# GCSE
# SOCIOLOGY

8192/2 The Sociology of Crime and Deviance and Social Stratification
Report on the Examination

**General Comments**

There was a wide range of responses from students on paper 2, with the vast majority of students finding the paper accessible. There was a notable increase in the number of students able to access higher level marks on extended writing questions, and even less instances of students leaving questions unattempted.

Students were clearly well prepared for the exam, and it was evident that there was good breadth of coverage of the specification by centres. However, some sections of the specification were less well covered than others – this was particularly the case for questions 7, 10, 14, 15, 16, 18 and 20. Schools should be reminded that the specification should be used as the guide for teaching, not the textbooks.

There was a marked improvement in students accessing marks in the questions. Students were again well prepared for the exam, demonstrating not only good knowledge and understanding but also a marked improvement in the skills of analysis and evaluation, particularly in the 12 mark responses. However, as in previous series, there was a tendency for some students to rely heavily on material from paper 1 in the section, particularly the sociology of education – centres are reminded that although synoptic in nature, it was often to such an extent that it limited responses.

In comparison to 2022, there was slight improvement in the knowledge of key research methods. However, a sizeable number of students were still confusing concepts such as reliability and validity, quantitative and qualitative etc. Many students still use the term 'accurate' to mean validity, reliability, representativeness etc. Centres should actively discourage students from doing this, and emphasise the correct terms. The lack of development leads to lower band marks.

**Question 1**

The vast majority of students identified choice A, labelling correctly.

**Question 2**

The vast majority of students identified choice B, prison system correctly.

**Question 3**

This question saw the vast majority of students able to access marks, with some well-developed examples of deviance offered by the students. In explaining what deviance is (breaking of a social norm), many contrasted it with breaking the law – a common misconception was that deviance is always legal. There were also some questionable examples given of deviant acts ie being topless in the street.

**Question 4**

Another well answered question – many students were able to give good explanations, with many making reference to self-report studies and victim surveys. Some students gave generic research methods such as a questionnaire or interview, which limited the marks awarded.

**Question 5**

Most students were able to access marks in this question – references to the hawthorne effect or observer effect were commonplace, questioning the validity of the study. A minority of students failed to develop the point adequately to receive the second mark. Many students used the term 'accurate' – centres should actively discourage this.

**Question 6**

The first part of this answer required the students to include a reason that the boys joined a gang. Many included references to social factors such as poverty, poor housing and lack of employment and developed these well- scoring 3 or 4 marks. Some students did not identify the correct reason for joining the gang as identified in the item and suggested alternatives such as peer pressure of labelling. This impacted on the number of marks given and meant low or no scores were given. Many students applied the work of Cohen and status frustration to good effect here.

**Question 7**

This was a well answered question in the main, but some students struggled to develop their answers in detail. A sizeable minority of students reference case studies as secondary sources, and did not seem to understand the actual disadvantages of the method. More successful students referred to the observer effect, social desirability and a lack of representativeness.

**Question 8**

This was a largely well answered question. Most students were able to identify that Heidensohn was a feminist, although some conflated her work with that of Carlen. Many students used the item well to reference the different strands of patriarchal control, but some students were unable to link this to why women were less likely to commit crime.

**Question 9**

The question referred to the use of official statistics and women and crime. Many students made points about the dark figure of crime and why women might be underrepresented. Higher level responses referenced ideas such as the chivalry thesis or the types of crimes that women tended to commit eg, those that meant they could feed or care for children.

**Question 10**

This essay was attempted by most students, and there was a range of responses. The best answers approached the issue through different theories such as functionalism, Marxism, and feminism. Top band answers used a range of terms that related to the topic and expressed ideas around primary and secondary socialisation. Many students also used ideas from education and incorporated those into the answers.

Higher level responses included some evaluation of the theories or studies and a conclusion – centres should note that while it is necessary for students to reach a conclusion, this does not necessarily have to be at the end of the response if there are conclusions, analysis and evaluation throughout.

Many students contrasted this view with the ideas of Cohen who was also a functionalist but expressed alternative views as why informal control was not effective. Ideas from status frustration were expressed to demonstrate that informal control actually had little impact on behaviour.
Answers that only accessed the lower bands often contained very little sociological terms and ideas, points were generalised and poorly expressed. Some answers did offer one perspective, but this still came into the limited band as no other ideas were developed properly

**Question 11**

This was in the main a well answered question. The best answers approached the question from theoretical points of view. Ideas from functionalists were present in some of the stronger answers. Students referenced the studies from Merton and Cohen and expressed those ideas very well.
The lack of opportunities given to some people was a direct cause of crime and this was backed up by the ideas of the key functionalist sociologists. Marxist ideas came in the form of a lack of opportunity in society due to it being more hierarchal and controlled by the elite. Ideas of some people struggling in education and suffering from material deprivation were also clear in some of the top band answers. Essays that were awarded lower marks tended to focus on basic ideas with limited sociological studies and terminology.

**Question 12**

The vast majority of students identified choice C, glass ceiling correctly.

**Question 13**

The vast majority of students identified choice B, representative sample correctly.

**Question 14**

This question saw most students able to access marks. Many students were able to explain the idea of meritocracy - a fair and equal society where hard work is rewarded. Well-developed answers included references to education and ideas around social mobility. Answers that scored lower marks tended to be brief and lacked depth.

**Question 15**

There were a range of responses to this question. Most students wrote about health and employment here were also some well-developed ideas about the problems younger people face in society and about pay and conditions. However, some students did not understand the difference between discrimination and prejudice, and did not really address the concept of ageism.

**Question 16**

There were a range of responses to this question. Many students expressed clear ideas about the fact that the data was limited in the sample size and therefore not representative. However, many students made a simple reference to it being secondary sources and not stating the problem of bias. Many students did not develop their answer enough to attain 2 marks.

**Question 17**

Students answered this question well. Many were able to use the item to good effect to identify the reasons for the difference and developed their ideas well. Answers that were scoring lower tended

to lack an explanation and had poorly expressed ideas. Unfortunately, many students did not identify what the type of research was.

**Question 18**

Responses to this question were not as strong as other. Higher level responses expressed ideas about the data being collected already so this allowed the researcher to focus or develop other ideas. Some students expressed ideas that this was based on peer reviewed work which made it more credible. The weaker answers failed to identify a valid reason for the research being trustworthy.

**Question 19**

This was a well answered question. Most student seemed to understand the ideas of Townsend and how he approached the concept of poverty differently to the government, and some identified his perspective as social democratic. Lower level responses failed to mention the research method accurately. Some made reference to postal questionnaires or simply stated 'qualitative methods.

**Question 20**

This was by and large a poorly answered question. Students needed to state the problem with relative poverty as a measure. Some students did this very well and even included the ideas from the Townsend study. They put the reasons down to a difference in culture or religious practices. However, so responses were very basic and the students had little or no understanding of what relative poverty was.

**Question 21**

The first of the stratification essays was based on the welfare state. Ideas from Murray, functionalists, Marxists and feminists were generally well expressed in the answers that I read. Most students were able to access marks in the question. Ideas from the New Right, functionalists, Marxists and feminists were generally well expressed in the answers that I read. Many students showed a good understanding of who Murray is and the ideas he has about the poor.Ideas from Marxists perspectives spoke about how the welfare state maintains false consciousness and better responses referenced the Lumpenproletariat.Some students covered the idea that the welfare state is needed due to the exploitation of workers in society on minimum wage. Weaker responses showed limited knowledge of studies and theories.

**Question 22**

This was another well answered question.The best responses focused on the ideas of Walby and how patriarchy still dominates society.The theory was counter argued from a functionalist perspective, many students also included the work of Davis and Moore and role allocation.  The theories were well evaluated and the students were able to express ideas clearly. Some students offered a Marxist perspective, suggesting that patriarchy was not a problem but class exploitation was – this somewhat limited the marks for the response, but some correctly cited the Marxist-feminist perspective, that women patriarchy exists due to capitalism.

**Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the Results Statistics page of the AQA Website.