

Internal Assessment Resource

Psychology Level 2

This resource supports assessment against Achievement Standard 91848

Standard title: Examine ethical issues in psychological practice

Credits: 3

Resource title: Prison Break

**Resource reference:** Psychology 2.5A Version 1

This resource:

* Clarifies the requirements of the standard
* Supports good assessment practice
* Should be subjected to the school’s usual assessment quality assurance process
* Should be modified to make the context relevant to students in their school environment and ensure that submitted evidence is authentic

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| Date version published by Ministry of Education | January 2017  To support internal assessment from 2017 |
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| Authenticity of evidence | Teachers must manage authenticity for any assessment from a public source, because students may have access to the assessment schedule or student exemplar material.  Using this assessment resource without modification may mean that students’ work is not authentic. Teachers may need to change figures, measurements or data sources or set a different context or topic to be investigated or a different text to read or perform. |

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Teacher guidelines

The following guidelines are supplied to enable teachers to carry out valid and consistent assessment using this internal assessment resource.

Teachers need to be very familiar with the outcome being assessed by the achievement standard. The achievement criteria and the explanatory notes contain information, definitions, and requirements that are crucial when interpreting the standard and assessing students against it.

**Context/setting**

This activity requires students to make a comprehensive judgement on the Stanford Prison Experiment (led by Philip Zimbardo) from the point of view of an ethics committee.

Students will prepare a statement about the ethics of Zimbardo’s research and deliver a judgement about whether, or not, the study complies with the *Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand*.

Students will be assessed on the application of their knowledge of the *Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand* to the study (as if it is beingreviewed by the Ethics Committee) and will decide whether, or not, the study complied with ethical principles.

**Conditions**

The students could work in groups but will be assessed individually.

As a guide, assessment against this standard should reflect approximately 30 hours of teaching, learning and assessment in and out of the classroom.

You may want to give students guidance on appropriate style and format for their review. Possible forms of presentation could include a blog, an article for a journal, magazine or newspaper, or be via an oral presentation. This achievement standard does not assess format or style.

Conditions of Assessment related to this achievement standard can be found at <http://ncea.tki.org.nz/Resources-for-Internally-Assessed-Achievement-Standards>

**Resource requirements**

Summaries of the Stanford Prison Experiment can be found on the internet or in numerous textbooks. It is important to note that most summaries include reference to the American Psychological Association’s Code of Ethics, so it is important that any summary has these references removed to avoid student confusion.

*Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand* can be found here: <http://www.psychologistsboard.org.nz/cms_show_download.php?id=237>

**Additional information**

None.

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Student instructions

**Introduction**

This assessment activity requires you to examine the ethical issues in psychological practice using the study led by Dr Philip Zimbardo, also known as the Stanford Prison Experiment, and present your findings.

You are going to be assessed on how comprehensively you examine ethical issues in psychological practice using a summary of the Stanford Prison Experiment.

Teacher note: Insert due dates and time frames.

**Task**

You are part of a committee who will review the ethics of Zimbardo’s study which has been criticised by a number of people as being unethical.

You are required to evaluate any issues of compliance in the study and make suggestions as to how to address these issues.

Use the *Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand* as you carry out your review.

Prepare a press report that your committee will deliver about their review on Dr Zimbardo’s study.

Your review will need to include the following information:

* key examples of how Zimbardo’s study complies with the ethical guidelines
* key examples of how his study breaches the ethical guidelines
* specific details from the study and specific principles from the Code of Ethics
* any arguments that Zimbardo could have about where breaches may have occurred
* suggested improvements to enable compliance and consider the implications of these
* other psychological studies or theories to support your committee’s judgement.

Deliver your final judgement, as a press report, about whether, or not, the study complies with the *Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand*.

**Assessment schedule: Psychology 91848 - Prison Break**

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| **Evidence/Judgements for Achievement** | **Evidence/Judgements for Achievement with Merit** | **Evidence/Judgements for Achievement with Excellence** |
| The student examines ethical issues in psychological practice by:   * explaining the key issues of compliance with ethical standards and the application of these to Zimbardo’s research * identifying key issues of compliance using examples from the study * referring to specific principles from the *Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand.*   **For example (partial evidence):**  *Zimbardo’s study breaches the Code of Ethics, in particular, Principle 2: Responsible Caring and the value statement 2.6 that states that the mental and physical wellbeing of participants should be protected. The prisoners’ experienced humiliation from the guards because they were made to do demeaning tasks as well as suffering distress from being arrested by real police at their homes. Zimbardo’s study breaches this principle as the participant’s mental wellbeing was not protected.*  *The examples above are indicative samples only* | The student examines, in depth, ethical issues in psychological practice by:   * explaining in detail the key issues of compliance with ethical standards in Zimbardo’s research * considering different viewpoints on these issues. This may include descriptions of psychological theories or studies from published works.   **For example (partial evidence):**  *Zimbardo’s study breaches the Code of Ethics, in particular Principle 2: Responsible Caring and the value statement 2.6 that states that the mental and physical wellbeing of participants should be protected. Zimbardo’s study breaches this principle as the participant’s mental wellbeing was not protected. They may have experienced distress from being arrested by real police officers at their homes (not to mention the embarrassment caused to their families by this). The prisoners experienced humiliation from the guards as they were made to do demeaning tasks such as clean out the toilets with their bare hands. They were also dehumanised by being made to wear prison numbers, stocking caps and smocks.*  *The committee’s view maintains that Zimbardo should have been quicker to recognise signs of distress in the prisoners. Perhaps he should have paid attention to the emotional distress that some participants in Milgram’s electric shock experiment* *experienced. In relation to this breach of Responsible Caring Zimbardo claimed that his participants didn’t suffer harm because they were aware they were in a simulation rather than a real prison.*  *The examples above are indicative samples only* | The student comprehensively examines ethical issues in psychological practice by:   * evaluating the key issues of compliance with ethical standards * suggesting improvements to psychological practice to enable compliance * considering the implications of these improvements.   **For example (partial evidence):**  *An improvement that we suggest for Zimbardo to make to ensure compliance with the Principle of Responsible Care and protecting the wellbeing of participants in the future would be to appoint an independent agency to oversee the experiment, with instructions to remove participants as soon as they are showing signs of distress. The agency would need to be monitoring the participants fairly closely and could perform interviews. Using an independent agency could perhaps vastly change the outcome of the study. Prisoners may see any removal of other prisoners as a way to get out of the study and act distressed or guards may alter their behaviour so as not to be overruled by the independent agency. The prisoners would not be arrested by real police at their homes. Implications of this improvement will be that while participants do not experience any humiliation, the results may not be as valid as prisoner behaviour may be altered.*  *The examples above are indicative samples only* |

Final grades will be decided using professional judgement based on a holistic examination of the evidence provided against the criteria in the Achievement Standard.