



A-level SOCIOLOGY (7192/1)

Paper 1 Education with Theory and Methods

Mark scheme

Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Assessment Writer.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 3 with a small amount of level 4 material it would be placed in level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

Education

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| 0 | 1 |
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Outline **two** material factors that may affect social class differences in educational achievement.

[4 marks]

Two marks for each of **two** appropriate factors clearly outlined or **one mark** for appropriate factors partially outlined, such as:

- overcrowding at home (1 mark) means not having private space in which to study (+1 mark)
- inadequate nutrition (1 mark) affects concentration in school/leads to illness and absence from school (+1 mark)
- inability to afford proper uniform or fashionable clothing/trainers (1 mark) leads to bullying and disaffection from school (+1 mark)
- high family income (1 mark) means parents can pay for private tuition to help with schoolwork (+1 mark)
- parents having to work long hours to make ends meet (1 mark) means they are less able to help children with their homework (+1 mark).

Other relevant material should be credited.

No marks for **no** relevant points.

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| 0 | 2 |
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Outline **three** reasons why government education policies aimed at raising educational achievement among disadvantaged groups may not always succeed.

[6 marks]

Two marks for each of **three** appropriate reasons clearly outlined or **one mark** for appropriate reasons partially outlined, such as:

- it is difficult to implement policies (1 mark), for example if they involve intervening in pupils' home life to change how parents socialise/motivate children (+1 mark)
- educational policies alone cannot overcome poverty as a cause of underachievement (1 mark). This requires far-reaching redistributive economic policies to tackle it (+1 mark)
- means tested educational policies such as free school meals (1 mark) may have low uptake by targeted groups because of the stigma attached to them (+1 mark)
- schools or local authorities may fail to carry out the policies properly (1 mark), for example they may misuse the funds provided for their implementation, eg the Pupil Premium (Ofsted 2012) (+1 mark)
- privileged groups may take advantage of such policies (1 mark), which may exclude disadvantaged groups, eg the assisted places scheme largely benefited middle-class pupils (+1 mark).

Other relevant material should be credited.

No marks for **no** relevant points.

0 3

Applying material from **Item A**, analyse **two** reasons why pupils from some minority ethnic groups achieve above average results in school.

[10 marks]

Item A

On average, pupils from some ethnic groups achieve more highly at school than others. For example, Chinese and Indian pupils generally out-perform white pupils at GCSE. This is even true when we take into account whether pupils are from deprived backgrounds, as measured by whether they receive free school meals (FSM). For example, Chinese pupils on FSM do better than white pupils who are not on FSM.

| Marks | Level descriptors |
|--------------|--|
| 8–10 | <p>Answers in this band will show good knowledge and understanding of relevant material on two reasons why pupils from some minority ethnic groups achieve above average results in school.</p> <p>There will be two developed applications of material from the item, eg teachers' stereotypical expectations, the role of a supportive home background, family structure, high aspirations of immigrant groups versus fatalism of white working-class, class position of Indians and Chinese families.</p> <p>There will be appropriate analysis/evaluation of two reasons, eg how teachers' expectations translate into streaming, the self-fulfilling prophecy etc, to produce high achievement.</p> |
| 4–7 | <p>Answers in this band will show a basic to reasonable knowledge and understanding of one or two reasons why pupils from some minority ethnic groups achieve above average results in school.</p> <p>There will be some successful application of material from the item, eg the role of teachers' stereotypical expectations resulting in a self-fulfilling prophecy of Chinese pupils' success, plus a brief account of supportive home background.</p> <p>There will be some analysis/evaluation.</p> |
| 1–3 | <p>Answers in this band will show limited knowledge of one or two reasons why pupils from some minority ethnic groups achieve above average results in school.</p> <p>There will be limited application of material from the item. Some material may be at a tangent to the question, eg on under-achievement of black pupils.</p> <p>There will be limited or no analysis/evaluation.</p> |
| 0 | No relevant points. |

0 4

Applying material from **Item B** and your knowledge, evaluate the view that gender differences in both subject choice and educational achievement are mainly the result of the influence of wider society.

[30 marks]

Item B

At each stage from pre-school through to university entrance, girls tend to do better than boys. For example, on entering primary school, girls are more likely to be able to write their own name. On the other hand, boys are more likely than girls to be assessed by their schools as having special educational needs.

When it comes to subject choice at age 16, there are major gender differences in the popularity of different A-level subjects and even greater gender differences in vocational courses.

| Marks | Level descriptors |
|-------|--|
| 25–30 | <p>Answers in this band will show sound, conceptually detailed knowledge of a range of relevant material on gender differences in achievement and subject choice. Sophisticated understanding of the question and of the presented material will be shown.</p> <p>Appropriate material will be applied accurately and with sensitivity to the issues raised by the question.</p> <p>Analysis and evaluation will be explicit and relevant. Evaluation may be developed for example through a debate between different perspectives (eg New Right, postmodernism, feminism) or different varieties of feminism, or through consideration of the impact of class or ethnicity upon gender differences in achievement, or by consideration of the relative importance of factors inside and outside the education system or their interrelationship. Analysis will show clear explanation. Appropriate conclusions will be drawn.</p> |
| 19–24 | <p>Answers in this band will show accurate, broad and/or deep but incomplete knowledge both of gender differences in achievement and in subject choice. Understands a number of significant aspects of the question; good understanding of the presented material.</p> <p>Application of material is largely explicitly relevant to the question, though some material may be inadequately focused.</p> <p>Some limited explicit evaluation, for example of the impact of equality legislation and/or some appropriate analysis, eg clear explanations of some of the presented material.</p> |

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| 13–18 | <p>Answers in this band will show largely accurate knowledge but limited range and depth, eg a broadly accurate if basic account of two or three reasons why girls do better than boys. Understands some limited but significant aspects of the question; superficial understanding of the presented material.</p> <p>Applying listed material from the general topic area but with limited regard for its relevance to the issues raised by the question, or applying a narrow range of more relevant material.</p> <p>Evaluation will take the form of juxtaposition of competing positions or one to two isolated stated points. Analysis will be limited, with answers tending towards the descriptive.</p> |
| 7–12 | <p>Answers in this band will show limited undeveloped knowledge, eg two to three insubstantial points about gender differences in subject choice and/or achievement. Understands only limited aspects of the question; simplistic understanding of the presented material.</p> <p>Limited application of suitable material, and/or material often at a tangent to the demands of the question, eg drifting into a ‘class and achievement’ answer.</p> <p>Very limited or no evaluation. Attempts at analysis, if any, are thin and disjointed.</p> |
| 1–6 | <p>Answers in this band will show very limited knowledge, eg one to two very insubstantial points about education in general. Very little/no understanding of the question and of the presented material.</p> <p>Significant errors and/or omissions in application of material.</p> <p>No analysis or evaluation.</p> |
| 0 | No relevant points. |

Indicative content

Concepts and issues such as the following may appear: equality legislation; school policies; subject-choice policy initiatives (GIST, WISE, mentoring); gender routes; changes in the family; single-sex schooling; feminisation of education; role models at home and in school; labour market changes/career opportunities; girls’ changing priorities; de-industrialisation; crisis of masculinity; ‘laddism’; absentee fathers; curriculum changes; coursework; early socialisation; gender regimes; teacher attention; peer pressure; stereotyping; sexual harassment; patriarchy; meritocracy; liberal feminism.

Methods in Context

0 5

Applying material from **Item C** and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of using unstructured interviews to investigate streaming.

[20 marks]

Item C

Investigating streaming

Streaming involves teachers differentiating between pupils on the basis of their perceived ability, placing pupils whom they believe to be of similar overall ability in the same teaching group. This may result in working-class pupils and those from certain ethnic minorities being placed in lower streams. Lower-stream pupils may lose self-esteem, give up trying and even join an anti-school subculture. By contrast, higher-stream pupils may identify strongly with the school's values and goals.

One way of studying streaming is to use unstructured interviews. These are often effective in exploring interviewees' personal feelings about sensitive subjects. However, for a variety of reasons, some pupils and teachers may refuse to participate in an unstructured interview.

| Marks | Level descriptors |
|--------------|---|
| 17–20 | <p>Answers in this band will show accurate, conceptually detailed knowledge and sound understanding of a range of relevant material on unstructured interviews.</p> <p>Appropriate material will be applied accurately and with sensitivity to the investigation of the specific issue of streaming.</p> <p>Students will apply knowledge of a range of relevant strengths and limitations of using unstructured interviews to research issues and characteristics relating to streaming. These may include some of the following and/or other relevant concerns, though answers do not need to include all of these, even for full marks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the research characteristics of potential research subjects, eg individual pupils, peer groups, parents, teachers (eg class, ethnic and gender differences; parental literacy skills; teachers' professionalism, self-interest or stereotypes of pupils) • the research contexts and settings, eg classrooms; staffrooms • the sensitivity of researching streaming, eg policy and resource implications for schools; schools' market and league table position; its impact on achievement or behaviour; stigmatisation; parental consent). <p>Evaluation of the usefulness of unstructured interviews will be explicit and relevant. Analysis will show clear explanation. Appropriate conclusions will be drawn.</p> |
| 13–16 | <p>Answers in this band will show accurate, broad and/or deep but incomplete knowledge of the strengths and limitations of unstructured interviews. Understands a number of significant aspects of the question; good understanding of the presented material.</p> |

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| | <p>Application of knowledge will be broadly appropriate but will tend to be applied in a more generalised way or a more restricted way; for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • applying the method to the study of education in general, not to the specifics of studying streaming, or • specific but undeveloped application to streaming, or • a focus on the research characteristics of streaming, or groups/contexts etc involved in it, with implicit links to some features of unstructured interviews. <p>There will be some limited explicit evaluation, eg of one to two features of unstructured interviews as a method, and/or some appropriate analysis, eg clear explanations of some of the features of unstructured interviews.</p> |
| 9–12 | <p>Answers in this band will show largely accurate knowledge but limited range and depth, including a broadly accurate if basic account of some of the strengths and/or limitations of unstructured interviews. Understands some limited but significant aspects of the question; superficial understanding of the presented material.</p> <p>Applying material (possibly in list-like fashion) on unstructured interviews, but with very limited or non-existent application to either the study of streaming in particular or of education in general.</p> <p>Evaluation limited to briefly stated points. Analysis will be limited, with answers tending towards the descriptive.</p> |
| 5–8 | <p>Answers in this band will show limited undeveloped knowledge, eg two to three insubstantial points about some features of unstructured interviews. Understands only limited aspects of the question; simplistic understanding of the presented material.</p> <p>Limited application of suitable material, and/or material often at a tangent to the demands of the question, eg perhaps drifting into an unfocused comparison of different methods.</p> <p>Very limited or no evaluation. Attempts at analysis, if any, are thin and disjointed.</p> |
| 1–4 | <p>Answers in this band will show very limited knowledge, eg one to two very insubstantial points about methods in general. Very little or no understanding of the question and of the presented material.</p> <p>Significant errors and/or omissions in application of material. Some material ineffectually recycled from the item, or some knowledge applied solely to the substantive issue of streaming, with very little or no reference to unstructured interviews.</p> <p>There will be no analysis or evaluation.</p> |
| 0 | No relevant points. |

Indicative content for strengths and limitations of the method

Strengths and limitations of unstructured interviews, as applied to the particular issue in education, may include: time, cost, access, flexibility, hypothesis-formation, qualitative data, insight, depth, empathy, validity, lack of reliability, sample size, unrepresentativeness, lack of generalisability, ethical issues (eg informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, psychological harm and vulnerability).

Theory and Methods

0 6

Outline and explain **two** arguments **against** the view that sociology is a science.

[10 marks]

| Marks | Level descriptors |
|--------------|---|
| 8–10 | <p>Answers in this band will show very good knowledge and understanding of the nature of sociology and of science.</p> <p>There will be two applications of relevant material, eg both Kuhn’s and Popper’s criteria for science applied to sociology.</p> <p>There will be appropriate analysis, eg of why some sociological perspectives or theories are not testable/falsifiable.</p> |
| 4–7 | <p>Answers in this band will show a reasonable to good knowledge and understanding of the nature of sociology and of science.</p> <p>There will be one or two applications of relevant material, eg the interpretivist view that meanings cannot be studied objectively.</p> <p>There will be some basic analysis.</p> |
| 1–3 | <p>Answers in this band will show limited knowledge and little or no understanding of the question or the material.</p> <p>There will be limited focus on the question, eg there may be some drift into arguments for rather than against the view that sociology is a science.</p> <p>There will be limited or no analysis.</p> |
| 0 | No relevant points. |

Indicative content

Answers may include the following and/or other relevant points:

- human action as the product of free will versus science as causal explanation/determinism
- the ideological or value-laden nature of sociology versus science as objective knowledge
- empathetic methods of interpretivist sociology versus detached methods of natural science
- ethical and practical difficulties of using experimental scientific methods in sociology
- interpretivist sociologists’ study of subjective meanings versus science’s study of objective facts
- sociology’s lack of a unified paradigm (Kuhn)/its competing perspectives
- the unfalsifiability of much sociological theory (Popper).

Assessment objectives

| Paper 1 | AO1 | AO2 | AO3 | Total |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| Education | | | | |
| Q01 | 4 | | | 4 |
| Q02 | 3 | 3 | | 6 |
| Q03 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 10 |
| Q04 | 12 | 9 | 9 | 30 |
| Q05 Methods in Context | 8 | 8 | 4 | 20 |
| Q06 Theory and Methods | 5 | 3 | 2 | 10 |
| Totals | 35 | 27 | 18 | 80 |

