**Instructions for candidates**

This assessment applies to the assignment for National 5 Psychology. This

assignment has 30 marks out of a total of 100 marks available for the course assessment.

The purpose of the assignment is to carry out background research on a chosen psychological topic and plan further research for this topic. You must complete a report on this task. You do not have to carry out the research study or this assignment.

The task assesses the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

* using basic investigation skills to select, organise and interpret information in psychology
* knowing and understanding the basic research process in psychology, including the ability to explain the strengths and weaknesses of methods
* and to describe ethical and scientific standards using communication skills appropriate to psychology

You must produce a report, either in written form or word-processed. The evidence must be submitted on paper to SQA for marking. Your report should be between 800 and1,200 words, excluding references, footnotes and appendices.

You must provide the word count of your completed report, excluding appendices, footnotes and references. If the word count exceeds the maximum by 10%, a penalty will be applied.

Your teacher or lecturer will let you know how the assessment will be carried out and any required conditions for doing it.

**Choosing a psychological topic**

Your teacher or lecturer will help you to choose a topic. Your choice should be based on your interest in the topic, and he availability of suitable resources to enable you to complete this task. You must remember your obligation to uphold ethical standards when choosing your topic and completing this assignment. You must comply with the ethical standards set by the British Psychological Society. In this assessment, you have to:

A Describe behaviour associated with a chosen psychological topic

B Explain features of the topic with reference to psychological research evidence

C Describe an aim for research on this topic

D Give an experimental/alternative hypothesis for the proposed research study

E Describe a suitable research plan, including method, sampling, variables and procedure

F Describe ethical issues and ways of addressing these in the research plan

G Use appropriate terminology and provide basic references

**Note:**

as you work through the assignment you should make sure that you use the language of psychology. You should also keep a note of sources that you use for information.

**A Describe behaviour associated with a chosen psychological topic**

Your teacher or lecturer will support you by commenting upon the suitability of the topic, and advise on the likely availability of resources.

* You should clearly define your chosen psychological topic.
* You should outline why your chosen area of study is of psychological importance.

**B Explain features of the topic with reference to psychological research evidence**

Your teacher will support you by providing a range of resources or guiding you to resources, from which you will select relevant information to use.

* Remember to use evidence from a minimum of two research studies to explain behaviour for your chosen topic.
* Make clear links between psychological concepts, theories and evidence from research to explain your chosen topic.
* Check your work to make sure you have used psychological language appropriately.
* Reference your sources of information and research studies in a way that would allow others to find them.

**C Describe an aim for research on this topic**

Now that you have done some background research, you should design an ethical research study that will build upon your background research. You will not carry out the research study, but you should design it in such a way that the research could be done.

* The aim should state exactly what this research study is about, with clear and accurate links to your chosen topic and background research.

**D Give an experimental/alternative hypothesis for the proposed research study**

* Make sure that your experimental/alternative hypothesis is accurate, clear, and has an obvious link to the aim of the research.

**E Describe a suitable research plan, including method, sampling, variables and procedure**

* Describe and justify the suitability of the research method you have selected in your plan.
* Explain a potential strength and a potential weakness of the method in your plan.
* Describe and justify the suitability of the sampling method you have selected in your plan.
* Describe the appropriate variables to consider in your research plan.
* Give some information about the data to be collected and the steps to be followed when conducting the research.

**E**  **Describe ethical issues and ways of addressing these in the research plan**

Your proposed research study must comply with ethical standards set by the British Psychological Society (BPS).

* Identify a minimum of two ethical issues relevant to your study.
* Describe how you will avoid breaching the BPS ethical guidelines within your research plan.
* Consider how you will avoid psychological harm or physical harm which
* could be caused to you or your participants.
* Note that debriefs and parental/informed consent do not excuse psychological or physical harm to participants.
* Do not include participants under the age of 16 in your plan.

**G Use appropriate terminology and provide basic references**

* Check your work to make sure you have used psychological language appropriately.
* Check your work to make sure you have included basic references