

# Commentary on candidate evidence

The candidate evidence has achieved the following marks for each question of this question paper.

## Candidate 1

### Law and Order — Part B: Research methods

#### Question 15

You are researching ‘racism within the criminal justice system’

To what extent would observation be the best method for investigating this issue?

You should include reference to an alternative method(s) in addition to observation.

In your answer you should make reference to relevant examples. (15)

The candidate was awarded **15 out of 15 marks** because they achieved the following marks in each assessable element:

#### Analysis

This response was awarded **6 out of the 6 marks** available for this element.

The candidate analyses observation, focusing specifically on covert observation, and brings in semi-structured interviews and official statistics as alternative methods. The candidate provides detailed comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the methods, supported by relevant evidence, including James Patrick, Panorama, Dobash and Dobash (referred to as Dombey by the candidate), and 2020 statistics on rural safety. The response demonstrates clear knowledge of social science research methods.

#### Evaluation

This response was awarded **6 out of the 6 marks** available for this element.

The candidate addresses the specified scenario throughout the response, for example identifying that semi-structured interviews would be both useful and problematic in exploring racism due to the sensitive nature of the issue and the benefits and pitfalls of observation as a result of going native, time and bias. The scenario is integrated into every paragraph, and not simply ‘tagged on’. The potential to experience harm is considered as an ethical issue in relation to covert observation and anonymity is covered in respect of the interviews.

**Conclusion**

This response was awarded **3 out of the 3 marks** available for this element.

The conclusion makes a clear judgement as to the preferred method: covert observation, with interviews as a potential follow on stage, in relation to the specified scenario. The candidate's line of argument integrates well with their preceding analysis and evaluation. Valid reasons for preferring this method and for rejecting official statistics are provided.

## Candidate 2

### Political Issues — Part B: Research methods

#### Question 7

You are researching the role of interest groups in politics

To what extent would observation be the best method for investigating this issue?

You should include reference to an alternative method(s) in addition to observation.

In your answer you should make reference to relevant examples. (15)

The candidate was awarded **9 out of 15 marks** because they achieved the following marks in each assessable element:

#### Analysis

This response was awarded **3 out of the 6 marks** available for this element.

The candidate identifies and analyses the key aspects of the research method and links them to the role of interest groups in politics. The response includes analysis of covert observation, the length of time observation takes and researcher bias. However, there is no relevant and contemporary supporting evidence included in their response which limits the mark awarded to 3 out of 6 in this element.

#### Evaluation

This response was awarded **6 out of the 6 marks** available for this element.

The candidate clearly evaluates observation as a research method and links it to the specified scenario, for example, 'This will allow for less tailored responses about interest groups effect in politics... could lead to a better insight on their views' and 'it may also allow for their own participation in interest groups to be revealed'. Whilst the term 'ethical issues' is not explicitly stated, the candidate's comment on the issue of consent is clearly addressing an ethical issue. The candidate also examines online surveys and focus groups and is, therefore, awarded 6 out of 6 in this element.

#### Conclusion

This response was awarded **0 out of the 3 marks** available for this element.

There is no evidence of concluding remarks in this response and, therefore, the candidate cannot be awarded any marks in this element.