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# **Examiners' Report**

## Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2017

Pearson Edexcel GCE in  
Health and Social Care (6949/01)  
Unit 12: Understanding Human Behaviour

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## **General comments**

The paper was in a similar format to that of previous years, allowing candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the specification. The questions discriminated well, with a range of marks being seen in each question.

The paper was deemed to be of a similar standard to that of previous years, with similar outcomes in candidate performance. Centres should be thanked for taking on board previous Principal Examiner reports, with an improvement being seen in the content of extended answer questions and application to the scenarios set.

The basic understanding of approaches from the specification underpin the application of the approach and related therapy. As in previous years, candidates did not always demonstrate an in-depth understanding of theories of human behaviour. This limited detailed extended responses and the ability to clearly and accurately define key terminology associated with the specification.

There was still evidence of candidates providing pre-learned responses for extended questions which limited their ability to achieve higher marks; it is vital for the responses to be applied to scenarios to attain higher marks on this paper. Where improvements were seen, candidates showed good evidence of application to scenarios using their knowledge and understanding in a mostly accurate way. Further improvements could be made to attain higher marks through candidates being given the opportunity to apply approaches and therapies to a range of client groups to provide a more holistic approach to application to health and social care.

We recommend that Centres support candidates with extended answer questions; many still do not follow a structure that relates to the command verb, thus limiting their achievement particularly with 8 and 10 mark responses. It is imperative that candidates provide a full and balanced account in response to the questions set.

## Comments on individual questions

### Question 1

This question was based on factors influencing behaviours, the behavioural and psychodynamic approach. It dealt with issues faced by young offenders and ways to support and overcome undesirable behaviours.

**Part (a)** responses demonstrated that some candidates were able to define the terms marginalisation and labelling, but few gave full and accurate definitions in order to attain full marks for this response. Candidates demonstrated understanding of exclusion and categorising individuals but few went beyond this.

**Part (b)** required candidates to demonstrate understanding of social exclusion, this was done to an extent, however many candidates focused on the immediate result of social exclusion for young people, rather than the impact of life chances in the future.

**Part (c)** In this response, candidates showed knowledge and understanding of modelling consistently. Where candidates did not achieve well in this response, they were unable to provide a full explanation in relation to the undesirable behaviour of young offenders.

**Part (d)** required candidates to define the term punishment. Many candidates demonstrated knowledge of this concept, however did not provide accurate definitions. Punishment is related to unpleasant/negative consequences to undesirable behaviour/actions and key terminology was not always provided. Some candidates have misinterpreted punishment as negative reinforcement, they are not the same thing.

**Part (e)** required candidates to evaluate the effectiveness of positive reinforcement to modify the behaviour of young offenders. It was pleasing to see many candidates using the scenario in their responses, although some centres still need to be aware of rote learned responses in relation to children. Where candidates achieved on this question they were able to give evaluations of the use of this approach with the specific client group, although it is still evident that candidates are unable to approach extended questions with the depth and level of evaluation needed to attain the higher marks. Many of the responses were basic and generic evaluations of positive reinforcement.

**Part (f)** focused on attachment theory and how this can be used to explain the negative behaviours displayed by young offenders. Good knowledge and understanding was evident in relation to attachment theory, with many candidates showing knowledge of the key theories included in the specification. However, as with other extended responses, candidates did not deliver a full and balanced assessment of how well attachment theory explains negative behaviour in young offenders, with the majority focusing on only attachment theory with no alternative suggestions being made.

## Question 2

This question focused around humanism and the cognitive approach. The focus related to an individual feeling anxious and stressed with various ways that she is able to overcome this with different therapies in relation to person-centred counselling and cognitive therapy.

**Part (a)** expected candidates to describe the importance of confidentiality in counselling sessions. There was clear understanding of confidentiality with many learners achieving well on this question. However, centres should note that candidates are required to apply their knowledge of confidentiality, with work-related issues to offer a reason for the importance of confidentiality. Where learners failed to achieve full marks, they only offered one or the other, or indeed two work-related issues.

**Part (b)** required candidates to explain how a counsellor would promote empowerment during a counselling session. Candidates showed good knowledge and understanding of empowerment, but application to the scenario and links to Pamela were minimal. Candidates need to be aware that responses should link to the question being asked, rather than simply stating the key terminology in the question. Where candidates provided accurate explanations of empowerment in relation to Pamela, they scored well.

**Part (c)** required candidates to explain how incongruence can lead to a negative self-concept. It was poorly answered with many candidates unable to demonstrate an understanding of incongruence. Many candidates made links to the psychodynamic approach which is inaccurate. Due to poor knowledge and understanding of incongruence, candidates struggled to present clear and accurate responses for this question.

**Part (d)** required candidates to discuss the extent to which a counsellor can fully demonstrate unconditional positive regard to clients. Candidates overall showed understanding of unconditional positive regard, however many explained this rather than discussing which limited marks awarded. Centres need to direct candidates to command verbs in order to ensure that they are able to access more marks when writing responses.

**Part (e)** required candidates to describe the term dysfunctional beliefs. Many candidates were able to do this clearly and succinctly which was pleasing to see.

**Part (f)** expected candidates to evaluate the use of cognitive therapy with clients in relation to stress and anxiety. Where knowledge and understanding of this therapy was evident, candidates achieved well. However, as with other extended responses, generic and rote learned responses do not allow candidates to achieve higher marks on this paper. It is important to recognise that the question requires specific application to the scenario in question, with different applications needed dependent on the case in question.

### Question 3

This question focused on supporting a child living with Asperger Syndrome, and supporting behaviours of young children. It considered the use of family therapy and social skills training and the benefits these therapies may have for this specific client group.

**Part (a)** required candidates to demonstrate their understanding of unconscious motivation for demanding behaviour. Many responses were not awarded marks for their responses because they were answered in a generic manner with suggestions of wanting attention rather than using the psychodynamic approach in their response. Candidates were expected to be able to explain the development of the ID and superego in children of this age, with very few candidates doing this.

**Part (b)** expected candidates to describe why secondary socialisation is important for young children and many did this well. They demonstrated clear and concise understanding of agents of secondary socialisation and application of this.

**Part (c)** required candidates to explain two benefits of respecting a child's wishes. Candidates demonstrated understanding of this to achieve some marks. Where candidates were able to explain their response, they scored well. However, many candidates made judgements about the benefits of respecting the child's wishes without suggesting the initial work-related issue/problem and therefore full and accurate explanations were not always evident.

**Part (d)** required candidates to describe the term social skills training. There was limited evidence of a full and accurate understanding of this type of therapy with many candidates being able to describe support for communication skills, with little other evidence.

**Part (e)** required candidates to evaluate social skills training programmes as an intervention with children such as Ayn. Candidates struggled with the question; where knowledge was limited for this therapy, candidates explained the development of communication skills but focused on a child attending sessions outside of the school environment rather than incorporating this into their everyday lives. Evaluations of this therapy were weak overall, with many candidates providing generic assertions of the use of this therapy in general rather than as a specific intervention.

**Part (f)** required candidates to assess the use of family therapy for families such as Ayn's. There was evidence of understanding and application in responses to this question, with candidates showing good understanding of family therapy and its use as a whole to support children and families to develop relationships. Where candidates did not achieve higher marks on this question, they failed to provide full assessments linking directly to the scenario and did not always exemplify points relating to Ayn's family and his specific needs.