**Godalming College**

## **PET - STATISTICS**

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| **Define the** **method** | **A form of numerical data where the objective is to quantify some aspects of an individual group or society – collected and published by governments.** |
| **Example(s)** | **Crime or marriage statistics, census.** |
| **Circle correct** | **Quantitative** | **Qualitative** | **Positivist** | **Realist** | **Interpretivist** |
|  | **Strengths**  | **Weaknesses**  |
| **Practical** | Free source of huge amounts of data.Allow comparisons between groups. Eg, crime rates in different areas.Because official stats are collected at regular intervals, they show trends and patterns over time. | The Government collects stats for its own purpose and not for the benefit of sociologists so there may be none available on a topic we are interested in. eg, no stats on religion of suicide victims.The definition that the state uses in collecting data maybe different from those sociologists would use.If definitions change over time it may make comparisons difficult. |
| **Ethical** | Secondary source so you don’t need consent. | Don’t know how it was collected in the first place. |
| **Theoretical** | Generally seen as a reliable source because any person properly trained will allocate a given case to the same category.Can be highly representative as can cover large sample sizes. | Stats can be unreliable for example, census coders may make errors or omit information. Soft stats give a less valid picture, police stats don’t record all crimes. And statistics don’t provide a depth of understanding.  |