

Observation Techniques - Mark Scheme

Q1.

[AO1 = 2]

1 mark for stating that overt observation is where the observer is clearly visible (not hidden from view).

Plus

1 mark for explanation – people being observed know that they are being observed.

Q2.

(a) **[AO2 = 2]**

1 mark for identifying an appropriate type of observation from the following: naturalistic or covert or nonparticipant.

1 mark for relevant justification in this study.

Possible applications:

- it was carried out in the school canteen which was the normal environment for the students
- the teacher did not place the recycle bins in the canteen they had already been placed there
- the teacher was hidden from view of the students
- the students didn't know they were being observed
- the teacher observed from a distance and did not interact with the students.

2

(b) **[AO2 = 2]**

2 marks for relevant explanation of event sampling applied to the scenario, e.g. the teacher recorded each time one of the three types of item was recycled.

1 mark for naming event sampling or limited / muddled explanation

2

(c) **[AO3 = 4]**

Possible content:

Age

- it suggests that younger children are likely to recycle more than other children (**1 mark**). More year 7-9 (than any other age group) recycled for all of the categories (cardboard, plastic and food) (**1 mark**)

or

- it suggests that older children are least likely to recycle (**1 mark**). Fewer year 12-13 students recycled any of the items (cardboard, plastic or food) (**1 mark**)

Plus

Type of item:

- it suggests that children are most likely to recycle plastic (**1 mark**). More children in each age group recycled plastic (than any of the other items) (**1 mark**)
- or
- it suggests that children are least likely to recycle food (**1 mark**). Fewer children recycled food (compared to all other items) for all age groups (**1 mark**)

Accept other possible suggestions / conclusions that apply to the data e.g. children do seem to recycle or that are derived from totalling the data. Credit the implications of these findings.

4

(d) **[AO3 = 2]**

2 marks for a clear, coherent explanation of an appropriate improvement with some details e.g. more locations, more lunch times, more observers, further ethical considerations

1 mark for brief / muddled / limited explanation.

Accept other appropriate explanations that are linked to the design.

2

[10]

Q3.

[AO3 = 4]

Level	Marks	Description
2	3 – 4	Discussion is relevant, well developed and well explained, with focus on improvements to be had by using controlled observation. The answer is generally coherent with effective use of specialist terminology.
1	1 – 2	Discussion is relevant although there is limited explanation / development and / or limited focus on the issue of improvement. Specialist terminology is not always used appropriately. Award one mark for answers consisting of a single point briefly stated or muddled.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible content:

- controlled environment affords the opportunity for control of extraneous variables
- examples of extraneous variables that might be controlled and how / why they could affect the outcome of a study if not controlled
- exclusion of extraneous variables allows for greater inference about cause and effect
- exclusion of extraneous variables means researcher can replicate the

observation to check for reliability of the effect.

Credit other relevant discussion points.

Q4.

AO3 = 2

Credit advantages of different types of observation (eg covert) even if this is not explicit in the answer.

The researcher is able to look at the way people really behave. If people are unaware they are being watched they will not be susceptible to demand characteristics.

1 mark for brief reference to an advantage eg it's real behaviour.

2nd mark for some accurate / effective elaboration. Eg it looks at real behaviour rather than what people say they would do.