

Mark schemes

Q1.

[AO1 = 3 AO3 = 5]

Level	Marks	Description
4	7-8	Knowledge of the absorption addiction model is accurate with some detail. Evaluation is thorough and effective. Minor detail and/or expansion of argument is sometimes lacking. The answer is clear, coherent and focused. Specialist terminology is used effectively.
3	5-6	Knowledge of the absorption addiction model is evident but there are occasional inaccuracies/omissions. Evaluation is mostly effective. The answer is mostly clear and organised but occasionally lacks focus. Specialist terminology is used appropriately.
2	3-4	Limited knowledge of the absorption addiction model is present. Any evaluation is of limited effectiveness. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1-2	Knowledge of the absorption addiction model is very limited. Evaluation is limited, poorly focused or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology is either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible content:

- parasocial relationships focused on a celebrity make up for inadequacies/deficiencies/dissatisfaction in a person's life/relationships and give a sense of identity
- absorption – people with weaker personal identity may become totally pre-occupied/consumed with the life of the celebrity and begin to identify with them
- addiction – at the extreme the person seeks ever greater involvement so the parasocial relationship becomes all consuming
- levels of involvement are characterised by McCutcheon & Maltby using the CAS:
 - entertainment social, eg discussion with friends about interesting celebrities
 - intense-personal, eg private obsession/feeling of personal connection
 - borderline pathological, eg uncontrollable/extreme behaviours such as stalking.

Possible evaluation:

- use of evidence to support or contradict the model

- comparison with alternative explanations, eg the attachment explanation
- links between borderline pathological level and poor mental health, social isolation, social incompetence, other addictions
- mediating effects of personality traits such as impulsivity, extraversion and neuroticism, eg people with high level of neuroticism tend to score highly on the intense – personal level aspects of the CAS
- usefulness of measuring instruments such as the CAS – includes distractor items to avoid response bias
- allows for a distinction between pathological and non-pathological parasocial relationships
- evaluation of methods used in this area, eg self-report/correlation and how this might affect our understanding of absorption-addiction.

Credit other relevant material.

[8]

Q2.

[AO1 = 6 AO3 = 10]

Level	Mark	Description
4	13-16	Knowledge of what psychological research has told us about why people develop parasocial relationships is accurate and generally well detailed. Discussion is thorough and effective. Minor detail and/or expansion of argument is sometimes lacking. The answer is clear, coherent and focused. Specialist terminology is used effectively.
3	9-12	Knowledge of what psychological research has told us about why people develop parasocial relationships is evident but there are occasional inaccuracies/omissions. Discussion is mostly effective. The answer is mostly clear and organised but occasionally lacks focus. Specialist terminology is used appropriately.
2	5-8	Limited knowledge of what psychological research has told us about why people develop parasocial relationships is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any discussion is of limited effectiveness. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1-4	Knowledge of what psychological research has told us about why people develop parasocial relationships is very limited. Discussion is limited, poorly focused or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology is either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible content:

- at a superficial level such relationships provide a source of entertainment (entertainment social – McCutcheon 2002)
- at more extreme levels, such relationships are explained as due to absorption-addiction or attachment problems
- absorption-addiction: such relationships are due to personal inadequacies (eg weak personal identity, poor real-life relationships, desire to escape real life). This leads to desire for complete psychological involvement in the celebrity's life and mistaken belief/delusion that the attention/feeling is reciprocated
- attachment explanation: insecure-resistant types feel need for fulfilment through relationships that do not involve chance of rejection.

Possible discussion:

- use of evidence to support contradict the explanation, eg McCutcheon (2006) insecure types had no increased likelihood of parasocial relationships; Meloy (1998) links between stalking and social incompetence
- basis of attachment explanation in Bowlby's attachment theory – issues with evidence
- links between absorption-addiction model and the three levels
- links between personality type and level of parasocial relationships: entertainment social linked to extraversion; McCutcheon (2014) links with impulsivity and sensation-seeking – traits linked to other addictive behaviours
- absorption-addiction model is more descriptive than explanatory
- tendency is culturally universal – may be a universal need
- discussion of how methodology of specific studies might limit what studies can tell us, eg correlations/self-report.

Credit other relevant material.