

G544: Examination feedback

Section A: Questions:

G544 Exam feedback

Q1: State the NULL hypothesis for your practical project (3)

- For 3 marks both the IV and DV must be 'operationalised'
- **Frequent cause of lost marks:**
- Few students who selected the Q about gender and detail of clothing, about visual illusions, or about leading questions fully operationalised the DV (e.g. older people.... hungry people)

G544 Exam feedback

Q2: Describe the method you would use to conduct your practical project: (13 + 6)

- **Replicable and appropriate (13)**
- Top band: 9 – 13 marks:
- At top end 'fully replicable'
Clearly described:

Sample and sample selection,
allocation to groups,
description of the 'test or questionnaire (procedure)
with examples of questions, conditions and timings,
methods of testing, scorings and/or ratings ..

G544 Exam feedback

Q2: Describe the method you would use to conduct your practical project: (13 + 6)

- **Replicable and appropriate** (13)
- **Most frequent 'missing detail'**
- Sample/ sampling detail; (e.g. opportunity sample but process not described) example questions; scoring detail,
- **Missed marks:** Not independent design, scoring not described so not replicable; procedure not described;

G544 Exam feedback

Q2: Describe the method you would use to conduct your practical project:

- **Quality of the design and its feasibility (6)**
- **Top band: 5 – 6 marks:**
 - Must be independent design AND collect ordinal level data: Sampling must be feasible: (e.g. an opportunity sample of police men is not feasible:
 - Must be ethical: Locking people in a room to ensure they are hungry is not ethical:

G544 Exam feedback

Q2: Describe the method you would use to conduct your practical project:

- **Quality of the design and its feasibility (6)**
- **Most frequent 'lost marks'**
 - Not collecting ordinal level data:
 - Sampling not feasible – e.g. opportunity sample of police men.. .or Random sample of all police in UK:
 - Breaches of ethical guidelines...

G544 Exam feedback

Q3: Give an advantage of using an alternative experimental design in this practical project (3)

- **Possible answers: Repeated Measures, Matched Pairs:**
- Very few students answered the question correctly:
- Many students misunderstood the Q.. and answered as if the question had asked for an 'alternative research method'.

G544 Exam feedback

Q3: Give an advantage of using an alternative experimental design in this practical project (3)

- **Possible answers: Repeated Measures, Matched Pairs:**
- **Frequent cause of lost marks:**
- Repeated measures with gender or 'police man' as IV
- Stating an alternative but not explaining the advantage
- Answering the question by giving an alternative research method

G544 Exam feedback

Q4 Assess the validity of your investigation in measuring the dependent variable (6)

- 5 – 6 marks: Two (or more) points explained in relation to the validity of measuring the DV in the context of the practical project:
- **Strong answers:**
- Two paragraphs:
- One point discussed re 'experimental validity' and one point discussed re ecological validity
- Strong answers clearly referred to 'what was being measured'

G544 Exam feedback

Q4 Assess the validity of your investigation in measuring the dependent variable (6)

- 5 – 6 marks: Two (or more) points explained in relation to the validity of measuring the DV in the context of the practical project:
- **Frequent cause of lost marks:**
 - Lack of understanding of the concept of validity
 - No mention of measurement of the DV
 - Discussion of the sample
 - Discussion of ethics
 - Generic answers - no context !!

G544 Exam feedback

Q5 Outline how you could select a sample which would be representative (3)

- 1 mark : identify sampling technique
- 2 marks explain how 'representative'
- 3 marks 'in context';

- **Frequent cause of lost marks:**
- Opportunity sample (these are never representative)
- Random sample – but no explanation of why representative;
- Lack of context
- 'select a bigger sample' (no marks)

G544 Exam feedback

Q6 What ethical issues would you consider in designing your practical project (3)

- 1 mark : one issue identified or described
- 2 marks one issue identified and described in context or 2 issues described
- 3 marks: 2 issues identified and described in context
- **Frequent cause of lost marks:**
- Generic answers:
- Most students were awarded 2 marks – but few students made reference to the context of their project

G544 Exam feedback

Q7: Suggest ONE idea for possible future research related to your practical project (3)

- 1 mark: a research suggestion is made but may lack clarity – or is unrelated to the project
- 2 marks: Future research is described but may not be justified
- 3 marks: Future research described, is appropriate, and is justified by explanation 'in context'
- Mostly quite weak answers

G544 Exam feedback

Q7: Suggest ONE idea for possible future research related to your practical project (3)

3 marks: Future research described, is appropriate, and is justified by explanation 'in context'

- **Frequent cause of lost marks:**
- Suggestion too brief: e.g. do it again with children, use a bigger sample, change the IV, do it in a different place (different city)
- No explanation (justification) for the suggestion
- Suggestion not related to original project

G544 Exam feedback

Section A: Summary:

- Students should think carefully about the 'research question' they choose and how they 'score' their 'test'
- *e.g. 'police and registration plates' fell into fewer 'holes' than 'visual illusions'*
- Students need a better understanding what is meant by 'ordinal level' data
- Students need to be warned that 'generic answers' are unlikely to attract full marks – as Q3 – Q7 relate to their 'project'

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q8 or Q9

8(a) Using your knowledge of psychology briefly outline the cognitive approach to psychology (4)

Expected top band answers might include:

unseen mental processes, mind, thinking, conscious processes, language, decision making, memory, an example of cognitive research; computer analogy of sensory inputs > cognitive processes > behavioural outputs

4 marks: Clear, accurate description, appropriate detail, demonstrates understanding, confident and accurate use of terminology

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q8

8(a) Using your knowledge of psychology briefly outline the cognitive approach to psychology (4)

Frequent cause of lost marks;

- Candidates refer to brain not mind
- Quoted research that is not cognitive. e.g Maguire, Sperry, and Freud
- Confused with other approach(es) (usually physiological)
- Answer lacks detail e.g. Cognitive psychologists study the mind

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q8

8(b) Describe two pieces of research that use the cognitive approach to psychology (8)

7 – 8 marks:

Two cognitive studies accurately described, accurate detail, accurate use of psychological terminology, structure of answer is effective, (e.g. APFCC) quality of written communication is good

PLUS: EXPLICIT link explaining why the selected study uses the cognitive approach

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q8

8(b) Describe two pieces of research that use the cognitive approach to psychology (8)

Note : Mostly 'AS' studies

Frequent cause of lost marks:

- **No explicit** explanation of why the selected study used the cognitive approach
- Lack of detail
- Inaccurately described detail
- Inappropriate study (Freud, Maguire, Sperry, Milgram)
- Candidate 'parrot' AS study with no obvious understanding (Savage Rumbaugh)

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q8

8(c) Discuss the strengths and limitations of using the cognitive approach to explain behaviour: Use examples of psychological research to support your answer (12)

10 – 12 marks:

At least two strengths and two weaknesses with apposite evidence selected to support arguments and demonstrating understanding.

8 – 9 marks:

May be only one strength and one weakness but these will be supported by apposite evidence and argued thoroughly demonstrating understanding.

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q8

8(c) Discuss the strengths and limitations of using the cognitive approach to explain behaviour: Use examples of psychological research to support your answer (12)

Frequent cause of lost marks:

- Answer not related to the cognitive approach
- Answer evaluates research not the cognitive approach
- Evidence selected not cognitive (e.g. Sperry; Milgram)
- Candidate lacks understanding of cognitive approach
- Frequent error:
- Candidate states 'cognitive approach' uses case study method and then supports with Savage Rumbaugh
- Answer disorganised / incoherent argument

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q8

8(d) Compare the cognitive approach with the behaviourist perspective. Use examples of psychological research to support your answer (8)

7 – 8 marks:

At least two 'accurate' points of comparison, supported by evidence selected from both the cognitive and behavioural perspective.

5 – 6 marks:

At least ONE 'accurate' point of comparison, supported by evidence selected from both the cognitive and behavioural perspective.

Very few candidates were awarded top band marks

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q8

8(d) Compare the cognitive approach with the behaviourist perspective. Use examples of psychological research to support your answer (8)

Most frequent cause of lost marks:

- Candidate compares research studies not approaches e.g Bandura used a lab experiment but Savage Rumbaugh used the case study method
- Candidate does not understand the assumptions of either the behaviourist approach (many answers) or the assumptions of the cognitive approach
- Candidate quotes evidence that is neither cognitive or behaviourist (e.g. Maguire, Sperry)
- Candidate describes two research studies
- *Many answers demonstrated lack of understanding of approaches and/or of methodology*

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q8

8(e) Discuss the features of the cognitive approach that supports the view that psychology is a science (8)

Expected: Testable hypotheses: Lab experiments: Quantitative data, objective measurement, replicable, use of controls, problems of measuring 'mental processes, etc

7 – 8 marks:

Candidate makes 3 – 4 points, with well developed argument. OR make 2 or 3 points and support these with psychological evidence from the cognitive approach.

5 – 6 marks:

Two points discussed without the use of supporting evidence or one point discussed with apposite supporting evidence

Generally answers 'stronger' than 8(d)

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q8

8(e) Discuss the features of the cognitive approach that supports the view that psychology is a science (8)

Expected: Testable hypotheses: Lab experiments: Quantitative data, objective measurement, replicable, use of controls, problems of measuring 'mental processes, etc

Frequent cause of lost marks:

- Evaluated research and did not answer the question
- Used non-cognitive research to support (e.g. Sperry)
- Generic answer – re Psychology as a science, not related to cognitive approach
- Misunderstanding – cognitive approach uses animals

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q9

9(a) Using your knowledge of psychology, briefly outline what is meant by ecological validity (4)

Expected: Outline the concept of validity and then what is meant by ecological validity.

3 – 4 marks:

Clear outline, in 2 or 3 sentences regarding what is meant by ecological validity, e.g. behaviour studied in everyday settings (non-artificial) and possibly giving an example of research methods (factors) that contribute to high ecological validity and low ecological validity.

Majority of candidates awarded 3 – 4 marks

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q9

9(a) Using your knowledge of psychology, briefly outline what is meant by ecological validity (4)

Expected: Outline the concept of validity and then what is meant by ecological validity.

Frequent cause of lost marks:

Brief answer stating – one sentence ‘research carried out in real life’

Very few candidates mentioned the contribution of ‘representativeness of the sample’ to ecological validity

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q9

9(b) Describe examples of high ecological validity from any two pieces of psychological research (8)

7 – 8 marks:

Accurate and detailed description of appropriate research with **explanation** for why the research has high ecological validity:

5 – 6 marks:

Accurate and detailed description of appropriate research BUT NO explanation for why the research has high ecological validity:

Most frequent: AS studies: Piliavin, 3 faces of Eve, Savage Rumbaugh,

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q9

9(b) Describe examples of high ecological validity from any two pieces of psychological research (8)

Frequent cause of lost marks:

- Accurate description but NO explanation of why high ecological validity
- Lack of detail – many candidates described only the aim or the setting of the study and gave no other detail
- Candidates described research having low ecological validity
- One study in accurate detail but the second study very brief
 - *E.g. Piliavin did a study on a train and the passengers did not know they were being studied. This has high ecological validity because it was a real life study with no demand characteristics.*

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q9

9(c) Discuss the strengths and limitations of conducting psychological research where the ecological validity is low. Use examples of psychological research to support your answer (12)

10 – 12 marks:

At least two strengths and two limitations with apposite evidence selected to support arguments and demonstrate understanding.

8 – 9 marks:

May be only one strength and one limitation but these will be supported by apposite evidence and argued thoroughly demonstrating understanding.

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q9

9(c) Discuss the strengths and limitations of conducting psychological research where the ecological validity is low. Use examples of psychological research to support your answer (12)

Frequent cause of lost marks:

- Answer not focussed on low ecological validity
- Answer evaluates research but not explicitly related to low ecological validity
- Evidence selected not appropriate
- Candidate lacks understanding of methodology
- Answer disorganised / incoherent argument

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q9

9(d) Compare the ecological validity of laboratory experiments with the ecological validity of field experiments. Use examples of psychological research to support your answer (8)

7 – 8 marks:

- The points can all be differences and the balance in the answer may be between the different points made. At least two differences with appropriate supporting evidence.

- **5 – 6 marks:**

- The discussion may focus on the difference between high and low ecological validity but with well described and appropriate examples. (this was the most frequent approach) OR more than one comparison with less detailed evidence.
- **Most frequent comments:** Controls possible in lab exp, ethics better in lab exp, sample selection possible in lab, fewer uncontrolled variables, higher ecological validity in field exp.

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q9

9(d) Compare the ecological validity of laboratory experiments with the ecological validity of field experiments. Use examples of psychological research to support your answer (8)

Frequent cause of lost marks:

- Evidence selected is not appropriate – or made appropriate. E.g. Savage Rumbaugh as field experiment, Milgram as high ecological validity,
- Most frequent band awarded 5 – 6 because candidate focus only on high vs low ecological validity

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q9

9(e) Discuss the usefulness of field experiments in psychology. (8)

7 – 8 marks:

- Candidate can discuss either the theoretical or practical usefulness of field experiments. Three or four points without the use of examples OR two points supported by appropriate examples.

• 5 – 6 marks:

- Discussion will be effective but not comprehensive and evidence may not be provided from more than one source.

• Most frequent answers:

- High eco validity leads to understanding of behaviour in real world.
- Can lead to application and / or understanding of abnormal behaviour.

G544 Exam feedback

Section B Questions: Q9

9(e) Discuss the usefulness of field experiments in psychology. (8)

Frequent cause of lost marks:

- Candidate evaluates one field experiment (Piliavin) but does not focus on the question of usefulness
- Evidence selected is not appropriate because candidate does not know which studies are field experiments (e.g. Maguire selected)
- Candidate focuses on one point only - ecological validity. E.g. useful because high ecological validity

G544 Exam feedback
Section B Summary: