

### Question 1 Understanding research methods, validity and reliability of results of research

- Research methods referred to in the article are explained, demonstrating a thorough understanding of data usage; response includes fully supported evaluative judgements on suitability.
- Reference to other research methods used to explore the issue demonstrates a thorough understanding.
- Conclusions on reliability are offered and fully supported, demonstrating a thorough understanding of the concept in the context of the methods used.

### Question 2 Understanding the relationship between own secondary research and article and how this relationship reinforces the importance of the issue

- Analyses the issue, leading to conclusions about the issue's importance. Provides relevant examples of effects on individuals and/or wider society, which are fully supported by research findings.
- Secondary research findings and their relationship to the issue in the article are explained; demonstrates a thorough understanding of the relationship between the two.

## Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care

### Unit 4 Knowledge Organiser

#### What is this unit about?

This unit will enable you to investigate a current issue in health and social care using a literature search methodology. You will investigate the possible purposes of research in health and social care and the methods that may be used in such research. You will be assessed by a controlled assessment in 2 parts set and marked by the exam board.

- Part A contains material for the completion of the preparatory work for the set task.
- Part A is given to learners four weeks before Part B is scheduled. Learners are advised to spend no more than 18 hours on Part A.
- Part A must be given to learners on the specified date so that learners can prepare in the way specified.
- Part A is specific to each series and this material must only be issued to learners who have been entered to undertake the task in the relevant series.
- Part B materials must be issued to learners on the specified date

### Question 3 Planning and ethical consideration for further research

- Provides rationalised suggestions of research methods that could be used to continue investigation/exploration into the issue. Justification demonstrates a thorough understanding of method effectiveness/suitability.
- Response demonstrates thorough analytical approach. Coverage of planning considerations, ethical issues and necessary research skills required to explore the issue demonstrates a thorough understanding of practical problems of conducting research in the wider context, addressed in a logical sustained systematic way.
- Judgements on importance of considerations are fully supported.

### Question 4 Research implications for future provision and/or practice

- Implications of the research for provision/practice in the sector are analysed and explained systematically.
- Implications referred to demonstrate a thorough understanding of the issue and its context in the article and wider research; likely to include recommendations for change which are justified.
- Rationale for implications always offered and fully supported.

## 3 Hour Exam Unit

## Qualitative methods

When planning and conducting qualitative research, your methods will produce data that is descriptive and cannot easily be measured statistically (e.g. emotions shown by facial expression). Research takes place through words about what the person thinks or how they feel (e.g. explaining fears about treatment).

### Listening to people

Qualitative methods look **subjectively** at human behaviour and interpret what people say about their feelings and experiences.

Qualitative researchers believe the best way to understand things is to listen to what people say and to observe what they do, instead of quantitative research methods such as controlled laboratory situations.

Qualitative research may be used alongside quantitative research, for example, by finding the number of people choosing a particular health product (quantitative) and exploring the reasons for their choice (qualitative).

### Sampling methods

A sample is a subset of the target group of your research. The challenge is to ensure that the sample is **representative** of the target group. Researchers use data from the sample to make **predictions** about the whole target population. Below are four different types of sampling you need to know about.

## Quantitative methods

When planning and conducting quantitative research, your methods will produce data that can be analysed statistically (e.g. number of hours spent exercising). Data are measurable and can help generate a hypothesis (e.g. those who don't exercise may be at higher risk of a stroke).

### Controlled conditions

Quantitative research looks **objectively** at attitudes, opinions, responses and other aspects of behaviour to learn about the way people behave in their everyday lives. Quantitative research is usually used to explore an issue under controlled laboratory situations. The ability to **control** (limit) the variables is high, and there are ample opportunities to observe.

### Producing quantitative data

Numerical data for **quantitative analysis** can be produced using six key methods:

- 1 experiments
- 2 observations
- 3 interviews
- 4 checklists
- 5 questionnaires
- 6 surveys.



# Issues in health and social care

Issues of concern in health and social care include the effectiveness of treatments of health conditions, how far lifestyle factors contribute to health and social care needs, and the changing health, social care and welfare needs in society.

## Reviews and research



Research leads to improvements in care provision, policy and practice. Sometimes reviews are a reaction to a particular event, such as the death of a child. Such reviews can be forms of research.

## Types of issues

The main three types of issues for research in the health and social care sector are:

- 1 health conditions
- 2 lifestyle factors
- 3 social care and welfare needs.

When planning research, you can look at what is 'topical' (current) by following the news or organisations in your field.

## Scaled questions

Some questions ask respondents to select their answer from a scale, for example from strongly disagree to strongly agree, or to rate their response according to a number scale, perhaps from 1 to 10. These scales are sometimes referred to as **Likert** scales.

These questions allow a wider variety of responses than closed questions but answers still can be analysed systematically. Here is an example.

I am satisfied with the standard of care I have received today:

Agree strongly  Agree  Neither agree nor disagree  Disagree  Disagree strongly

# Advantages and disadvantages

When planning, conducting, reporting and evaluating research, you need to know the advantages and disadvantages of the main research methods. This can help you to identify, select and use methods suitable for different research purposes and evaluate their reliability.

## 1 Observations

Observations can produce both **qualitative** and **quantitative** data:

- 👍 Observer can see what is happening.
- 👍 Not expensive to carry out.
- 👍 Data can be more reliable.
- 👎 Participants may be uncomfortable.
- 👎 People may behave differently when being watched.
- 👎 Time consuming.

## 2 Experiments

Experimentation usually produces **quantitative** data:

- 👍 Good for discovering cause and effect.
- 👍 Allows control over variables.
- 👍 Can be replicated.
- 👎 Not typical of real-life situations.
- 👎 Behaviour of participants may be limited.
- 👎 Participants may guess the purpose of research and subconsciously influence the data.

## 3 Interviews

Interviews can be used to gather both **qualitative** and **quantitative** data:

- 👍 Direct feedback from participants.
- 👍 Topics can be explored in depth.
- 👍 Opportunities to explain and clarify.
- 👎 Time consuming and costly.
- 👎 Researchers need to be well prepared.
- 👎 Researchers' own opinions may influence the way participants respond to questions, and this may bias results.

## 4 Questionnaires and surveys

Can be used to gather both **qualitative** or **quantitative** data:

- 👍 Can gain large amounts of information.
- 👍 Can be carried out quickly.
- 👍 Cheap and not time consuming.
- 👎 Doesn't always give insight into feelings, motivations or behaviours.
- 👎 Participants may not tell the truth.
- 👎 Questions may be misinterpreted.

Keywords	Definition
Article	The pre-released account of a piece of recent research relating to an aspect of health or social care. Could be based on a longer research report.
Ethical issue	Ethically related aspects that may have affected how the research was carried out.
Health and social care practice	Used in relation to how health and social care professionals carry out their work or job roles.
Health and social care services	May be used in relation to how services are provided and/or made available to the individuals that need them.
Issue	May be used on its own to describe the subject of the research that the article is describing.
Literature review	An assessment of existing research around a particular issue or area of study

Keywords	Definition
Primary research	Research compiled directly from the original source, which may not have been compiled before. Learners are not expected to carry out primary research, but they are expected to understand the advantages and disadvantages of different primary research methods.
Qualitative research	Descriptive data, such as data drawn from open-ended questions in questionnaires, interviews or focus groups.
Quantitative research	Data in numerical form that can be categorised and used to construct graphs or tables of raw data, such as data drawn from results of experiments, hospital data showing admissions of individuals with certain health conditions, closed questions in questionnaires.
Research methods	Refers to how the research described in the article was carried out, for example through quantitative methods such as analysis of figures drawn from hospitals or GP surgeries; or qualitative based on focus groups, questionnaires.
Secondary sources/research	Published research reports and data, likely to be based on analysis of primary research.