



MARKSCHEME

May 2013

PSYCHOLOGY

Higher Level

Paper 3

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Paper 3 markbands

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The answer does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1 to 3	There is an attempt to answer the question, but knowledge and understanding is limited, often inaccurate, or of marginal relevance to the question. The response makes no direct reference to the stimulus material or relies too heavily on quotations from the text.
4 to 7	The question is partially answered. Knowledge and understanding is accurate but limited. Either the command term is not effectively addressed or the response is not sufficiently explicit in answering the question. The response makes limited use of the stimulus material.
8 to 10	The question is answered in a focused and effective manner and meets the demands of the command term. The answer is supported by appropriate and accurate knowledge and understanding of qualitative research methodology. The response demonstrates a critical understanding of qualitative research methodology applied to the stimulus material.

1. Explain two ethical considerations relevant to this study.**[10 marks]**

Refer to the paper 3 markbands when awarding marks.

The command term “explain” requires candidates to give a detailed account, including reasons, for the relevance of *two* ethical considerations to the study.

Responses that use the term “experiment” as a generic term for “study” should not be penalized for this.

Relevant ethical considerations in this study could be, but are not limited to:

- anonymity
- confidentiality
- informed consent.

Candidates could mention that the participants know each other so it may be practically impossible to keep anonymity. This situation is often the case when snowball sampling is used. However, the importance of the research topic in understanding factors in excessive use and (perhaps) addiction to online gaming could justify that anonymity is not guaranteed within this study. Candidates could perhaps argue that as long as the researcher makes sure that the identities of the participants are not known outside of the group, a study like this is still ethically acceptable.

Candidates may explain that confidentiality is particularly important in a topic like online gaming addiction because it is a very personal and sensitive issue. Candidates could give various reasons for the relevance of confidentiality, for example that it is important that other people will not find out anything about the participants’ internet addiction.

As for informed consent, the researchers obtained informed consent from all participants. A relevant consideration in this study could be the age of the participants. Candidates could explain that parental consent should in principle be gained for these minors but that it may not have been done due to the sensitive nature of the study.

Another relevant ethical consideration would be to say that research such as this study could include a follow-up procedure in which treatment is offered for those who are adversely affected by this addiction.

Candidates may refer to ethical considerations taken by the researcher in the study in the stimulus material and/or considerations that could have been taken. Both approaches are equally acceptable.

If a candidate explains more than two ethical considerations, credit should be given only to the first two explanations.

If a candidate explains only one ethical consideration, apply the markbands up to a maximum of **[5 marks]**.

2. Discuss the use of semi-structured interviews in this study.

[10 marks]

Refer to the paper 3 markbands when awarding marks.

The command term “discuss” requires candidates to offer a considered and balanced review of factors relevant for the use of a semi-structured interview in the research study in the stimulus material. Opinions or conclusions should be presented clearly and supported by appropriate knowledge of semi-structured interviews.

Responses that use the term “experiment” as a generic term for “study” should not be penalized for this.

Semi-structured interviews can use a combination of closed and open-ended questions and the interview is often more informal and conversational in nature.

Candidates could argue that the researchers have chosen semi-structured interviews most probably because they want answers to certain questions they have, while giving participants the opportunity to talk more freely about their motivation to play online games. Using open-ended questions makes it possible for interviewees to give an account of their personal experiences with online gaming from their own perspective. This seems a major advantage in this study on a sensitive topic.

In the context of the study in the stimulus material, candidates could also argue that the flexibility of open-ended questions allows the researcher to obtain richer data. If the researchers had used a structured interview with closed questions they would perhaps not be able to gain the same insight into why the adolescents are more or less addicted to internet games. Candidates may also refer to the disadvantages of semi-structured interviews, for example, that analysis of data is extremely time-consuming. Since the researchers have chosen to use the semi-structured interview in spite of this, it could be because of the possibility to obtain richer data.

Responses that briefly refer to other research methods as part of the discussion of why semi-structured interviews were used in this study should be fully credited.

3. Describe the use of inductive content analysis (thematic analysis) in this study. [10 marks]

Refer to the paper 3 markbands when awarding marks.

The command term “describe” requires candidates to give a detailed account of how inductive content analysis could be applied to the interview transcripts in the study.

Responses that use the term “experiment” as a generic term for “study” should not be penalized for this.

In the context of this study, candidates should describe characteristics or features of the procedure of inductive content analysis. Relevant parts of the procedure of inductive content analysis in this study could be, but are not limited to:

- Analysis of the transcripts of the interview to identify possible themes that relate to adolescents’ own perceptions of their addiction to internet games.
- Following a systematic analysis of the transcript for emerging themes (for example, “avoiding homework” or “finding friends”) the researcher could try to connect emerging themes in meaningful ways to establish possible hierarchies of themes.
- Constructing a summary table of the four higher-order themes mentioned in the stimulus material.
- Connecting the subordinate themes with relevant quotations from the adolescents to support the choice of each theme. The final task is to make interpretations based on the analysis.

Responses that do not describe the use of inductive content analysis in this study but merely refer to the themes mentioned in the stimulus material should be awarded up to a maximum of *[3 marks]*.
