

Commentary on candidate evidence

Candidate 1

Section A

The candidate was awarded **1 mark out of 2** because they described the topic but did not outline why this area is of psychological importance. The title of the study was 'the effect of caffeine on the quality of sleep' and the candidate wrote that this was of psychological importance 'because it studies the effect that caffeine has on the quality of sleep' so no mark awarded. The candidate could have gained the other mark had they suggested that the increase in caffeine consumption may be contributing to the increase in sleep issues so further investigation is necessary as sleep deprivation can have negative physical and psychological effects.

Section B

The candidate was awarded **5 marks out of 9**.

- for G 'use of psychological language was appropriate and basic references for the 2 studies were given' **(1 mark)**
- 2 marks for describing the Shiro et al study. However, the candidate did not link this study to relevant theories/concepts. They could have gained further marks had they explained the results with reference to their knowledge of the role of melatonin in sleep. **(2 marks)**
- 2 marks for describing the Drake et al study. However, the candidate did not link this study to relevant theories/concepts. They could have gained these marks had they explained the results with reference to the knowledge demonstrated in Section A, namely the role of adenosine in sleep. **(2 marks)**

Section C

The candidate was awarded **1 mark out of 1** as the aim of their investigation is clear.

Section D

The candidate was awarded **2 marks out of 2**. These 2 marks could be awarded for either the experimental or null hypothesis. The 2 conditions of the IV were clear (use caffeinated products after 2pm or do not use caffeinated products after 2pm). The DV was also clear (quality sleep ratings). The DV was fully operationalised, as the candidate referred to 'ratings' so full marks were awarded.

Section E

Overall, the candidate was awarded **8 out of 12 marks**.

Method (4 marks available) – 3 marks awarded

Description of method: Quasi experiment/aims to find cause-effect relationship/groups not randomly assigned (**1 mark**)

- **Explanation of potential strength or weakness:** Strength is not explained (it allows me to test cause and effect while ensuring ethics – this was included in the description). (**1 mark**) for weakness as we can see from the procedure that this was a quasi-experiment conducted in the field (there may be extraneous variables that I cannot control which may affect the results of the outcome making it harder to establish a cause-effect relationship)
- **Justification of choice with regard to its suitability:** Candidate stated that a quasi-experiment would be the most suitable method as it involves recruiting participants who already consume caffeinated products (**1 mark**). Candidate could have gained a justification mark had they compared this method with another.

Sampling (3 marks available) – 1 mark awarded

- **Description:** volunteer sampling method/self-selecting/meet criteria/interested in taking part (1 mark)
- **Suitability (0 marks)**
- **Justification (0 marks)**

Variables (3 marks available) – 3 marks awarded

- **Independent variable:** the time that the caffeine is taken (Condition A is consuming caffeine before 2pm, and Condition B is consuming caffeine after 2pm) (1 mark)
- **Dependent variable:** self-reported quality of sleep (1 mark)
- **Extraneous variable:** the quality and amount of sleep the night previous to the study (1 mark)

Procedure (2 marks available) – 1 mark awarded

- **Type of data to be collected:** rate/quantitative data (1 mark)
- **Procedure:** brief/consent form not included (0 mark)

Section F

The candidate was awarded **3 out of 4 marks**

- 'Unethical to use a lab experiment as this would include the use of giving the participants caffeinated products which they may not consume during their regular routines, therefore I am using a quasi-experiment' (2 marks)
- 'I will ensure that any participants that take part in the study will be over 16 and will have fully informed consent and will be able to withdraw at any time' (1 mark) – this is too generic to be awarded full marks – candidate could have attained the additional mark had they explained that they only gave 6th year pupils the opportunity to participate.