Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

SOCIOLOGY **9699/21**

Paper 2 Theory and Methods **May/June 2020**

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 50

Published

Students did not sit exam papers in the June 2020 series due to the Covid-19 global pandemic.

This mark scheme is published to support teachers and students and should be read together with the question paper. It shows the requirements of the exam. The answer column of the mark scheme shows the proposed basis on which Examiners would award marks for this exam. Where appropriate, this column also provides the most likely acceptable alternative responses expected from students. Examiners usually review the mark scheme after they have seen student responses and update the mark scheme if appropriate. In the June series, Examiners were unable to consider the acceptability of alternative responses, as there were no student responses to consider.

Mark schemes should usually be read together with the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers. However, because students did not sit exam papers, there is no Principal Examiner Report for Teachers for the June 2020 series.

Cambridge International will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

Cambridge International is publishing the mark schemes for the June 2020 series for most Cambridge IGCSE™ and Cambridge International A & AS Level components, and some Cambridge O Level components.

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Generic Marking Principles

These general marking principles must be applied by all examiners when marking candidate answers. They should be applied alongside the specific content of the mark scheme or generic level descriptors for a question. Each question paper and mark scheme will also comply with these marking principles.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 1:

Marks must be awarded in line with:

- the specific content of the mark scheme or the generic level descriptors for the question
- the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the generic level descriptors for the question
- the standard of response required by a candidate as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 2:

Marks awarded are always **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 3:

Marks must be awarded **positively**:

- marks are awarded for correct/valid answers, as defined in the mark scheme. However, credit is given for valid answers which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme, referring to your Team Leader as appropriate
- marks are awarded when candidates clearly demonstrate what they know and can do
- marks are not deducted for errors
- marks are not deducted for omissions
- answers should only be judged on the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar when these features are specifically assessed by the question as indicated by the mark scheme. The meaning, however, should be unambiguous.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 4:

Rules must be applied consistently e.g. in situations where candidates have not followed instructions or in the application of generic level descriptors.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 5:

Marks should be awarded using the full range of marks defined in the mark scheme for the question (however; the use of the full mark range may be limited according to the quality of the candidate responses seen).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 6:

Marks awarded are based solely on the requirements as defined in the mark scheme. Marks should not be awarded with grade thresholds or grade descriptors in mind.

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Question	Answer	Marks
1(a)	**What is meant by the term qualitative data?** Qualitative data refers to written sources that provide a detailed account of people's meanings and understandings. One mark for a partial answer such as such as 'non-statistical data' or 'results from in-depth studies'. Two marks for a clear and accurate definition.	**2**
1(b)	**Describe two advantages of using questionnaires.** Advantages could include: • Standardised questions mean the research can be replicated. • Produces hard/quantifiable data that is easily compared. • Reliability [links to positivism]. • Sampling more likely to be systematic/large enough to be representative (by comparison with other interviews). • Can be conducted anonymously. • Less researcher imposition. • Practical advantages - Easy to administer/record; data can be analysed by computer. One mark for the advantage plus one mark for development (2×2 marks).	**4**
1(c)	**Explain why interpretivist sociologists are unlikely to use structured interviews.** **0–4** Lower in the band a few simple points about interpretivism unrelated to structured interviews would be worth 1 or 2 marks. Higher in the band there may be a basic account of the limitations of structured interviews, but with little or no reference to interpretivism, could reach the top of the band. **5–8** Lower in the band there will be a sound account of a couple of possible limitations of using structured interviews in sociological research. There may be links to interpretivism but these will not be fully developed. Higher in the band there is likely to be a wider range of reasons with clear and accurate links to key concepts and interpretivism. The analysis here needs to be explicit and well informed. Reasons might include: • Interviewer effect. • Desire for detailed data. • Pre-coded questions may limit and/or inhibit responses. • Potential for respondent misinterpretation of questions. • Reduced validity [links to interpretivism]. • Teams of researchers may produce variations in response depending on their interviewer characteristics.	**8**

Question	Answer	Marks
	• Unstructured interviews allow more insight. A good list of undeveloped points may gain up to 6 marks. To go higher, some of the points should be developed. This question asks candidates to 'explain', therefore there is no requirement for assessment.	
1(d)	**Assess arguments in favour of semi-structured interviews as a method of sociological research.** **0–4** Answers at this level are likely to show only **limited appreciation** of the issues raised by the question. Lower in the band, a few simple points describing interviews might be worth 1 or 2 marks. Higher in the band, there may be an attempt to describe the features of semi-structured interviews, with few or no direct links to the set question. **5–8** Answers at this level show **some sociological knowledge** and understanding of the question. Lower in the band, a simple account of some arguments in favour of semi-structured interviews. There is likely to be a lack of development in the response, perhaps with greater emphasis on practical issues. Higher in the band, a more detailed account that develops a range of points could gain 7 or 8 marks. There is likely to be links made to theory but not be fully focused on semi-structured interviews. Responses might distinguish between questionnaires and/or other types of interviews. A one-sided answer that is done very well, could also gain up to 8 marks. **A descriptive answer cannot gain more than 8 marks.** **9–11** Answers at this level will demonstrate **good sociological knowledge and understanding** applied to the question. There will also be an assessment of the strengths of semi-structured interviews and its 'middle' position will be explored. Lower in the band (9**–**10 marks), there will be a good account of one or two limitations of semi-structured interviews but these will be unbalanced or not fully developed. Some juxtaposition is likely. At the top of the band, the assessment must either cover a range of issues and/or demonstrate depth of understanding. Informed and explicit links to theory are likely.	**11**

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Question	Answer	Marks
1(d)	Arguments for: • The researcher may wish to have elements of structured and unstructured interviews because this relates to their overall aims [e.g. factual and attitudinal]. • Gives a degree of control over proceedings. • Enables a [limited] measure of comparability. • Allows for unpredictable responses and the possibility of follow up questions, in other words they are flexible. • Respondent control may lead to greater depth and validity. • Less time consuming than unstructured interviews [but still a lengthy process]. Arguments against: • Unreliable: SSI can lack generalisability depending on the degree of structured, i.e. the nature of the interview schedule used. • Researcher imposition. • Dependent upon skilful interview, ability to build rapport. • Dependent upon the articulacy of the respondent. • Primarily a qualitative method and therefore subject to many of the objections levelled at unstructured interviews e.g. problems associated with analysing and interpreting data. • Sample size likely to be small.	

Question	Answer	Marks
2	**'Sociologists have exaggerated the extent to which people conform to social norms and expectations in modern societies.' Explain and assess this view.** **0–6** Answers at this level are likely to be **assertive and focus on a few common sense observations**. Lower in the band, answers may be confined to one or two simple points about socialisation based on assertion/common sense understanding. Higher in the band, there may be a wider range of simple points based on assertion/common sense understanding. For example, answers will demonstrate a basic understanding of one sociological approach, probably functionalist, but there will be very little detail or development that is relevant to the question as set. **7–12** Answers at this level will show **some sociological knowledge and understanding** of the question. Lower in the band (7–9 marks), the answer may be confined to a narrow range of points, lacking detail and possibly with some inaccuracies. Answers will be rather list-like and are likely to refer to only one sociological account of socialisation, such as functionalism or Marxism.	**25**

Question	Answer	Marks
2	Higher in the band (10–12 marks), answers may either cover a narrow range of developed points or a wider range of undeveloped points. Responses are likely to show some awareness of why the concept of socialisation might be seen as too deterministic. **13–18** Answers at this level will show **good sociological knowledge and understanding**. The material used will be interpreted accurately and applied well to answering the question. There is no requirement for assessment at this level although it may be present. Lower in the band (13–15 marks), answers may use a range of knowledge, there will be some use of concepts and/or theory, but the points covered may lack development. There may be a lack of balance in terms of the coverage of functionalist or Marxist accounts. Higher in the band (16–18 marks), answers will use a wider range of knowledge, supported by the use of concepts and/or theory where relevant and include some well-developed points with a more even distribution of the relevance of functionalist and Marxist models. At the top of the level, answers will contain a wide range of knowledge with some well-developed points and accurate use of theory, studies and concepts that is focused on the question. It will be clear from the response that the candidate understands the issues underpinning the question and in particular the view that some (perhaps all) sociological theories of socialisation are over-deterministic. However, the overall analysis of the view may not be fully convincing. **19–25** Lower in the band (19–21 marks), the assessment may be largely delivered through juxtaposition of contrasting arguments/theories. Alternatively, the assessment may be limited to just one or two evaluative points that are explicitly stated. The functionalist and possibly the Marxist theories are likely to be cited as examples of a tendency towards adopting a rather too deterministic view of social order. Assessment is likely to be reliant on the interactionist contribution to the study of socialisation and used to highlight the limitations of the functionalist and Marxist theories. References to substantive areas (crime, deviance, sub-cultures, rebellion, etc.) may be used to good effect in addressing the issues raised by the question, though it is not essential to go down this line in order to achieve top marks. Higher in the band (22–25 marks), there will be sustained assessment and the points offered will be explicit and well directed towards the question. For example, the post-modernist critique of traditional sociology would provide another useful angle to explore in assessing the claim made in the essay question.	

Question	Answer	Marks
2	**Answers at this level must achieve three things:** • **First**, there will be good sociological knowledge and understanding of the interactionist perspective and its critique of functionalist and Marxist views on socialisation. • **Second**, the material used will be interpreted accurately and applied effectively to answering the question • **Third**, there must also be some evidence of assessment. At this level expect an accurate and detailed accounts of differing sociological contributions to the debate and in particular the issue of determinism. There is likely to be a well-formulated conclusion.	

Question	Answer	Marks
3	**'Sociologists should use their research to help powerless groups in society.' Explain and assess this view.** **0–6** Answers at this level are likely to be assertive and focus on a few common sense observations. Lower in the band, answers may be confined to one or two simple points based on assertion/common sense understanding. For example, some brief comments about the nature of sociological research. Higher in the band, there may be a wider range of simple points based on assertion/common sense understanding. For example, answers will demonstrate a basic understanding of the purposes for which sociologists might use their research but offer very little detail or development that is relevant to the question as set. **7–12** Answers at this level will show some sociological knowledge and understanding of the question. Lower in the band (7–9 marks), the answer may be confined to a narrow range of points, lacking detail and possibly with some inaccuracies. Answers will be rather list-like and may offer a general discussion of views about the possible uses of sociological research. Higher in the band (10–12 marks), answers may either cover a narrow range of points in reasonable detail or cover a wider range of points in limited detail. There will be some extension of key points, perhaps through references to the debates between those who favour a value-neutral approach to sociological research and those who argue for a committed approach. Links to relevant theoretical perspectives may be present but are likely to be limited.	**25**

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Question	Answer	Marks
3	**13–18** Answers at this level will show good sociological knowledge and understanding of the ideas of those who have argued that sociologists should use their research to help the powerless groups in society, e.g. Marxists, feminists, Mills, Becker, Goffman. The material used will be interpreted accurately and applied effectively to answering the question. 'Powerless' may be understood to mean a wide variety of groups but this is not a necessary feature of an answer. There is no requirement for assessment at this level although it may be present. Lower in the band (13–15 marks), answers may use a range of knowledge, there will be some use of concepts and/or theory, but the points covered may lack development. Higher in the band (16–18 marks), answers will use a wider range of knowledge, supported by the use of concepts/theory where relevant and include some well-developed points. Candidates will begin to address the specific wording of the question, though the analysis of the view put forward in the question may not be fully convincing. **19–25** Lower in the band (19–21 marks), the assessment may be largely delivered through juxtaposition of contrasting arguments/theories over the debate about values in sociology. Alternatively, the assessment may be limited to just one or two evaluative points that are explicitly stated. Higher in the band (22–25 marks), there will be sustained assessment and the points offered will be explicit and well-directed towards the question. For example, candidates may question whose interests sociological research serves, who may benefit from efforts to help powerless groups, and what values support the idea of a committed form of sociology. Answers at this level must achieve three things: • **First**, there will be good sociological knowledge and understanding of the arguments and theoretical perspectives that support the idea of a value committed sociology. • **Second**, the material used will be interpreted accurately and applied effectively to answering the question • **Third**, there must also be some evidence of assessment. At this level expect to see clear assessment of the view that sociologists should use their research to help powerless groups in society There is likely to be a well-formulated conclusion.	