# Commentary on candidate 2 evidence

## The serial position effect

The evidence for this candidate has achieved the following marks for each section of this course assessment component.

| Section | Mark available | Mark awarded | | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Aim | 1 | 0 | | The aim of the investigation is not stated clearly enough. The serial position effect is regarded as the dependent variable, but there is no indication of what the independent variable is. |
| 2 Underlying biology | 4 | 1 | | One expanded description/explanation, that is relevant to the aim, is given at a depth appropriate to Higher level:<br><br>♦ 1 mark for the explanation of short-term memory (STM) (paragraph 5) linked to the 'recency effect' (paragraph 3).<br><br>No marks are awarded for paragraph 4 as 'chunking' is a process in the short-term memory (STM) not the long-term memory (LTM) as stated. In addition, chunking involves building up information as opposed to breaking it down, as stated by the candidate. |
| 3 Data collection and handling | 5 | a | 0 | A brief summary of the approach used to collect experimental data has not been provided in sufficient detail to allow the nature of the experiment to be visualised.<br><br>The independent variable is the position of the word in the list, while the dependent variable is the recall percentage.<br><br>In memory investigations, the collation of the data is regarded as the instrument of measurement. |
| | | b | 1 | Repeated measurements are included (two groups) and the raw (unprocessed) data is sufficient ie, 20 items have been used.<br><br>Despite the aim mark not being awarded, this data is sufficient to test the serial position effect. |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | c | 0 | The term '(units)' is included inappropriately in the heading of the first column.<br><br>All average percentages are correctly calculated. |
| | | d | 1 | A line graph is included with labels, which show relevance to the aim. |
| | | e | 0 | No citation is provided. The reference is included beside the line graph. |
| 4 Graphical presentation | 4 | a | 1 | The graph produced is based on the candidate's experimental data. A line graph has been selected which is the appropriate format for this data. |
| | | b | 1 | Both axes have suitable scales. |
| | | c | 1 | Both axes have suitable labels and units.<br><br>Labels are copied directly from the table of data, so incorrect inclusion of '(units)' is not penalised here as this has already been penalised in section 3c. |
| | | d | 1 | All points are plotted within a half box tolerance, and lines drawn to link each of them. |
| 5 Analysis | 1 | 0 | | A full comparison of the data has not been provided.<br><br>The decrease stated is incorrect. |
| 6 Conclusion | 1 | 0 | | A valid conclusion is not given. The role of short-term memory (STM) in the recency effect is not specified and incorrect information is provided. |
| 7 Evaluation | 3 | 1 | | 1 mark was awarded for paragraph 3 – errors relating to the use of large groups. The improvement is clearly described along with the impact. The incorrect reference to 'reliability' is not penalised here as the incorrect use of this term has already been taken into account in the previous description of validity. (See below). |

| Section | Mark available | Mark awarded | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | No marks were awarded for the following reasons:<br>♦ The point about timers is incorrect due to the use of the term ‘reliability’ when it should be ‘validity’.<br>♦ The point about age is incorrect due to the use of the term ‘accurate’ when it should be ‘valid’. |
| 8 Structure | 1 | 1 | An informative title is given and the report flows in a logical manner. |
| **Total** | **20** | **9** | |