

**Psychology**  
**Higher level**  
**Paper 3**

SPECIMEN PAPER

1 hour

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**Instructions to candidates**

- Do not turn over this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Read the passage carefully and then answer all the questions.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[24 marks]**.

The stimulus material below is based on a study on the influences on young people's use of drugs.

The aim of this study was to investigate processes involved in drug-related decision-making in an adolescent sample. According to the researchers, the identification of important factors in decisions to use drugs could potentially help to develop and inform new approaches to prevention and education.

- 5 A purposive sample was recruited through advertising in youth clubs, nightclubs, shelters and schools. The sample was multi-ethnic and consisted of 30 participants (age range 16 to 21) including both males and females. Most of the participants lived with their parents, some were homeless and some lived with friends.

- 10 Before the semi-structured interview, the participants signed an informed consent where they also gave consent to videotape the interviews for later transcription and inductive content analysis of the qualitative data. They were also assured anonymity. The interview guide prepared by the researchers included topics such as drug use of friends, personal drug use experience, and reasons for using as well as not using drugs.

- 15 The results showed that reasons for using drugs ranged from the desire to relax and decrease inhibition to increase energy, relieve boredom and depressive thoughts, and increase motivation to get things done. Some participants reported that media coverage of specific drugs influenced their decision of whether or not to use drugs. For example, news stories about ecstasy-related deaths had made them decide that the benefits of using that drug were not worth the risk of negative effects. The data also suggested that the decision to use drugs was rather through  
20 personal choice than social pressure.

- The researchers concluded that prevention strategies should take into account that decision-making in drug use is complex and therefore multiple influences should be addressed in the design of future prevention programmes. They also recommend that further research is needed to decide on the relative importance of the different factors that influence different  
25 people's choice of drugs.

Answer **all** of the following three questions, referring to the stimulus material in your answers. Marks will be awarded for demonstration of knowledge and understanding of research methodology.

1. (a) Identify the research method used and outline **two** characteristics of the method. [3]  
(b) Describe the sampling method used in the study. [3]  
(c) Suggest an alternative or additional research method giving **one** reason for your choice. [3]
  2. Describe the ethical considerations in reporting the results and explain additional ethical considerations that could be taken into account when applying the findings of the study. [6]
  3. Discuss the possibility of generalizing the findings of the study. [9]
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