



A-LEVEL SOCIOLOGY

7192/3 Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods
Report on the Examination

7192
November 2020

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General Introduction to the November Series

This has been an unusual exam series in many ways. Entry patterns have been very different from those normally seen in the summer, and students had a very different experience in preparation for these exams. It is therefore more difficult to make meaningful comparisons between the range of student responses seen in this series and those seen in a normal summer series. The smaller entry also means that there is less evidence available for examiners to comment on.

In this report, senior examiners will summarise the performance of students in this series in a way that is as helpful as possible to teachers preparing future cohorts while taking into account the unusual circumstances and limited evidence available.

Overview of Entry

The November series saw significantly smaller entry numbers in comparison to a normal summer series. This reflects the decision to award students centre assessment grades in place of exams for summer 2020. The standard of student responses covered a wide range of marks, which suggests the paper differentiated appropriately. All three assessment objectives were addressed in student responses. In line with other series, AO3 was the skill that students had the most difficulty with. The AO3 evaluation skill should be an area of development for schools and colleges.

A number of students had difficulty producing legible handwriting. Schools and colleges should take the appropriate steps to ensure that these students are not disadvantaged as a result; unfortunately, this was not always evidently the case.

Most students answered all questions on the paper showing that the allocated time was appropriate, where timing was an issue it had an impact on the final question. This was also the question which saw the weakest answers amongst students. This may have been because theory is often addressed later in the academic year, which unfortunately coincided with national lockdown.

Comments on Individual Questions

Question 1

Most students attempted this question. Most students could identify two ways in which media representations of crime may not reflect reality. There was a tendency to write too much for this question, some students explained the work of sociological studies, and although this displayed excellent knowledge it is not a requirement for this question and may have had an impact on timing.

Question 2

This question was answered well. Most students could identify three functions of the criminal justice system. A common error was that students presented a positive function of crime but did not link this to the criminal justice system. For example, using the warning device or safety valve function but not linking this to anything within the CJS or agents within the criminal justice system.

Question 3

This question was well attempted on the whole with many students being able to develop the two hooks in the item. Students displayed a wide range of knowledge and could further link global crime to sociological research and studies. A common error was to not make explicitly clear how this would influence crime in UK. Although the question was about global crime students needed to make the link with the UK.

Question 4

This question provided varied levels of challenge for students and marks were widely differentiated. Most students were able to use the item and develop the ideas within the item. The most used study was Merton and strain theory. This was done well; many students knew this study and could apply it in a focused way. Most students were able to provide a range of points with some development. Several students were confused with the work of Albert Cohen and Merton and mixed the two studies up. Marxism was another commonly used theory and in some instances was developed with the work of Gordon, Snider and Pearce. AO1 was the best developed skill in this question whereas the AO3 skill was the most challenging and not always addressed well. Students need to make explicit evaluative statements which link with the points they make, however few were able to do this. This should be an area of focus for schools and colleges. Specific assessment for learning AFL strategies should be considered to develop these essays. When students did provide a conclusion, it was often not critical and did not add to the essay. Again, this is an area that schools and colleges should focus upon.

Question 5

The majority of responses could identify two ethical issues. However, there was confusion over which research methods were primary quantitative methods. Some students did not address this at all, and this had an impact on the marks awarded. Other students who answered this question well were able to link the ethical consideration to an appropriate study. This displayed excellent knowledge and understanding of both ethical concerns and primary quantitative research methods.

Question 6

This question proved the most challenging on the paper. Many students were unable to develop ideas beyond the item. Students had little knowledge of postmodern ideas and were not able to add depth to their points. Many were unable to name postmodern thinkers and there was little development of the discussion of late modernity. Where students were able to evaluate, they relied on the theories named in the item, students were not able to develop these ideas to meet the demands of the question and evaluative statements often bordered juxtaposition. If students did run out of time, there was often an impact on this question. This could be addressed by schools and colleges by timing practice in assessments.

Concluding Remarks

The paper differentiated appropriately. Students accessed all questions and there were very few questions with no response, which is positive. Timing was not problematic for the majority of students. The crime content had been covered well and students did display theoretical knowledge and understanding and were able to apply this to the question. Students presented sound AO1 skills in knowledge and understating of the subject and levels of application were high. Schools and colleges should focus on the AO3 evaluation skill and plan for the development of this within teaching and learning. Generally, more attention to detail in the research methods 10-mark question (Question 5) must be given.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.