Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

SOCIOLOGY **9699/23**

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 *norms?*** A norm is a shared expectation of appropriate behaviour. One mark for a partial answer such as such as 'norms are social rules'. Two marks for a clear and accurate definition.	**2**
1(b)	**Describe two ways in which society may shape how people behave.** Ways could include: • The influence of any agent of socialisation on social behaviour e.g. on lifestyle, occupation, education etc. • Formal/informal social sanctions that encourage conformity to social rules. One mark for the way plus one mark for development (2×2 marks).	**4**
1(c)	**Explain why values may vary between social groups.** **0–4** Lower in the band a few simple points about values, perhaps overly reliant upon the stem, unrelated to social groups would be worth 1 or 2 marks. Higher in the band there may be a basic account of societal values, but with little reference or linkage to varied social groups. **5–8** Lower in the band there will be a sound account of why social values may vary between groups. The values cited and groups discussed will have breadth and/or balance but not be fully developed. There is likely to be a few references to sociological accounts of subcultures/different social groups. Higher in the band there is likely to be a wider range of examples with clear and accurate explanation of different value systems in society. The analysis here needs to be explicit and well informed. Areas that might be included: • Subcultural explanations. • Class cultures. • Youth cultures. • Gender culture. • Ethnic and religious division. • Differential socialisation. A good list of undeveloped points may gain up to 6 marks. To go higher, some of the points should be developed.	**8**

Question	Answer	Marks
1(d)	**Assess the functionalist explanation of social order.** **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 about consensus in society, with little sociological insight and only weak links to the question. Higher in the band, an answer might contain a basic explanation of functionalism, but with little development in relation to the question. **5–8** Answers at this level show **some sociological knowledge** and understanding of the question. Lower in the band, a simple account identifying some features of the functionalist approach. For example, Durkheim's view that there needs to be a basic agreement on values for society to exist may be present but it will not be very well applied to the question. There is likely to be a lack of development in the response. Higher in the band, a more detailed account that develops a range of points could gain 7 or 8 marks. Concepts such as value consensus, moral codes, mechanical/organic solidarity or the collective conscience are likely to feature. A descriptive answer cannot gain more than 8 marks. A one-sided answer that is done very well, could also gain up to 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 functionalist approach to social order. Lower in the band (9**–**10 marks), there will be a good account of one or two limitations of functionalist position on social order but these will be unbalanced or not fully developed. Some juxtaposition with an alternative theory 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. Reference to the Marxist critique is likely and to the work of Althusser or Gramsci.	**11**

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Question	Answer	Marks
2	**'Qualitative methods have little value in sociological research because they lack reliability.' 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; for example, a few comments about a qualitative method. Higher in the band, there may be a wider range of simple points based on assertion/common sense understanding. A general description of qualitative methods 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. There may be a basic description of qualitative research, with only implicit or weak links to reliability. 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. For example, there may be some development of the idea that qualitative methods produce data that is low in reliability, but at this level the response is likely to provide a straightforward endorsement of the proposition. **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. Expect to see sound knowledge and understanding of qualitative methods in the overall response. However, the discussion will be somewhat general and lacking focus on the precise issues raised by the wording of the question. Higher in the band (16**–**18 marks), answers will use a wider range of knowledge, supported by the use of concepts/theory/studies where relevant and include some well-developed points. There will be a clear attempt to explain why qualitative research lacks reliability. There is likely to be reference to sociological theory and it will be clear from the response that the candidate understands the issues underpinning the question.	**25**

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Question	Answer	Marks
2	**19–25** Lower in the band (19–21 marks), the assessment may be largely delivered through juxtaposition of contrasting arguments/theories, principally positivism and interpretivism. Alternatively, the assessment may be limited to just one or two evaluative points that are explicitly stated There will be a detailed account of the relationship between qualitative research and reliability. There will also be a sustained attempt to assess the overall value of qualitative methods with specific reference to their lack of reliability. This will include some questioning of the importance of reliability and/or a consideration of the relative importance of validity and reliability. 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. To reach the top of the band, the assessment will be supported by a more direct analysis of the value of qualitative research methods and of what constitutes 'good' sociological research. This may lead some candidates to even question the extent to which those who conduct qualitative research are at all concerned to achieve reliable outcomes. Another possible assessment route might be to outline those 'qualitative' methods that arguably lead to a measure of reliability in the data produced e.g. semi-structured interviews, structured observations. There may be a discussion of research aims and values, and reflections on the influence of topic on the choice of research methods. **Answers at this level must achieve three things:** • **First**, there will be good sociological knowledge and understanding of qualitative research and links to the interpretivist perspective. • **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 account of qualitative research with a direct focus on the concept of reliability. There is likely to be a well-formulated conclusion.	

Question	Answer	Marks
3	**'It is both desirable and possible for sociology to be objective.' 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 objectivity or the nature of sociological research or human behaviour.	**25**

Question	Answer	Marks
3	Higher in the band, there may be a wider range of simple points based on assertion/common sense understanding or a response that demonstrates a basic understanding of the view in the question, but with very little detail or development that is relevant to the question as set. For example, an outline of a few research methods, or an answer showing some awareness of the purposes of sociological research. **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 more likely to offer a general discussion, probably describing the positivist perspective but with few or no direct links to the issue of objectivity. 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 is likely to be some extension of key points, perhaps introducing some interpretivist arguments but still rather descriptive and without any clear links to the notion of objectivity **13–18** Answers at this level will show good sociological knowledge and understanding. The material used will be interpreted accurately and applied effectively to answering the question. There will be a clear outline of the debate between those who argue research can and should be objective approach and those that reject this position. 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. At this level there will be a sound account of the positivist position and there is likely to be some reference to the interpretivist alternative/rejection. Higher in the band (16–18 marks), answers will use a wider range of knowledge, supported by the use of studies, concepts/theory where relevant and include some well-developed points although the analysis is likely to be somewhat juxtaposed and the understanding of objectivity rather implicit. Candidates will begin to address the specific wording of the question, though the 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. For example, some may focus on the practical difficulties that sociologists face when undertaking research that might compromise their objectivity. At this level, the assessment may include little or no	

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Question	Answer	Marks
3	reference to the distinction between 'desirable' and 'possible' in relation to the question. To reach the top of the band, however, this part of the question is likely to be addressed directly. 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 whether it is even theoretically possible to achieve objective research, in other words to question explicitly the premise view that sociology can be a value free enterprise. A possible further tack is for candidates to question whether it is desirable to attempt objectivity on the grounds that sociologists should recognise the imposition of their own values and to take a committed stance. Reference to Becker or Marxism or feminism might be used to support this line of argument **Answers at this level must achieve three things:** • **First**, there will be good sociological knowledge and understanding of the underlying debate, namely, the notion that it is the responsibility of sociological to aspire to an objective approach. • **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 account. There is likely to be a well-formulated conclusion.	

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