

MARKSCHEME

November 2006

PSYCHOLOGY

Higher Level

Paper 3

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1. (a) Describe *two* different sampling techniques suitable for use in qualitative research. *[4 marks]*

Sampling techniques are likely to include random, purposive, stratified and other techniques that focus on people who just happen to be about at the time of the investigation. (*e.g.* convenience or opportunity sampling). Examiners should be careful not to award marks to candidates who claim that these two techniques (convenience and opportunity sampling) are examples of random sampling.

Award *[1 mark]* for each sampling technique identified.

Award *[1 additional mark]* for each sampling technique accurately described.

- (b) Evaluate the *two* techniques that you have described in part (a). *[6 marks]*

Evaluation should consider the purpose of each sampling technique and whether it always achieves its aims. There is very little to support convenience or opportunity sampling since it is difficult to generalise to a parent population, if this is known.

A maximum of *[3 marks]* should be awarded for each evaluation that includes both knowledge and understanding.

Award *[1 to 2 marks]* for a limited evaluation of each technique described in part (a).

2. (a) **Provide an example of a situation in which you would be justified in using a verbal protocol, and explain how you apply this research method.** [6 marks]

A range of situations may be provided: bomb disposal, giving birth, driving a fire engine in an emergency, refereeing a football match, etc. The key is that the participant in this method needs to think aloud as the task is performed, and that the speech is recorded for subsequent analysis. Analysis should be concerned with identifying salient points or themes that emerge from analysis of the data, and this could include the use of content analysis.

[1 to 2 marks] should be scored for a weak explanation.

[3 to 4 marks] should be given for a limited explanation.

Award [5 to 6 marks] for a clear and detailed explanation of the method and its relation to a relevant example.

- (b) **Evaluate the use of a verbal protocol.** [4 marks]

Evaluation in this case should consider both advantages and disadvantages. *i.e.* the method usually has excellent ecological validity, but it is sometimes limited by the stress of the process that it seeks to interpret. Can you really interpret what you are feeling when concentrating on bomb disposal or giving birth?

Lower scores [1 to 2 marks] should be awarded to responses that offer limited evaluation.

High scores [3 to 4 marks] should be awarded for responses that present a relevant and balanced evaluation.

3. (a) Outline *three* types of triangulation. [3 marks]

The four basic types of triangulation are provided on page 43 of the *psychology guide* for 2005 onwards, these are: data triangulation; investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, methodological triangulation. Alternatively, candidates may offer variations of one basic type of triangulation, for example: time, location and participant triangulation. Only three are required here and [1 mark] should be given for each, provided that the types are explicitly outlined.

(b) Evaluate the claim that the use of triangulation increases the credibility of research findings. [7 marks]

Evaluation has both positive and negative aspects. The use of triangulation can help to produce more credible findings and it may be argued that credibility implies a greater validity or trustworthiness. But this is not necessarily the case since three or more types of triangulation being applied may miss a design flaw in the investigation, but their combined use may cloak this error in respectability. Although the same terms may not be used in explanations offered by candidates, as long as their meanings are similar they should be given credit.

Award [1 to 2 marks] where occasional comments provide evidence of limited understanding.

Award [3 to 5 marks] for a limited or one-sided evaluation.

Award high marks [6 to 7 marks] for answers that include both positive and negative aspects and informed evaluation of the claim.
