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# A-LEVEL SOCIOLOGY

7192/2 Topics in Sociology  
Report on the Examination

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7192  
Autumn 2021

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## **General Introduction to the Autumn Series**

This has been another 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**

This entry was very small in comparison to a normal entry, and also smaller than the October 2020 entry. The choice of topics by students was also similar to that expected in a normal series, with Families and Households being by far the most popular topic in Section A and Beliefs in Society, to a lesser extent, in Section B. In the comments below, only questions on these topics are considered, because of the very small number of answers on other topics.

## **Comments on Individual Questions**

### **Families and Households**

#### **Question 04**

This question required knowledge and understanding of functions of families; these could be from functionalist, Marxist, feminist or other perspectives. Discussion of changing roles within families was accepted as being about functions. Some students concentrated on outlining changes to the structure of the family without referring sufficiently to functions.

#### **Question 05**

As information was given in the item about family diversity, students needed in their answers to focus on government policies. This could be done either by referring to specific acts of parliament or equivalent, or by more general discussion of the impact of, for example, provision of welfare benefits; both approaches were acceptable and could be equally successful.

#### **Question 06**

Many students were able to answer this question well, applying ideas in the item and from their own knowledge to make relevant points about gender roles and relationships today. Most were able to address both aspects of the debate, looking at evidence for continuing inequalities as well as progress towards greater equality, and to use a range of theories, concepts and studies. It was good to see in some answers findings from recent research studies, showing recognition of the value of empirical evidence.

### **Beliefs**

#### **Question 13**

Some answers here recounted examples of change influenced by religion, such as the US Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, without being able to make clear connections to globalisation. Those that approached the question by considering aspects of globalisation (such as

Westernisation, technology and social media, diasporas and migration) tended to have more success.

#### **Question 14**

As information was given in the item about churches, answers needed to focus on how New Age Movements differ, on the characteristics referred to in the item. Some students wrote mostly about churches as religious organisations, sometimes showing good knowledge but not addressing the question directly. There was a disappointing lack of knowledge of NAMs, with few answers being able to give examples, and some weak answers simply stated that the characteristics of NAMs were the opposite of those of churches, without explanation or elaboration.

#### **Question 15**

There was some good knowledge both for and against the view that the UK is becoming increasingly secular. Answers tended to follow the points in the item, with, as in previous series, lack of time preventing students from bringing in more of their own knowledge later in the essay.

#### **Concluding Remarks**

Students taking this exam should be congratulated on their achievement in very difficult circumstances and on the levels of sociological understanding they showed.

It seemed clear though that these circumstances had made the exams more challenging for some students, even when compared to October 2020. Because of the reduction in classroom teaching, some students seemed to have had less guidance from teachers. The particular requirements of both types of 10 mark questions mean that the role of the teacher in explaining the format of questions and, for 'analyse' questions, the structure and content of the items, is essential, as is practice followed by constructive feedback. Students need to be aware that these questions will always require connections to be made between different parts of the specification for the topic, and that this will require thinking in the examination about how the two aspects are connected. It is likely that because of school closures and related factors, some students could not prepare for these exams as well as when supported by teachers as for a 'normal' series.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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