



## Motivation: Health & Wellbeing

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# Fear arousal: quitting smoking



### Worked Example

Here is an example of a **Paper 3 source** and 15–mark ERQ using **motivation** (HL extension) in the **Health & Wellbeing** context:

#### Source 5

Health promotion programmes often rely on fear arousal as part of their efforts to change people's health behaviour. This strategy aligns with the general aim of health promotion, which is to enable people to exert control over and improve their health (WHO, 1986).

The effectiveness of fear appeals is affected by several factors, including:

- the level of self-efficacy of an individual
- the level of positive outcome expectations
- the level of perceived susceptibility to a disease
- the tone of the message (not too fear-provoking, but not too weak)
- the level of social support given to the person who is trying to quit the behaviour

Most of the above factors are out of the direct control of health psychologists, which limits their usefulness to some extent. Health promotion programmes should not rely solely on fear arousal – they must address a range of factors which may impede an individual's attempts to become (and to stay) healthy.

Fear appeals have been shown to be particularly effective when a person has received a doctor's warning about their susceptibility to a disease. Fear appeals are also most effective with women when the appeals include efficacy messages and emphasise susceptibility (Tannenbaum, 2015). Health promotion programmes often use social media or television to get their fear appeals out, but it is unlikely that sampled participants can accurately self-report how much of the campaign they have seen/heard, leading to lower validity of the findings. It is difficult to measure the effectiveness of fear appeals over a long period of time to identify if the effectiveness is simply short-term or long-lasting.

Fear arousal around smoking includes providing information on cigarette packets highlighting the possibility of disease and death from smoking; graphic images showing diseased lungs; and warnings as to the dangers of passive smoking to children.

**Q4: To what extent can we conclude that people can only quit an unhealthy behaviour if they are motivated to do so? In your answer, use your own knowledge and at least three of sources 2–5.**

[15 marks]

**Model answer:**



(Here are two paragraphs which could appear as part of a longer response to this question.)

Fear arousal may provide a 'short, sharp shock' to the smoker but it is probably a weak motivator over time, i.e., it is not an ongoing source of motivation. If a researcher wishes to measure the effect of fear arousal on smoking, then they need the correct tools to do so – and these may not actually exist. If a smoker is asked, 'Did this shocking image motivate you to quit smoking?' they may respond, 'Yes,' but this may not necessarily result in them quitting smoking. To this extent, a self-report on the effect of fear arousal is only a short-term interim measure.

A smoker must truly want to quit smoking, which means that motivation is best if it is self-generated (intrinsic) rather than fear-generated (extrinsic), which, compared to a true desire to quit, is only a temporary solution. Health campaigns should consider how to harness the power of intrinsic motivation (e.g., by drawing from ideas such as self-efficacy and internal locus of control) if they are to be truly successful in the long term.

### Guidance

- The command term "To what extent" requires you to express a view/judgement on the merit, validity, or success of an argument or concept, supported by relevant evidence
- Weigh up the relative merits of this claim
  - What is there in this (and other) source(s) that could be used to back up this argument?
  - Do you know of any research or examples which could be used to validate the idea that motivation is key to quitting a behaviour such as smoking?
- Consider the difficulties facing people who are addicted to or strongly dependent on smoking
  - What problems are they likely to face, both from a personal and a sociocultural perspective?
- Make sure that your argument is informed by the sources and that it draws from the relevant topics featured in this context
- Include concepts (e.g., causality, bias) to inform your critical thinking and discussion of the source(s) as well as any real-world or anecdotal examples you are aware of



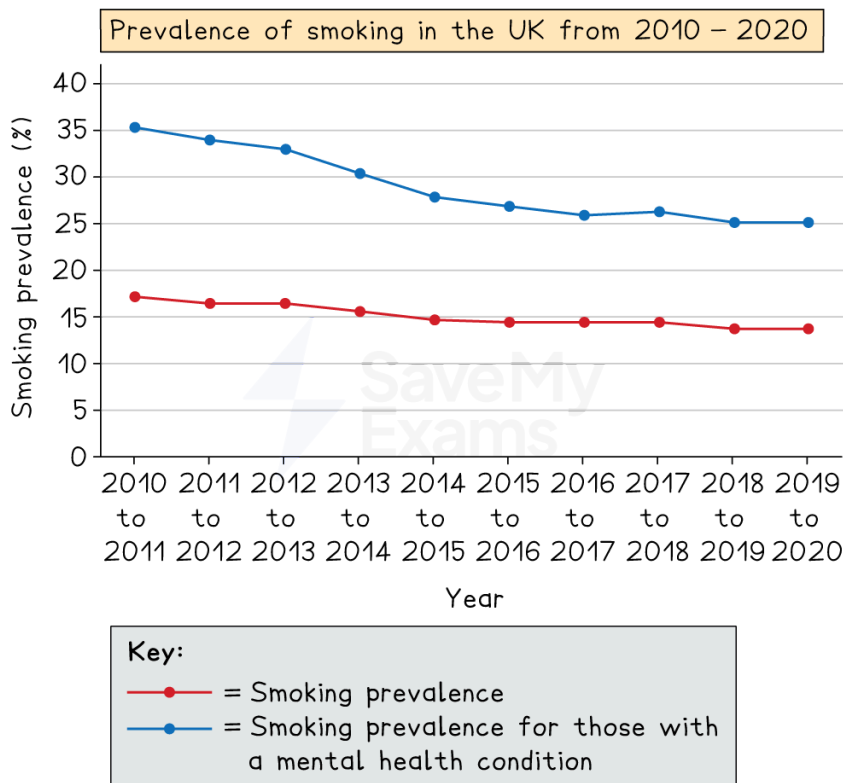
## Motivation: quitting smoking



### Worked Example

Here is an example of a **Paper 3 source** and a **6-mark SAQ** using **motivation** (HL extension) in the **Health & Wellbeing** context:

Source 2:



**Q2: Analyse** the findings from **source 2** and state a **conclusion** linked to the claim that awareness of decreasing prevalence rates for smoking should act as motivation to quit smoking.

[6 marks]

**Model answer:**

The line graph shows that smoking prevalence decreased in both the general population and for the population of those with a mental health condition from 2010 to 2020. This suggests that smoking is becoming less popular over time, possibly due

to increased awareness of its harmful effects or because of other factors (e.g., lack of places to smoke in public, peer influence).

These findings could act as motivation to quit smoking, as they could provide encouragement for the smoker, i.e., other people have managed to quit. Alternatively, the smoker may feel that by smoking they are not conforming to a general social norm which is not to smoke. This could work as motivation to quit smoking, as by not smoking they are adhering to the majority group norm.

**Guidance:**

- Your analysis should refer to the raw scores (if these are included) and/or the descriptive/inferential statistics presented in the findings
  - For descriptive stats this may comprise the mean/median/mode as measures of central tendency and the range/standard deviation as measures of dispersion
  - For inferential stats this may comprise a statement of significance and/or link to the level of probability used
- You should always state which condition of the IV performed better
- You should comment on what the stats seem to suggest about performance per condition
- If relevant, you should comment on what the data tells you about the population, e.g., is this a normal distribution or is it skewed?
- If the research is qualitative then you should focus on how the findings have been categorised/presented and whether there are drawbacks or limitations to how it has been gathered (e.g., sample size, potential bias)
- You should draw a conclusion based on what the data in the source/study tells you about what is being investigated
  - E.g., do the findings suggest that X does affect Y?



Your notes