

Commentary on candidate evidence

Candidate 1

Question 9

You are researching *drug misuse by prison officers*.

To what extent would unstructured interviews be more effective than surveys for investigating this issue?

In your answer you should make reference to relevant examples.

Analysis

This response was awarded **5 out of 6 marks** because the candidate identifies relevant links of key aspects to the scenario, as well as using relevant supporting evidence such as the NHS Adult Inpatient Survey. Unstructured interviews, surveys and official statistics are all analysed and analytical comments are linked to evaluative comments in each paragraph. However, despite several correct points of analysis, there could be more aspects covered in the response that link to knowledge of research methods, therefore the candidate narrowly misses achieving full marks in this section.

Evaluation

This response was awarded **6 out of 6 marks** because the candidate addresses the specified scenario throughout the response, for example, identifying that surveys could cover a wider geographical area allowing for responses from more prisons, and the importance of qualitative research for first-hand experience of drug misuse. The ethical issues of consent and privacy are considered in relation to unstructured interviews too.

Conclusion

This response was awarded **3 out of 3 marks** because the overall conclusion makes a clear judgement as to the preferred method, unstructured interviews, citing the fact they allow for rich, in-depth discussions with follow up questions. The candidate

explains that surveys have low response rates that lead to small sample sizes as their reasons for rejecting this method. Overall, the candidate's line of argument integrates well with their preceding analysis and evaluation.

Overall, this response was awarded **14 out of 15** marks.

Candidate 2

Question 9

You are researching *drug misuse by prison officers*.

To what extent would unstructured interviews be more effective than surveys for investigating this issue?

In your answer you should make reference to relevant examples.

Analysis

This response was awarded **3 out of 6 marks** because it shows sound knowledge of the research methods, comments on strengths and weaknesses of unstructured interviews and surveys and demonstrates some awareness of ethics. However, engagement with the scenario is limited, capping the mark that can be awarded. Repeated reference to 'police officers' rather than 'prison officers' and the inclusion of official statistics as a third alternative method is not relevant to this scenario (the UK government do not collect or publish data on this issue), reinforcing the fact that this candidate has not fully considered or applied their knowledge to the scenario in question.

Evaluation

This response was awarded **2 out of 6 marks** because the evaluative comments do not address the specified scenario. This prevents the candidate from being awarded further marks in this section.

Conclusion

This response was awarded **3 out of 3 marks** because the conclusion provides an overall judgement, stating unstructured interviews are the most effective method, provides reasons for preferring that method, and provides reasons why surveys are less effective.

Overall, this response was awarded **8 out of 15 marks**.