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BTEC Level 3 Nationals in Sport and Exercise
Science
Unit 3: Applied Sport and Exercise Psychology
(31815H)



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A grade boundary is where we set the level of achievement required to obtain a certain grade for the externally assessed unit. We set grade boundaries for each grade (Distinction, Merit, Pass and Near Pass). The grade gained for each unit contributes proportionately to the overall qualification grade and each unit should always be viewed in the context of its impact on the whole qualification.

Setting grade boundaries

When we set grade boundaries, we look at the performance of every learner who took the assessment. When we can see the full picture of performance, our experts are then able to decide where best to place the grade boundaries – this means that they decide what the lowest possible mark should be for a particular grade.

When our experts set the grade boundaries, they make sure that learners receive grades which reflect their ability. Awarding grade boundaries is conducted to ensure learners achieve the grade they deserve to achieve, irrespective of variation in the external assessment.

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Each test we set asks different questions and may assess different parts of the unit content outlined in the specification. It would be unfair to learners if we set the same grade boundaries for each test, because then it would not take into account that a test might be slightly easier or more difficult than any other.

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Unit 3: Applied Sport and Exercise Psychology

Grade	Unclassified	Near Pass	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Boundary Mark	-	10	21	34	47

Introduction

This was the second series of the new specification, and therefore, the second time that this unit has been externally assessed via a task rather than centre based internal assessment. As a result, centres had additional resources, such as a retired test and an accompanying Lead Examiner's report to help prepare their learners for this second series.

The question paper followed the same format as the first series and the sample assessment material with a case study split into two parts, one part which is seen and one part which is unseen. There are three activities based on the case study each of which is marked using a levels based approach, where the overall quality of the response is considered rather than identifying individual marking points. While the case study was different the three activities remained the same.

This case study of Harvey, a rugby player, was based around arousal and aggression with reference to perfectionism as well. In Part A Harvey shows traits of perfectionism in how he prepares for matches and he illustrates levels of arousal that are appropriate to achieving optimal performance. He also shows aspects of assertive behaviour in his 'hard but fair tackling' which is playing with high intensity within the rules of the game but without intention to cause harm. The potential for Harvey's aggression is set up in the final paragraph as the importance of the event, the local rivalry and Harvey's previous bad tempered behaviour all offer potential for aggressive behaviour.

Part B is characterised by an increase in Harvey's arousal levels and a subsequent decline in his performance. These increases in arousal levels lead to Harvey committing an act of hostile aggression 'a dangerous tackle to deliberately injure an opponent and his resulting sending off.

Introduction to the Overall Performance of the Unit

As this was the second time that learners had undertaken this type of assessment it was expected that learners would perform equally well, if not better, than the first time. However, this was not the case despite the case study being equally accessible, the questions remaining the same and the mark scheme being identical.

In particular performance around the pass boundary being much weaker with significantly fewer learners achieving a pass mark than for the first series. Performance at the top end was improved with slightly more learners achieving a

distinction grade. Most learners accessed marks in the lower grade band between 18-29.

Learners found that marks were most accessible in Activity 1 where they could accurately identify factors and describe their impact in the case study. Activity 2 where learners had to explain relevant theories that account for the Harvey's experiences, then explain and show how it accounts for Harvey's experiences proved to be a more difficult task that was more demanding on the learners' skills. Activity 3 where learners had to recommend and justify psychological interventions specific to Harvey was not done as well as the first series with learners often relying on generic interventions rather than interventions that specifically met Harvey's needs.

Individual Questions

Activity 1

In this activity learners had to describe how psychological factors were impacting on Eva, the athlete in the case study. To do this activity well, learners had to read the two parts of the case thoroughly and draw out the relevant information and then produce an extended answer.

This involved three stages which made up the three traits of the levels based mark scheme. Firstly, they had to identify specific psychological factors that were impacting on Harvey; secondly, with reference the content of the case study show the impact/effect each factor was having in each section and thirdly describe the impact of each factor on performance as being positive or negative.

Good responses made significant and continual references back to the case and showed the examiner that they were clear about how each factor was impacting on Harvey. In this case study the psychological factors that had most relevance to the case study were as follows:

Perfectionism

Arousal levels

Stress and anxiety related to increased arousal levels

Assertive behaviour (Part A)

Aggressive behaviour (Part B)

In Part A perfectionism, arousal levels and assertive behaviour have a positive impact on Harvey and his performance while in Part B high arousal levels and hostile aggression have a negative impact.

Learners often referred to motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic) and self-confidence. While they were deemed creditworthy they were seen as being a generic factor rather than a specific one meaning their answer met the criteria for Band 1 but not beyond. While some parts of the case study could be deemed to illustrate motivation, there was no content that could be specifically interpreted as intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. Learners would benefit from spending time reading and rereading the case to accurately identify which factors are most important and relevant in this case study rather than trying to fit their knowledge to case studies.

Learners should aim to cover 3-4 factors across both parts of the case study to ensure they have enough breadth to their answer.

A minority of learners referred to fixed and growth mindsets, group dynamics and leadership and these were not given credit. A common mistake made by learners was to identify Harvey's assertive behaviour in Part A as being instrumental aggression. This is not a correct interpretation because assertive behaviour is playing within the rules with high intensity and emotion (energetic, upbeat, hard but fair) rather than instrumental aggression which has the aim of harming or injuring another living being but with a non-aggressive such as to improve chances of success.

Learner's responses were marked by gaining a mark in one of three grade bands:

Grade band 1: 1-5 marks

Grade band 2: 6-10 marks

Grade band 3: 11-15 marks

The main factors that have impacted Harvey are aggression, perfectionism, Arousal and motivation.

In part A, ~~Harvey~~ Harvey is aggressive in a good way. He shows assertive behaviour, as his aggression has no intent to harm the opposition, it is within the rules and is used to gain an advantage over the opponent. This is displayed in the case study as it says 'hard but fair tackle early in a match to gain an advantage'.

However towards the end of part A, Harvey's begins to change. He has started to become 'bad tempered' and is showing signs of Relational aggression. This type of aggression is to cause psychological harm. This is shown in the case study as he has started to 'shout at his team' and 'argue with the referee's decisions'. ~~Relational~~ Relational aggression is not goal orientated and only used to cause emotional harm, which is

why Harvey's aggression is beginning to turn negative.

In part B, Harvey made a few costly mistakes which led to the opposition scoring, which made Harvey very upset and angry. He took his anger out on an opponent where he 'commits a dangerous tackle to deliberately injure an opponent'. This is hostile aggression as his intent was to cause harm to an opponent, with a tackle outside of the rules. This was not goal orientated, and not only did it not give ~~Harvey~~ Harvey's team an advantage, it put them at a disadvantage as he got sent off.

The next point is arousal. The first ~~part~~ half of part A shows Harvey at optimum levels of arousal. This is because he is 'excited and energetic' during matches, he plays in an 'energetic and upbeat' way and he 'is totally focused on being successful'. Overall, he is one of the best players in his college team. As he is optimally aroused, ~~but~~ he is purely focused on being successful and isn't becoming distracted by other factors. This is displayed in the

Case Study as 'he always targets his direct opponent'.

During the second half of part A, it would appear he has become over aroused. He has lost focus on winning the game and being successful, and is instead being distracted on 'shouting at his teammates' and 'arguing with the referee's decisions'.

In part B, his high arousal levels are affecting his performance. After having made a mistake, his focus has turned to 'desperately trying to make up for his mistake - which has led to his passing being inaccurate. His arousal levels rise so high that he isn't focused on the game at all, which is why he deliberately hurts an opponent.

Another factor affecting Harvey is perfectionism. Early in part A, ~~Harvey~~ Harvey proves eager to please as he is 'always early to training and matches' and is 'a very organized person'. His perfectionism shows as he becomes frustrated with his teammates when they don't arrive with 'immaculate' kit. This is

because Harvey perceives them as not living up to his standards - a common trait of perfectionism.

Harvey however is a functional perfectionist as he is highly motivated to achieve. He always lifts heavy weights and runs as fast as he can in the gym. At the beginning, he wants to achieve perfectionism without affecting his self-esteem - which is shown as he plays in an 'energetic and upbeat' way.

The final factor affecting Harvey is his motivation. In part A Harvey displays intrinsic motivation as he shows his love for the sport as he is always 'early to training and matches'. He also 'psyches himself up in the gym' to work hard.

In part B Harvey begins to show signs of over-motivation, where he has started to lose focus of the main task. His motivation has gone from being successful to harming opponents.

This answer is done well with an introduction that identifies the factors that the learner regards as being the most important. Then the learner describes each factor and makes reference to where it is impacting in the case study and its effect on Harvey's performance.

This mark sits in the lower end of Band 3 as there is not enough reference to whether each factor is having a positive or negative impact and also there is some less relevant content on motivation.

There is clear explanation of whether each factor is having a positive or negative effect and how the effect changes from positive to negative as the case study develops.

In this answer the learner has written about six factors in total, assertive behaviour, relational aggression, hostile aggression, arousal, perfectionism and motivation. They have shown breadth of knowledge and but only depth on their coverage of arousal. If they had had more depth on one or two other factors that would have pushed their mark up as well.

¶ ~~In the~~ Murray ~~has~~ has become over aroused, which is causing his performance to decrease. For gross sports like rugby, you need high arousal levels. However, there is always a point where an athlete could become over aroused. There are many links that suggest that Murray has become over aroused. For example, ~~Har~~ in the case study it ~~suggests~~ states "his passing becomes inaccurate ~~and~~ and when he kicks the ball it goes too far. This suggests that he ~~is~~ has ~~a~~ high levels of adrenaline, because he is getting this unusual energy that is causing him to kick it too far. Furthermore, Murray's actions relate to the inverted U theory. His over arousal is in part B of the study.

Another factor is Murray has hostile aggression. This is when an athlete has an intention to harm and a goal to harm. ~~This is when for~~ For we know that Murray has hostile aggression, because in the case study it states "He loses his temper and commits a dangerous

tackle to deliberately injure an opponent." This shows that Harvey has hostile aggression because he is using unusual energy to inflict harm to an opponent. Furthermore hostile aggression is outside the rules of the game. This is for part B of the study.

Furthermore, In part A of the case study, Harvey has a different approach. He has high intrinsic motivation. This is when an athlete has inner drive to succeed. Harvey is an athlete that has dedication to his sport and is always trying to improve. We know this because in the case study it states "During ~~match~~ Harvey psyches himself up to lifting heavy weights and to run as fast as he can." This indicates that Harvey is always trying to improve and has huge dedication to the game as he channels all his efforts into his training.

Furthermore, in part A of the case study Harvey has a growth mindset. This is when an athlete rises to a range of different challenges and always tries to improve. This we know this as the case study states "always early for training and matches." This shows that he has a growth mindset as he is eager

to train, improve ~~and~~ and prepare. Furthermore, in part B of the case study, ~~it~~ it states 'He apologises to ~~his~~ the coach and his team mates'. This suggests he still has maintained that growth mindset and is able to know ~~when~~ when he is in the wrong and blames internal factors. This also shows he is ready to improve.

In part B of the case study, it suggests that Harvey has anxiety. ~~Anxiety~~ Anxiety relates to nervousness. This is a factor that decreases performance. ~~We know that~~ we know that Harvey could potentially have this, because in ~~the~~ ^{the} case study it states "This makes Harvey upset and angry!" This indicates that he is feeling emotional and nervous because he made a mistake. Furthermore, the case study then states "his passing becomes ^{totally inaccurate} ~~increasingly bad~~". This suggests that his anxiety is affecting his performance, and is getting nervous and anxious about his performance. This is the opposite in part A, as he has high confidence.

In part A, it suggests that Harvey has high self-efficacy for tackling. We know this because in the case study it states 'He loves to tackle as well'.

as he can" This suggests that he feels CONFIDENT about tackling work tasks to do it. However in part B. it suggests that he has low self efficacy in his passing as it states that "his passing became totally inaccurate" This means that each poor pass, is lowering his overall self efficacy on on passing.

This learner has identified six factors, three of which are relevant to the case study. Arousal, hostile aggression and anxiety are all relevant factors and their choice of these is backed up with content from the case to illustrate each one. There no attempt to indicate whether each factor has a positive or negative impact on performance.

The learner has identified intrinsic motivation but they cannot find any relevant evidence from the case study to back this up without reading something into the content that is not there. This is also the case for growth mindset as the examples they use are irrelevant and fail to back up their point. Self-efficacy is also not credit worthy for the same reason and the learner uses the phrase 'this suggests' which shows there is no evidence in the case study.

Activity 2

In this activity learners had to explain psychological theories that account for Harvey's experiences in both parts of the case study. To do this activity well learners had to do three things: i) identify correct theories that are linked to the factors described in Activity 1; ii) explain the key principles of each theory and iii) contextualise the theory to show how it accounts for Harvey's experiences in parts A and B of the case study.

Good responses showed detailed coverage of at least two theories and less detailed coverage of one other theory with clear and coherent links to the case study and how it could explain Harvey's experiences. There was often analysis of the extent to which the theory could account for Harvey's experiences or reference to another theory that would explain it better. In this case study the theories with most relevance were as follows:

Drive theory, Inverted U hypothesis, and Catastrophe theory to show arousal-performance relationship

Frustration-aggression or adapted frustration theory

Instinct theory of aggression

Multidimensional anxiety theory to explain the link between cognitive anxiety and performance

Need achievement theory, Achievement goal theory and self-determination theory were poor choices of theory as there is no explicit evidence in the case study to support their relevance. Thus, they were deemed to not be creditworthy.

It is vitally important that the most relevant, specific factors are identified for Activity 1 as if the less appropriate factors are selected then theories that relate to them are likely to be incorrect along with the interventions selected for Activity 3. Learners must identify the specific factors relevant in the case study rather than bending the case study content to match the factors they know about as these generic factors gain little credit. Incorrect identification of factors also means that learners spend a lot of time and energy writing about irrelevant content that doesn't gain credit at the expense of writing about factors that will gain credit.

Learner responses were marked by gaining a mark in one of three grade bands:

Grade band 1: 1-5 marks

Grade band 2: 6-10 marks

Grade band 3: 11-15 marks

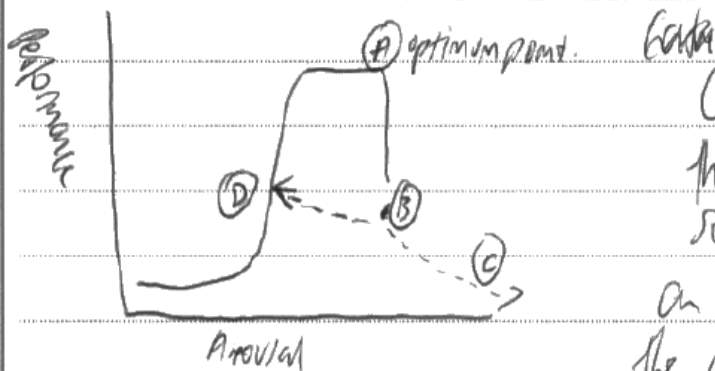
To achieve a Band 3 response learners should cover two to three theories. Band 3 could be achieved by either covering two theories fully with accurate and in-depth coverage or provide more breadth by covering three theories less fully. The most important trait with each band was the trait covering how theories are applied to analyse the case study.

There are theories that can be accounted for Harvey's experience in both parts of the case study. The following are the ones I will mention: frustration-aggression theory, catastrophe and multidimensional anxiety theory.

The first is frustration-aggression theory. This theory suggests inevitable aggression occurs when goals are blocked making the athlete become frustrated. Behaviour follows this aggression and makes the athlete want to release it through any means. In this case Harvey "loses his temper and creates a dangerous tackle to deliberately injure his opponent." This is known as the cathartic effect as he releases his aggression through tackling someone. This is a form of hostile aggression. His goals were blocked when he made a mistake making him frustrated and make more mistakes. After the first mistake he is desperate to improve but is frustrated, due to opponent's blocking his goal of trying to score, the frustration impacts him negatively in part B. Furthermore this aggression is shown in part A when it says, "he becomes frustrated when other players don't have the same high standards" and the relational aggression when it says, "shouted at his teammates". Again, but another form of aggressive behaviour but it is ascriptive. "Always targets his direct

opponent with a hard but fair tackle. His ~~the~~ aggression is shown having him be aggressive but is controlled and within the rules not intending to harm. This impacts him negatively in part B with enough provocation causing him the aggression to surface which is what instinct theory claims.

The second theory is Catastrophe theory. The following is a graph to explain it:

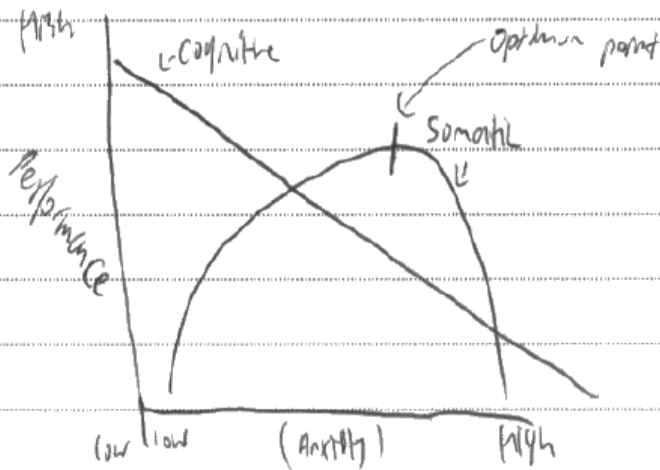


Catastrophe theory states that as arousal increases so does performance up to an optimal point. This is when the athlete has the right

levels of arousal for their sport. Higher arousal levels means a dramatic decline ~~above~~ beyond the optimum point (a catastrophe in performance). At ~~point A~~ ^{point A} arousal is the best it can be. point B is the dramatic drop. The athlete can go either to C or D. In part B of the case study, Harvey goes towards point C, this is after the dramatic decline in performance due to over arousal as he continues to decrease in performance and making mistakes. A catastrophe in performance. However, Harvey may have been able to stay in the game if he calmed down and refocused and gradually increase in performance like in point D. In contrast to part A, arousal has a positive

effects as he "psyched himself up to lift heavy weights" and it focused the optimal arousal gave him an increase in motivation.

The final theory is multidimensional anxiety theory. The graph below represents this:



The graph shows anxiety the effects of high levels of Somatic/Cognitive anxiety and how it contributes to an athlete's performance. In the graph Somatic anxiety has an identical effect on performance. As ^{Somatic} anxiety increases, so does performance up to an optimum point. If the somatic anxiety goes beyond this point, performance decreases, this is because the ↑ in heart rate and ~~stress~~ shaking may affect his performance like how Harvey throws the ball. ~~transfers~~ Cognitive anxiety has a linear effect, the higher it is, the lower the performance. Due to an increase in cognitive anxiety, in part B, Harvey had pure negative thoughts after the motivation causing him to perform terribly. The more negative thoughts, the

with the performance.

This response sits in the lower end of Band 3. The learner has chosen three relevant theories, in frustration-aggression, catastrophe and multidimensional anxiety theories. Frustration-aggression theory is explained well with reference to the case study and a discussion of different types of aggressive behaviour from both parts of the case study. Catastrophe theory is well explained with the use of a diagram but the application to Harvey could have clearer and more detailed. Multidimensional anxiety theory is done less well but there is a good explanation of theory but limited application to the case study.

There are many theories that account for Harvey's performances the main one being catastrophe theory which says that arousal levels go up with with motivation performance but once past the optimal point can lead to a sudden drop in performance which is seen in his performance as he experiences a decrease in focus " which eventually see's him become frustrated leading to him making a bad decision and getting sent off. "commits a dangerous tackle... the referee sends harvey off" this proves that catastrophe theory is correct as too high arousal levels have lead to a decrease in his performance and then being removed from the game. This also proves that drive theory is wrong as he sees a decrease in performance due to arousal levels.

Another theory that is seen is attentional narrowing which is when the athletes levels of ~~arousal~~ arousal are high which leads to Harvey focusing on all the negative aspects of the game "Harvey makes another mistake and loses his temper" it shows how he is focusing just on the negatives in the game and ~~is~~ nothing else when he actually wants optimal arousal which would give him ~~the~~ optimal attention span and would lead to him only focusing on the positives rather than the negatives that are going on around him. I would put this second as it can lead to things going wrong in his game and explains what went wrong during.

Another theory is frustration aggression theory ~~and~~ ~~shows~~ ~~how~~ is how aggression is direct result of build-up due to failure or goal blockage and is seen in Harvey's performance when "his passing becomes totally inaccurate and

when he kicks the ball it goes
~~too~~ too far" this causes aggression
to keep building up until it is
released in the game which then
leads to him being removed from
the game. I would prioritise this as
I believe that it has a detrimental
effect on him being removed however
it doesn't have as great an effect
as the ones before this.

Overall there are many theories
that account for the decrease
in his performance and the
eventual removing him from the
game.

In this answer the learner identifies two theories that have relevance to the case study and there is an attempt to explain and apply each one to Harvey's experiences. The work on catastrophe theory explains its key principle but the application to Harvey is poor and lacks focus. Then the learner starts discussing its value and makes an irrelevant reference to drive theory.

The work in the second paragraph is not credit worthy as it doesn't cover a theory. The coverage of frustration-aggression theory is very basic with poor application to the case study.

Activity 3

In Activity 3 learners had to focus on Part B of the case study as this is the section where Harvey experiences problems such as changes in his arousal levels due to the impact of playing a semi-final against local rivals and then starting to make mistakes. He suffers an increase in arousal levels accompanied by increases in cognitive and somatic anxiety. Because of these factors his performance changes as he makes big mistakes (inaccurate passing, kicking the ball too far) that could be interpreted as 'choking'. His mistakes also lead to him showing hostile aggression. Learners need to recommend psychological interventions to help Harvey control his arousal levels and aggressive behaviour.

The interventions that were most relevant to the case study were as follows:

Arousal control techniques

- progressive muscular relaxation
- imagery/mind to muscle relaxation
- breathing control
- self-talk
- mental rehearsal/imagery

In this activity learners need to do three things: i) identify 3-4 correct interventions specific to Harvey's needs; ii) clearly justify why this intervention is needed with reference to the experiences of Harvey in the case study; iii) explain the principles behind each psychological intervention by giving sufficient detail for the intervention to be replicated; iv) describe/explain how the intervention can be implemented before and during competition ie, when would it be practiced and when would it be used.

Due to the high weighting of this activity within the paper, it accounts for 50% of the marks, it was expected that learners would cover three to four interventions and provide detailed information on at least three interventions.

Goal setting and performance profiling were poor choices of intervention as Harvey does not have a problem with motivation or general performance. Goal setting was only credit worthy if the goals directly related to action to control Harvey's arousal levels or aggressive behaviour.

This activity was completed poorly as many learner responses were generic in nature in that they selected techniques without specific references to Harvey's needs. They did not use the case study content to justify their choice of intervention or accurately explain how each intervention could be implemented. Learners often said, 'in my opinion' or 'I would suggest' without any thought of what would be most appropriate or justifying their answer in relation to the case study content.

As in Activity 2 learners waste a lot of time on less relevant interventions, such as goal setting and performance profiling, at the expense of interventions that will specifically address his needs as shown in the case study. The justification of

techniques is very important in this activity so learners must show why they have selected these interventions based on the content of the case study.

Learner responses were marked by gaining a mark in one of five grade bands:

Grade band 1: 1-6 marks

Grade band 2: 7-12 marks

Grade band 3: 13-18 marks

Grade band 4: 19-24 marks

Grade band 5: 25-30 marks

This response was placed in Band 5: and gained 25 marks out of 30

There are many psychological interventions to address Harvey's needs in case study Part B. These psychological interventions are Progressive Muscular Relaxation, Breathing Control, Imagery, and self-talk.

The first psychological intervention that I recommend as a sport psychologist is Progressive Muscular Relaxation (PMR). PMR is linked to the psychological factor arousal. PMR is an easy technique that helps ~~to~~ to reduce muscle tension. PMR raises awareness of muscular tension and allows you to distinguish between tension and relaxation. PMR involves tensing the muscles for 5 seconds then relaxing with a deep breathing. This is progressive as the athlete works slowly through the whole body, muscle by muscle. I would make sure Harvey was in a dark ^{and quiet} room and tell him to lay down whenever ~~he~~ feels comfortable. After all of this, I would start the PMR from his feet all the way to his head, I would also make sure Harvey tenses every muscle in ~~his~~ ^{his} body. This would be helpful for Harvey as he shows high levels of arousal, as it's stated in Part B of the case study that Harvey was very angry, that ~~he~~ was desperate and that he loses his temper.

Therefore, I would make Harvey do PMR to decrease his levels of arousal and help him for the next game. I would make Harvey do this technique 2/3 times a week and one time 2/3h before the next game, in order to help him to be back to his optimal point of arousal. In case Harvey is optimally aroused, he will be able to perform his best as he did in Part A of the case study.

The second psychological intervention that I recommend as a sport psychologist is Breathing control. Breathing control is linked to the psychological factor aggression. Breathing control is a slow and deliberate inhalation-exhalation process. Breathing control is best used during breaks in play, for example in a time-out of a rugby game. Breathing control is useful when athletes get anxious or aggressive. It involves to breath on a ratio of 1:2 (4 seconds in, 8 seconds out). Psychologically, this helps Harvey to focus and concentrate and ~~the~~ take ~~away~~ attention away from the negative causes of aggression. This would be helpful for Harvey as he has been aggressive, as it's stated in Part B of the case study, that Harvey commits a dangerous tackle to deliberately injure an opponent. This would make Harvey calm down and reduce his levels of aggression. I would tell him to sit on a chair or bench with ~~his~~ his back ~~straight~~ straight, I would also tell him to breath from his stomach with a hand on the stomach and another hand on his chest and to focus on the lower

hand to breath deeply ~~as~~ from as low as possible.

The third psychological intervention that I recommend as a sport psychologist is Imagery. Imagery is linked to the psychological factor anxiety. Imagery makes use of particular words or outcomes that create visual representations of ideas within our ~~the~~ mind. There are three types of imagery, which are visual, auditory and kinesthetic. Imagery is best used to imagine goals, to reduce stress and anxiety, to mental ~~rehearsal~~ rehearsal and to pre-performance routine. I would make Harvey do imagery to make him stop getting anxious as it's stated in part B of the case study that Harvey is ~~becoming~~ increasingly desperate. I would tell Harvey that he ~~will~~ will have to ~~begin~~ imagine visually him scoring good points in his rugby match, being faster than the opponents, making good decisions and good passes. Therefore, I would make Harvey do imagery to decrease his levels of anxiety and to be on his ~~optimal~~ optimal point for his next games of rugby.

The fourth psychological intervention that I recommend as a sport psychologist is self-talk. Self-talk is linked to the psychological factor stress. Self-talk is a ^{conscious} ~~conscious~~ and subconscious dialog that ~~occurs~~ occurs in your mind before, during and after competition. Self-talk is normally used in a variety of different sports for different purposes, for example, chance

Self-confidence, control stress and arousal and support ~~pre-~~ pre-performance routines. This would help to ~~reduce~~ reduce Harvey's levels of stress by instilling the belief that Harvey can do it. This would help Harvey to focus and reduce the impact of negative thoughts or emotions that Harvey is feeling. This would ~~be~~ be helpful for Harvey as he shows high levels of stress in Part B of the case study, as it's stated in Part B of the case study that Harvey was increasingly desperate. Self-talk would make Harvey's levels of stress decrease by making him to ~~say~~ say to himself good and motivated thing such as "I can do it!", "Come on Harvey!" or "I have done it before so I can do it again!" in order to decrease his levels of stress and so Harvey could make his levels of stress decrease to become the talented rugby player he used to be.

This example falls into the bottom end of Band 5. The learner has selected 4 relevant interventions and been able to make links to appropriate factors and show why they would be valuable to Harvey. PMR and breathing control are done more fully than imagery and self-talk with explanations on how to learn and practice them and when to use each one in relation to performance. Imagery and self-talk have briefer explanations and while there is some application to Harvey's performance it is not fully clear when he could use it.

All the content is relevant and in particular the selection of interventions was clearly justified by the learner.

Fuller explanations of imagery and self-talk would have led to the learner receiving a higher Band 5 mark.

Psychological interventions could be used to address harvey's needs in ~~case study~~ ^{Part B} of the case study.

During part B Harvey experienced a knock to his confidence as he kept making mistakes during the match. Harvey and his coach could sit down and go through performance profiling ~~with~~ which will allow harvey and his coach to identify psychological strengths and weaknesses which then allows a basis of goal setting. This is a very usefull intervention as it will make harvey more self-aware and can be used to monitor his progress so that ~~he~~ ^{both} him and his coach will know where he's at allowing them to compare past and present results so Harvey can see improvement in his weaker areas giving him confidence.

≡

Goal setting can be carried out by the athlete and coach creating short, medium and long term goals so that Harvey feels a continuous sense of achievement. The scores obtained from the performance profile can be used to create these

goals. It is important for Harvey to set Mastery goals which focus on self challenge and improvement. The use of MAP ~~goal~~ goals will help Harvey become more ~~extrinsically~~ intrinsically motivated rather than extrinsically as MAP Mastery goals focus on performing a task well and outperforming previous achievements. This will help Harvey as it will stop him from becoming frustrated when the team is not winning and allow him to just focus on how he is playing and improving his technique making sure that he is playing to the best of his abilities. This would be carried out before he goes into a big competition so he has time in the build up to concentrate on improving in training.

Harvey could also use ~~up~~ self-talk during matches in order to keep him ^{self-}confident and relaxed during the matches even if they aren't going well. The use of positive self-talk can help direct Harvey's attention away from negative thoughts which will stop Harvey from becoming over aroused. ~~And~~ will keep his arousal ~~level~~ to a level which would not affect performance negatively. This is a useful

Technique that Harvey could ~~try out~~^{use} during matches by using it in training it could help him become comfortable and used to doing it so that when it comes to matches he can successfully use it.

Breathing control can also be used by Harvey this is the slow and deliberate inhalation-exhalation process done in a 1:2 ratio of breath in and out. This would be implemented during breaks of the match helping Harvey reduce symptoms of arousal and anxiety which would stop the catastrophism theory from occurring during a match as it ensures that arousal and anxiety levels are kept under the threshold. This would be a very useful intervention for Harvey to use especially in intense matches as it allows ~~him~~^{his} attention to be taken away from the negative aspects of the match and allows him to concentrate on getting things right whilst also improving confidence, control and well-being. Which would stop Harvey from ~~becoming~~ becoming aggressive to other players.

Furthermore the use of relaxation imagery could be used by Harvey. Which can be used leading up to matches in order to reduce

Harvey's levels of arousal and anxiety into a competition which ~~would~~ ^{would} help to stop a decrease in performance due to too high levels of arousal and anxiety ~~and~~ while also stopping aggressive outbursts from occurring during a match. The use of relaxation imagery can be used as a pre-performance routine making Harvey feel confident and relaxed going into a high pressured match.

Verbal persuasion could also be used by incorporating vicarious experiences into a speech carried out by Harvey's coach which would help improve self-efficacy as he would feel that he could successfully complete the task. The coach could remind him during half-time breaks of times when other athletes have come back from mistakes and how he can do the same making him go into the second half in a different mindset which would help to increase Harvey's performance.

This learner has recommended six interventions for Harvey but three of them having little relevance. Goal setting and performance have no specific relevance in this case study and the learner is unable to justify their inclusion for Harvey. All the content on these two factors is generic and not credit worthy, likewise the content on verbal persuasion.

The learner identifies three relevant interventions and attempts to link each one a factor and justify why it would be beneficial for Harvey. However, there is no coverage of the principles of each intervention, what each one is and how they could be practiced. There is some reference to when they could be used but the coverage of each intervention lacks depth.

Summary

- Read the case study several times, highlight the key content and identify which psychological factors are being covered
- It is most important that you spend time to accurately identify which factors are being covered in the case study as if you select incorrect or less relevant factors it is likely that you will select less appropriate theories to explain the case study and psychological interventions to help the sports person
- Each case study is designed to specifically cover 3-4 factors across the unit specification and it is vital that you have knowledge of the full content of the unit to enable you to interpret the case study correctly
- When answering questions refer to the content of the case study as much as possible and make sure that the content you refer to is actually in the case study
- Draw information from both parts of the case study when asked to in the question, such as for Activities 1 and 2 and just from Part B for Activity 3
- Be selective about which theories and interventions you cover and make sure they are the most relevant for the answer.
- If you cannot fully justify the inclusion of a factor, theory or intervention by using the content of the case study then don't use as it prevents you from covering relevant material which will gain credit
- Use the marking grid for each activity to guide you and ensure you cover all the content needed for each activity
- Please click [here](#) for the specification and SAMS

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