SOCIOLOGY

Paper 0495/11
Paper 11

Key messages

- Candidates' knowledge of key terms could be improved for example getting candidates to create their own glossary for each unit. This would enable them to not only obtain full marks in part (a) questions but would also help them to understand key terms in other questions.
- On the data response **Question (1c)** candidates should look for common 'issues' such as if the source is outdated, adapted or is derived from official statistics, as these frequently occur.
- On **Questions (1d)** and **(1e)** a good technique is for candidates to first identify a feature of the method in question and then describe the strengths and/or limitations. For example in **(1e)** identifying that closed questions are used in a social survey and then describing the problem that this may not allow respondents to give depth and detail in their answers which will inhibit validity.
- Candidates should be encouraged to write extended responses in paragraph form to prevent different points overlapping or coalescing into each other.
- Candidates would benefit from a more detailed understanding of key theories such as Marxism, functionalism and feminism. These should be explicitly taught in unit one and applied to issues when teaching the other units on the syllabus.

General comments

Many responses showed a fair level of engagement with the question paper and the assessment objectives. Time management appears to have been good with very few candidates who did not manage to finish the paper.

Some candidates enumerated their points (for example, 'firstly…,' 'secondly…' etc.) which is helpful to examiners, though some candidates do not write in paragraphs in extended questions. In essay responses the evaluation skills evidenced by some candidates was good, though relatively few candidates developed the full range of points with suitably robust evidence.

The research methods unit was done fairly well though the technique for answering the data response **Question (1c)** could be improved. Moreover candidates knowledge of less well-known methods such as comparative studies was weak. In the optional questions **Question 2** (Culture, socialisation and identity) was marginally more popular that **Question 3** (Social inequality). There were very few rubric errors and non-responses.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Theory and Methods

Question 1

(a) A very good response here with most candidates achieving full marks by correctly identifying the two countries that had the highest life expectancy in 2000.

(b) Some candidates misinterpreted this question. Instead of identifying two reasons for the interviewer effect some candidates described the effect itself. So, for example, some wrote about respondents giving socially desirable answers, giving invalid answers etc. Correct answers highlighted something about the interviewer themselves, such as their gender, ethnicity, status, tone of voice etc., that could influence answers given by respondents.

(c)   The data analysis question drew a mixed response. Some candidates made generic points which were not explicitly linked to the data on life expectancy. A few candidates simply stated that the data in the source was 'invalid' or 'not reliable' and these were not creditworthy by themselves. Popular correct identified points included that the source came from the government/official statistics, the likelihood that not all deaths might be officially recorded and the fact that the data stopped at 2018. A few candidates noted that the data was quantitative and therefore could not explain the reasons behind the life expectancy figures; or that the data had been 'adapted' and therefore modified in some way which could negatively impact validity.

(d)   Many candidates did not describe strengths of comparative studies and wrote answers which were vague. Better responses focused on the ability of such studies to enable comparability over time or across different social groups. A few candidates mentioned the famous Durkheim study on suicide or the idea of comparative studies as a useful secondary data source often drawing upon large data sets.

(e)   This question on the strengths and limitations of social surveys drew a more confident response. Popular strengths included the ease of using them to access a large and varied sample, closed questions/quantitative data leading to the ability to derive patterns and trends, ease of analysis and the ability to present in graphs, charts etc. Popular limitations included low response rates, the lack of qualitative data and corresponding depth and detail and the lack of validity resulting from respondents not understanding questions correctly (if there is no interviewer present).

(f)   This question required candidates to explain why many sociologists use a pilot study in their research. Many candidates clearly knew what a pilot study was and gave several reasons. Candidates who scored best made at least three developed points. Common answers included the need to test the feasibility of a proposed research plan, to check that questions are clear and give relevant data, to check the accessibility of the sample, ethics. A minority of candidates did not know what a pilot study was. Others made fewer than three points that were either undeveloped or only partially developed.

(g)   The essay question focused on evaluating the extent to which the Marxist view of society is correct. It proved challenging for many candidates. Some understood the basic ideas of Marxist theory and described the basic conflict between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in capitalism. These candidates focused on the inequality of the relationship between the two classes using terms such as 'exploitation' and 'oppression.' Others discussed the 'myth of meritocracy' and issues of social control of the masses. On the 'against' side a few candidates discussed the functionalist and feminist views by way of contrast. However, very few candidates provided a range of points each way, i.e., three or more on each side, and this limited marks. Some candidates had little or no knowledge of the Marxist theory of society.

Section B: Culture, identity and socialisation

Question 2

(a)   This question asked candidates to define the term 'role-modelling.' It drew a particularly good response with many candidates achieving two marks linking to the idea of copying the behaviour of someone we look up to and admire. Where candidates only scored one mark it was usually due to them only mentioning one of these two elements.

(b)   This question required candidates to describe two features of traditional femininity. Many candidates scored well on this question with common answers describing the housewife role or feminine dress styles, character traits such as gentleness, emotional and the capacity to nurture. Those who scored less did not describe the features or only identified one and described it.

(c)   This question focused on how socialisation occurs through the hidden curriculum. There was a varied response. Those who scored best made three developed points. Common answers discussed the transmission of norms and values, social control via sanctions and rewards, teacher expectations and role-modelling. Candidates who scored less well usually made only one or two points sometimes with little or no development.

(d)   The eight-mark question asked candidates to explain why sub-cultures exist in society. Few candidates scored top band largely due to a lack of developed points. Many answers tended towards common sense though creditworthy points such as that some groups disagreed with the

rules of society, or they shared common interests. More sociological points focused on the struggle for rights (LGBT+), political rebellion by working class groups such as the skinheads and the functionalist idea of sub-cultures as a safety valve for adolescents, allowing young people to vent their frustrations and feel a sense of togetherness with their peers. A minority of candidates had no knowledge of sub-cultures.

(f) The essay question focused on the extent to which religion is the most effective agency of social control. Many candidates scored in band two due to the lack of range and development of arguments, a few managed to achieve band three. Candidates identified ways in which religion controls individuals including the use of formal and informal sanctions and rewards such as beliefs in an afterlife for those who conform, the guidelines or rules into which people are socialised that are contained in holy books, religious leaders as role models and the general induction into religious norms and values that occurs through the family. There were a few one-sided answers although most suggested contra arguments, including the idea that society is now becoming more secular and hence religion has diminishing power. Candidates also had plenty of choice in terms of other agencies of social control, both informal and formal, and common arguments put forward aspects of education, the family and formal agencies such as the government and the criminal justice system which can draw upon more serious sanctions.

Section C: Social Inequality

Question 3

(a) Many candidates achieved two marks defining absolute poverty. Most described the idea that individuals lack necessities and then gave examples such as food, water, shelter or medicine. Answers which only scored one mark lacked one of these elements.

(b) There was mixed success in answering this question asking for two examples of life chances. A range of examples were offered including education, employment opportunities and life expectancy though candidates could also have explored health, housing and social mobility. Those who did not achieve full marks either gave one example or gave two but left one or both undeveloped. Only a little unpacking is required for each example here so, for example, if a candidate identified education, they could then write a sentence describing how the opportunity to go to school and achieve qualifications opens doors to better jobs and the pay and rewards it brings. A small number of candidates had no understanding of life chances.

(c) This question proved to be challenging for some candidates in terms of gaining enough developed points to score in band two. The question asked how discrimination affects women's lives and to achieve full marks three points with development were needed. Some candidates described inequalities but did not discuss the effects. Alternatively some wrote about why gender inequalities exist, for example because of sexist assumptions. The best answers focused on ideas such as the glass ceiling preventing upward mobility, women's careers being hampered by continuing stereotypes and expectations surrounding the housewife role and triple shift and the greater likelihood of poverty due to low pay in the workplace.

(d) This question asked candidates to explain why a dependency culture exists in some societies. It proved to be challenging for many candidates. The phrase dependency culture is often used in New Right criticisms of the welfare state and the underclass. It involves certain norms and values such as the need for immediate gratification, fatalism, having a sense of entitlement, being lazy or workshy etc. More successful answers focused on ideas such as this and explicitly linked to values and norms to illustrate the cultural aspect of the term. Most identified at least one aspect, but few explained two or more. Some candidates appeared to have no knowledge of the term dependency culture.

(e) The essay question asked candidates to discuss the extent to which ethnicity is the most important influence on social mobility in modern societies. Most candidates scored in band one or two due to a lack of range and development. Many identified racism as the core factor in support of ethnicity being a key form of inequality and explored various aspects such as labelling or ethnocentrism in education, discrimination in employment and overrepresentation in arrest and prison rates. Arguments against focused on ideas such as equal opportunities laws and famous ethnic minority success stories showing that racism is no longer prevalent. Others examined competing factors such as gender discrimination, ageism and social class inequality as more important than ethnicity. A minority did not know what ethnicity was.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 0495/12
Paper 12

Key messages

- On the data response **Question (1c)** encourage candidates to firstly identify an issue in the source and then to unpack/develop their point in a second sentence. Candidates should also look for common 'issues' such as if the source is outdated, adapted or is derived from official statistics.
- On **Questions (1d)** and **(1e)** a good technique is for candidates to first identify a feature of the method in question and then describe the strengths and/or limitations. For example in **(1d)** identifying that closed questions are often used in a telephone questionnaire and then describing the problem that this may not allow respondents to give depth and detail in their answers which will inhibit validity.
- On **Question (1f)** candidates should avoid evaluation as this is not required by the question which asks candidates to explain.
- Candidates should be encouraged to write extended responses (**1f**, **1g** and optional **Questions 2/3 c**, **d** and **e**) in paragraph form to prevent distinct points overlapping or coalescing into each other.
- Encourage candidates not to waste time and effort writing extraneous detail in questions that do not require it e.g. where candidates are asked to 'identify' (**1a**, **1b**) where a word or phrase will suffice.

General comments

Candidates showed a good level of engagement with the question paper and the assessment objectives. Time management appears to have been good, with only a few candidates not finishing the paper.

Many candidates showed a good knowledge and understanding of sociological concepts and theory. Many applied this knowledge well to the demands of the actual questions. In essay responses the evaluation skills evidenced by some candidates were impressive, going beyond juxtaposition by using other perspectives to interrogate the view in the question.

The research methods unit was done well though the technique for answering the data response **Question (1c)** and the methods evaluation **Questions (1d)** and **(1e)** could be improved. In the optional questions **Question two** (Culture, socialisation and identity) was far more popular that **Question three** (Social inequality) and tended to be done better overall. There were very few rubric errors and non-responses.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Theory and Methods

Question 1

(a) A particularly good response here with most candidates achieving full marks by correctly identifying the two years in which the highest number of people reported their health as 'very good.'

(b) This question was done well by most candidates who identified two research methods which are useful for studying people's health, apart from questionnaires. The most common responses were interviews and surveys though any primary quantitative research method scored a mark. Candidates who did not achieve both marks did not use primary research methods but instead used sampling types, secondary data or health statistics. A few candidates erred by using questionnaires despite the question specifying this should not be given as a response.

(c) The data analysis question drew a mixed response. Most candidates identified something creditable for this question, most commonly identifying that the sample sizes were decreasing, the

self-reported nature of the data and that the survey was only conducted on those aged 16 and over. However, some candidates did not develop their points sufficiently to gain full marks. A few candidates misunderstood the source, e.g., wrongly suggesting the research was only conducted on 16-year-olds. Some candidates put forward purely speculative points, e.g. asserted that the data lacked validity and/or reliability with no links to the data in the table.

(d) This question asked candidates to describe two limitations of using telephone questionnaires in research. Some candidates chose to define the method in their first sentence and then go on to select appropriate aspects of the method and their limitations. Popular correct answers included the inability of the researcher to read body language, the lack of rapport and qualitative data achievable from a questionnaire format, the idea that many people may not have access to a phone or that the research may suffer if there are internet connection issues. Some candidates developed such points sociologically, but others did not explain the negative impact of their point. Time-consuming was referenced but not always unpacked. Some candidates made no link to any aspect of a telephone questionnaire and simply speculated about a lack of validity or reliability. A few candidates talked about the respondent 'filling in' the questionnaire which showed a misunderstanding of the method.

(e) This question on the strengths and limitations of stratified sampling proved particularly challenging for many candidates. Some responses started with a definition of stratified sampling but did not then fully describe its strengths and limitations. Many candidates did not appear to fully understand stratified sampling or its possible strengths and limitations. As a result very few scored full marks. For strengths a common answer was that stratified samples are more likely to be representative and generalisable. A few candidates also alighted on the fact that stratifying a sample then enables comparisons to be made between different social groups. For limitations some candidates pointed out that a sampling frame is needed to stratify and such frames are not always available e.g. criminal gangs. Others pointed out that the process of stratifying a sample can be complex and time consuming particularly if many distinct groups are targeted. Some candidates treated stratified sampling as a research method and described the type of data that would be gained, suggesting some confusion about the distinction between sampling and research methods.

(f) This question required candidates to explain why some sociologists prefer large-scale research. It is an extended response question and requires at least three well-developed points to score in band three. Most candidates score in bands one and two due to a lack of development. Many candidates correctly identified the preference for large scale research with structuralists and/or positivist/macro approaches. They often proceeded to link this preference to a scientific approach, quantitative data, objectivity etc. Durkheim's study on suicide featured frequently. However, such points often tended to be descriptive and did not explain the actual benefits of this approach. Better responses linked large sample sizes to representativeness and generalisability and the ability to generate substantial amounts of quantitative data to the ability to establish patterns, trends and correlations between variables. Some candidates provided vague points relating to studying lots of people and often relied upon the catch all phrase 'valid and reliable.' Candidates who scored less well made fewer than three points and these were often undeveloped or only partially developed.

(g) The essay question focused on evaluating the extent to which ethical issues are the most important factor when planning sociological research. On the whole many candidates formulated a balanced debate with quality of development often the main differentiator. Many responses demonstrated a sound knowledge of ethical issues linked to informed consent, deception, privacy and harm. Some used famous studies such as Milgram, Ventakesh, Humphreys and Rosenthal and Jacobson to illustrate ethical issues to exceptionally beneficial effect. However, many responses listed or described ethical issues rather than stating why they are important in planning research aside from asserting that they should not be done. Several weaker candidates confused ethical issues with ethnicity and wrote about the importance of being aware of ethnicity and race in research. In evaluation, most discussed the importance of pilot studies and choice of research method, practical issues such as time and cost and theoretical issues such as the need for validity, reliability and generalisability of data and findings as potentially more important to some sociologists. Where candidates did include conclusions, often they were summative and few made judgements based on evidence presented.

Section B: Culture, identity and socialisation

Question 2

(a)   This question asked candidates to define the term 'globalisation'. Most candidates scored at least one mark. Those that achieved two marks linked the ideas of interconnectedness across the world with countries being influenced in different ways by each other. Many candidates confused globalisation with global culture or westernisation and hence were confined to one mark for giving an example.

(b)   This question required candidates to describe two agents of formal social control. The expected answers identified the government, police, prison service and armed forces and described how they control social behaviour by enacting law, sometimes by using coercion. Many candidates did not seem to understand the distinction between formal and informal control and used institutions like media and family as examples which were not creditworthy. Education, religion and the workplace do sometimes use formal control, however, in such cases credit was given for the description only if candidates linked the control to rules or laws.

(c)   Candidates found this question demanding. It asked candidates to explain the impact of canalisation on gender identity. Many candidates knew what canalisation involves – channelling children's behaviours through toys and activities – and linked the process to primary socialisation via the Ann Oakley study and went on to describe examples such as girls being given dolls and boys action figures/soldiers to play with. Weaker responses lacked discussion of the impact of this on the gender identity of girls and boys. The best answers talked about how dolls and kitchen sets prepare girls for future nurturing roles as housewives and mothers or how being encouraged to play contact sports like rugby or football encourage aggression and toughness as part of masculine identity. A few candidates wove verbal appellation and manipulation into their answers, conflating these processes with canalisation.

(d)   The eight-mark question asked candidates to explain why schools are an important agent of socialisation. Candidates seemed more confident with this question. Most referred to the hidden curriculum and sanctions/rewards, often with pertinent examples. There were sound references to functionalist and Marxist ideas. Popular points included the teaching of key social norms and values via the hidden curriculum, the regulation of behaviour and teaching of discipline via sanctions and the reinforcement of traditional gender identities. However, whilst knowledge was generally good relatively few candidates gave three of more developed points and hence few achieved top band. A few responses confused socialisation with socialising.

(e)   The essay question focused on the extent to which multiculturalism is a strength of modern industrial societies. There was a mixed response reflecting the fact that some candidates are not entirely secure in their knowledge of the concept of multiculturalism. Many responses were vague and common sense based. However, responses that scored well used some interesting, localised examples. Some also successfully applied a theoretical analysis, referring to functionalists as critics of multiculturalism. In their arguments 'for' candidates explored increased social tolerance and the many benefits of diversity in terms of cuisine, clothing, the enjoyment of festivals and learning about other ways of seeing the world. The 'against' side of the argument tended to be stronger and points raised included the inevitability of assimilation, homogenisation and loss of minority cultures, cultural conflict (with some excellent examples), the expense of supporting multifarious cultures as well as the loss of an overarching host culture to provide foundational norms and values for all. Some candidates were confused in terms of seeing assimilation and global culture as aspects of multiculturalism. A good range of well-developed points supported with evidence allowed some candidates to achieve at least level three if not level four.

Section C: Social Inequality

Question 3

(a)   This question on 'vertical segregation' was not answered well. Candidates who achieved both marks defined vertical segregation in terms of unequal positioning of a group within an organisational hierarchy. Most understood and explained the concept in terms of gender discrimination in the workplace. Answers which only scored one mark lacked one of the two definitional elements or simply gave an example with no definition.

(b) There was generally a good response to this question which asked candidates to describe two ways in which the welfare state helps individuals. Common correct answers included helping the unemployed through benefits, helping the elderly with pensions and helping those in poverty in terms of the provision of free education and healthcare. Candidates who scored full marks unpacked each point with a little further information – for example that free education allowed those living in poverty the chance to achieve qualifications and gain social mobility. Those who did not achieve full marks either identified one feature or identified two but left one or both undeveloped.

(c) This question asked candidates to explain how some ethnic minority groups are scapegoated in society. It was challenging for many candidates. The best answers tended to focus on immigrants being blamed for taking jobs from the host community, minorities being blamed for crime – Hall's study of mugging featured in some answers as well as contemporary examples of African Americans or Muslims being blamed for crimes and being targeted by police as a result. Some successfully developed Marxist points about scapegoating creating false consciousness and division amongst the working class. Others linked labelling of groups in the media as integral to the scapegoating process. Some knew what scapegoating was and provided a definition in terms of ethnic minorities being blamed for things that are not their fault. But many did not offer any examples of such blaming and drifted into a generic discussion of racial inequalities which were frequently not creditworthy in terms of the question.

(d) This question asked candidates to explain why ascribed status can affect a person's life chances. There were some good responses that referenced how being born into a certain caste, social class, gender or ethnicity can affect chances for education, social mobility, life expectancy etc. Theories such as functionalism, Marxism and feminism were often successfully brought into answers. Some responses were narrow in range – for example focusing exclusively on social class – whilst others made points that were only partially developed. A few candidates confused ascribed with achieved status.

(e) The essay question asked candidates to discuss the extent to which gender is the most influential factor in social inequality. It was accessible with most candidates giving a balanced argument with several points made on each side. Many responses focused on rehearsing feminist arguments about patriarchy, the dual and triple burden, domestic violence, the glass ceiling, vertical and horizontal segregation and inequalities in education. There was some excellent conceptual and theoretical knowledge on show. In terms of arguments against many candidates pointed out the legal gains made by women in many countries, more joint conjugal roles within families and improvements within education and the workplace. Others made arguments that social class, age and ethnicity were more important than gender in understanding social inequality today. Candidates who scored less well offered fewer points and often offered minimal evidence in development of those points. Whilst a few responses addressed the 'to what extent' and provided focused conclusions, these tended to be in the minority.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 0495/13
Paper 13

Key messages

- Candidates' knowledge of some key terms could be improved, for example getting candidates to create their own glossary for each unit. This would enable them to not only obtain full marks in (option a) questions but would also help them to understand key terms in other questions.
- On the data response **Question (1c)** encourage candidates to firstly identify an issue in the source and then to unpack/develop their point in a second sentence. Candidates should also look for common 'issues' such as if the source is outdated, adapted or is derived from official statistics.
- On **Questions (1d)** and **(1e)** a good technique is for candidates to first identify a feature of the method in question and then describe the strengths and/or limitations. For example in **(1e)** identifying that closed questions are used in a structured interview and then describing the problem that this may not allow respondents to give depth and detail in their answers which will inhibit validity.
- On **Question (1f)** candidates should avoid evaluation as the question asks for explanation and no evaluation is required.
- Candidates should be encouraged to write extended responses in paragraph form to prevent different points overlapping or coalescing into each other.

General comments

Candidates showed a good level of engagement with the question paper and the assessment objectives. Time management appears to have been good, with only few candidates not finishing the paper. Higher scoring candidates tended to enumerate points and write in paragraphs in extended answers. This is helpful to examiners and prevents distinct points blurring into and overlapping with each other. In essay responses whilst the evaluation skills evidenced by some candidates were particularly good, relatively few candidates were able to develop the full range of points with suitably robust evidence.

Candidates' knowledge of theory was in many instances impressive. Question one was done well with many candidates being well prepared to discuss various aspects of sociological research methodology. The technique for answering the data response **Question (1c)** and the methods evaluation questions themselves **(1d)** and **(1e)**, however, could be improved. It remains the case that some candidates use concepts such as validity and reliability interchangeably or use them both together when making a point when this is rarely creditworthy.

In the optional questions question two (Culture, socialisation and identity) was far more popular that question three (Social inequality) and tended to be done better overall. There were very few rubric errors and non-responses.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Theory and Methods

Question 1

(a)   A particularly good response here with most candidates achieving full marks by correctly identifying two family types which decreased from 2012 to 2020.

(b)   This question was done well by most candidates who identified two research methods which are useful for gaining statistics. Any primary quantitative research method sufficed to score a mark.

Candidates who did not achieve both marks put a type of data e.g. quantitative or official statistics – neither response answered the question as set.

(c) The data analysis question drew a mixed response. Popular correct points included that the source did not include all family types and thus data was unrepresentative, the data only covered every two years so gives no information about intervening years and that it is the form of quantitative data which gives no information as to why the figures are as they are. A few candidates noticed that the data came from official statistics and may therefore be prone to political bias; or that the data had been 'adapted' and therefore modified in some way which could negatively impact validity. Candidates who did not score well sometimes simply read off information from the table or asserted that the data lacked validity and/or reliability with no specific link to the data in the table.

(d) Some candidates did not describe two limitations of using open questions in research. Those who achieved good marks focused on the inability of open questions to provide quantitative data and hence patterns and trends and the difficulty of analysing data in word form and the tendency of respondents to go off on a tangent when asked open question thus giving irrelevant data. Some candidates presumed that open questions were inevitably biased or that respondents would have difficulty in understanding such questions. Other responses assumed that open questions formed part of an interview and thus talked about the likelihood of socially desirable answers.

(e) This question on the strengths and limitations of structured interviews drew a slightly more confident response. Popular strengths included the use of closed questions yielding quantitative data which give patterns and trends and the standardised format allowing for research to be easily replicated as a check. Some candidates focused on the fact that an interviewer is present and used this to identify both a strength and a weakness; the strength being that it enabled clarification of questions and hence more valid data, the limitation being the interviewer effect. Other critical points raised included the inflexible format of structured interviews not allowing for probing and rich qualitative data. Practical issues of time and cost were not rewarded unless properly contextualised by candidates.

(f) This question required candidates to explain why some sociologists use more than one method in their research. Many candidates made a link to triangulation and gave some positive rationale. Candidates who scored best made at least three developed points in their response. Common answers included the idea that several methods could function as a validity check on data gathered, that it could enable researchers to gather both qualitative and quantitative data and that it enabled more data from respondents thus giving a bigger picture of social reality. There were sound references to positivism and interpretivism. Candidates who scored less well made fewer than three points and these were often undeveloped or only partially developed. Some candidates spent time and effort writing negative or evaluative points which were not creditworthy.

(g) The essay question focused on evaluating the extent to which feminist views of society are correct. A few candidates spoke knowledgably about the different strands of feminism: liberal, radical and Marxist feminists but this level of sophistication was not needed to achieve full marks. Many candidates made a range of points using concepts such as patriarchy, gender role socialisation, hidden curriculum, segregated roles, the glass ceiling, the dual burden/triple shift and horizontal/vertical segregation. On the 'against' side candidates discussed the improved socio-economic position of women and greater legal equality. Functionalist, Marxist and even postmodernist views also featured by way of contrast. On the whole many candidates formulated a balanced debate with quality of development often the main differentiator.

Section B: Culture, identity and socialisation

Question 2

(a) This question asked candidates to define the term 'stereotype.' It drew a generally good response with many candidates achieving two marks linking to the idea of a generalised and often incorrect view of a social group. Where candidates only scored one mark it was usually due to them missing out one of these two elements or just giving a correct example.

(b) This question required candidates to describe two features of traditional masculinity. Many candidates scored well on this question with common answers describing the breadwinner and protector roles in the family, physical strength, mental toughness and/or the idea that men should

not show emotion or cry. Those who scored less did not describe the features or only identified one and described it.

(c) This question was demanding in that it focused on two elements how a person's identity is influenced by social institutions. It drew a varied response. Those who scored best made three developed points linked to social institutions such as the family, education, peer group, the media, workplace etc. Common answers discussed primary socialisation and the hidden curriculum's effect in reinforcing gender identity, employer sanctions in shaping effective workers roles and the effects of peer pressure on individual conformity to group norms and values. Candidates who scored less well usually made only one or two points sometimes with little or no development. Some candidates made no creditable references to social institutions.

(d) The eight-mark question asked candidates to explain why some sub-cultures do not conform to the norms and values of society. Few candidates scored in the top band largely due to a lack of full development. Candidates tended to make generic points such as that some groups disagreed with the rules of society, feel marginalised, want to rebel or seek more freedom. Very few candidates gave examples or evidence to support such ideas. Cohen's mods and rockers, skinheads and anti-school sub-cultures did feature occasionally and some candidates made effective use of the functionalist ideas of the 'safety valve,' youthful experimentation and boundary-breaking.

(e) The essay question focused on the extent to which the family is the most effective agency of social control. Arguments 'for' included the transmission of norms and values in primary socialisation, the use of sanctions and rewards, and techniques such as canalisation and manipulation to steer children into their gender identity. There were a few one-sided answers although most included contra arguments, including the idea that society is now becoming more secular and hence religion has diminishing power. Candidates also had plenty of choice in terms of other agencies of social control, both informal and formal, and common arguments drew upon aspects of education, media, religion and formal agencies such as the government and the criminal justice system which use more serious sanctions.

Section C: Social Inequality

Question 3

(a) This question on 'life chances' was not answered well. Candidates who achieved both marks defined life chances as opportunities to improve an individuals' prospects in some way. Many gave examples such as education, employment opportunities, health, housing and social mobility. Answers which only scored one mark lacked one of the two definitional elements or simply gave an example with no definition.

(b) There was mixed success in answering this question asking for two features of a culture of poverty. It was expected that candidates would focus on norms and values such as a lack of education, fatalism or immediate gratification those that did simply needed to expand on the feature to achieve the two marks per point. So, for example, some linked fatalism to the idea of the cycle of poverty or the poverty trap. Those who did not achieve full marks either identified one feature or identified two but left one or both undeveloped.

(c) This question was generally well done. The question asked how gender discrimination has a negative effect upon women's lives and to achieve full marks three points with development are needed. Some candidates described discrimination but did not discuss the effects. Alternatively some wrote about why gender discrimination exists rather than how it affects women. The best answers tended to focus on areas such as family, education, employment etc., detailing the discrimination experienced and the impact that may have. For example, many discussed the idea that the glass ceiling prevents upward mobility, the fact that women's careers are being hampered by continuing stereotypes and expectations surrounding the housewife role and triple shift and the greater likelihood of poverty due to low pay rates for many women in the workplace.

(d) This question asked candidates to explain why some sociologists argue that a meritocracy exists in modern industrial society. It proved to be challenging for many candidates. More successful answers linked the idea to the functionalist perspective and focused their answers on the importance of achieved status, universal and/or free education, equal opportunities legislation and open societies encouraging social mobility. Most candidates identified at least one aspect, but few explained two or more.

(e)   The essay question asked candidates to discuss the extent to which has the welfare state has failed to reduce social inequality. Many candidates scored in band two due to a lack of range and development. To score in band three a minimum of four sociological points each with some development/evidence are needed. For band four a minimum of six well developed points must be made. Arguments for the failure of the welfare state tended to point to the fact that the cycle of poverty, the culture of poverty and the poverty trap all remain untouched by welfare reforms. Others focused on other serious social inequalities such as racism or sexism being largely unaffected by welfare state initiatives. Arguments against the view focused on ideas such as welfare benefits keeping absolute poverty at bay, pensions to allow elderly people to live with ease, free basic healthcare for rich and poor alike and measures such as progressive taxation to redistribute wealth.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 0495/21
Paper 21

Key messages

Question (e) requires a debate – this means there needs to be developed points both for and against, with a conclusion. Some one-sided **(e)** answers were seen which consequently caps the marks awarded.

Candidates should be encouraged to show their sociological knowledge by using terms, concepts, studies and theories whenever possible. This approach allowed a lot of candidates to achieve good marks in this examination series. However, some candidates could only score lower marks as their answers tended to be based on common sense rather than Sociology.

Candidates should spend time thinking about what the questions are asking and planning answers to those longer questions before they start to write – this is particularly important in the 15-mark **part (e)** essay questions to ensure that candidates remain focused on the specific demands of the question set.

Some candidates are not using paragraphs in the longer responses, making it difficult for Examiners to see where points begin and end. A 'point per paragraph' structure is therefore recommended. Candidates would benefit from essay writing skills and techniques for the **part (e)** questions as 'range' and 'development' are key factors.

Candidates should be encouraged to use the marks per question as guidance for how much should be written and how long should be spent on a particular question. At times, for example, candidates were writing as much for a **part (c)** question worth 6 marks as for a **part (e)** question worth 15. Time management skills and regular practice of timed examination questions in the classroom will really help with this.

Command words are crucial. In the **part (b)** questions, for example, some answers were insufficiently developed (the command word is to 'describe'). Similar issues were seen in **parts (c), (d)** and **(e)**. Some training in the classroom into the requirements of the various command words would prove beneficial.

General comments

Section A (Family) was the most popular option, followed by **Section B** (Education) and **Section C** (Crime). The least answered option was **Section D** (Media).

Many candidates successfully used relevant contemporary, global and localised examples alongside the more traditional 'textbook' evidence in order to justify and substantiate several of the points made. This demonstrated both sociological knowledge and the ability to apply sociological concepts and theory to the real world and so should be encouraged.

Very few rubric errors at all were seen this examination session, allowing most candidates to maximise their chances of success. Some candidates did not number or incorrectly numbered their answers, however, and centres would be advised to ensure candidates are aware of the importance of doing this diligently.

In the **part (a)** question, candidates should look to include **two** separate elements in their definition. Examples can be a really useful way of adding a second element to an answer and are thus to be encouraged.

Part (b) needs **two** distinctly different points with some development – candidates should separate these and label them clearly.

In **part (c)** questions candidates should make more than two evidenced and developed sociological points.

For **part (d)** candidates should adopt a similar approach as for **(c)** but need to develop ideas further, consider more range and ensure concepts/theory/studies are used appropriately. Concepts, quality of response and explicit sociological engagement tend to be the key differentiator between a **part (c)** and a **part (d)** question.

In terms of the 15-mark **part (e)** question, candidates should be encouraged to organise their answers into paragraphs and to develop each idea fully using theory, studies, examples and/or concepts wherever relevant. Candidates should aim for three developed points for and three developed points against the claim in the question. There also needs to be a well-focused conclusion that makes a supported judgement on the claim in the question. Each point made should be directly focused upon what the question is asking and should engage sociologically and conceptually wherever possible.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Family

Question 1

(a) Responses to this question were generally good, showing a clear understanding of 'serial monogamy' as a concept. Some candidates were less specific in their responses, however, and thus only achieved reward for a partial definition e.g. by not making it clear that this was over a lifetime.

(b) This was a question about patriarchy in the family and most candidates demonstrated secure and clear knowledge and understanding. Typically, candidates focused on conjugal roles, power, decision making, dual burden and domestic violence.

(c) Responses were mixed for this question, depending on the candidate's understanding of the term 'secularisation'. This demonstrates the importance of ensuring all areas of the syllabus are covered and learnt. Key ideas used successfully were decline in the marriage rate, divorce, reconstituted families, singlehood, lone parents and same-sex families. The best answers explicitly linked the points raised to family life.

(d) Most candidates demonstrated some knowledge and understanding of Marxism and capitalism. Candidates who then linked this understanding to the family scored well. The most common ideas discussed were the warm bath theory, preventing a revolution, the family as consumers and socialization into the norms and values of the dominant ideology. Knowledge of theories from Unit 1 needs to be applied across all other units in the syllabus.

(e) This question was typically well answered with most candidates made points on both sides of the debate. Some candidates, however, gave unnecessary and overly long introductions and/or set their answers in the past. The question is about families today and thus in order to be rewarded it is crucial that the debate centres around contemporary families. Some responses demonstrated some excellent understanding of legislation, changing attitudes, the impact of ethnicity and religion and the widespread influence of feminism.

Section B: Education

Question 2

(a) The term 'immediate gratification' was not clearly understood by all candidates, demonstrating how crucial it is that all areas of the syllabus are covered and learnt.

(b) This question was well answered with candidates clearly well versed in the different types of schools from the syllabus. Knowledgeable and accurate answers were typically seen with private and state schools being the most common types of school described.

(c) There was much sociological engagement demonstrated with the concept of the 'hidden curriculum'. Strong candidates demonstrated conceptual and theoretical knowledge and understanding e.g. feminism/Marxism. Gender roles, social conformity and hierarchy were the most commonly used creditable points seen.

(d) Responses were not always focused sufficiently on the wording of the question and did not always demonstrate understanding of how education and social mobility are linked. The better answers integrated concepts and theory with explanations – Marxism and feminism particularly. Some weaker responses were descriptive and common-sense in focus with no clearly distinguished points made.

(e) Most candidates created a debate about whether schools influence educational achievement. A wide range of points and sociological evidence were seen. Those candidates that focused well on the question integrated concepts and theories, referring to Marxism, feminism, setting, private schools, ethnocentrism and role models to formulate their 'for' points. Most commonly used in evaluation were home, cultural and social factors which challenged the notion of schools being influential well. Candidates should be encouraged to use signal words such as 'firstly', secondly', 'in contrast', 'in conclusion' etc. to help structure their answers.

Section C: Crime, deviance and social control

Question 3

(a) Most candidates understood the term 'youth sub-culture' typically defining it with ideas such as rejection of norms and values, smaller group of young people within society and examples such as hippies and skinheads.

(b) This question was well answered by candidates who recognised the complexity of offending through description of ideas such as poverty, age and discrimination.

(c) Some candidates did not focus on the 'time' aspect of the question sufficiently in this question, focusing instead on more generic ideas of relativity which could not be credited. Those that did, however, gave pertinent and clear examples to illustrate how definitions of crime are not static and do change over time. Many relevant localised examples were well used here too.

(d) Many candidates demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the agencies of socialisation and social control and the processes used. This approach worked well and led to successful responses. Formal and informal agents were all permissible answers and so there was a great variety of ideas in the responses seen from candidates. Theory was also used to good effect by some candidates e.g. functionalist claims of a value consensus.

(e) Most candidates answering this question tackled it through the advantages and disadvantages route, only the very best candidates successfully interweaved the two. This was perfectly acceptable and led to some high marks being awarded. Some confusion was seen around understanding of what a victim survey was or how it was used as a measurement of crime. As a key part of the measuring crime topic, this needs to be fully covered to allow candidates to tackle such questions with confidence. Methodological concepts such as reliability and validity were used with mixed success, again there was a lot of error and confusion seen.

Section D: Media

Question 4

(a) 'Socialisation' was well understood by candidates and thus many scored highly in this question. Media examples were often used in order to tie responses to this area of the syllabus, e.g. role modelling, imitation etc.

(b) A large number of candidates used new media, particularly, social media, to formulate their points about the media being global and this worked well. Examples were well chosen and relevant on the whole e.g. the George Floyd case in America.

(c) This was a topical question resulting in good sociological knowledge and understanding. Ideas about access, content, networks and communication were well integrated and produced some very good answers.

(d) Most candidates demonstrated good understanding of both new and traditional media and were well placed to compare the two. Examples and concepts added clarity, e.g. uploading material,

citizen journalism, top-down approach etc. The best responses linked knowledge to the idea of freedom. This idea was very open and allowed candidates to talk about freedom from such diverse areas as censorship, stereotyping, ownership, audience reach etc.

(e)   This was a straightforward debate for most candidates who successfully demonstrated their knowledge and understanding of socialisation processes and agencies. On the 'for' side most commonly seen ideas were linked to media violence, media effects models, role modelling and new media influencers. On the against side candidates typically took one of two legitimate approaches. Either challenging the 'for' side with the idea that the media is not influential in terms of socialisation, e.g. through audience centred approaches. Or by offering evidence that other agencies are more influential, e.g. primary socialisation in the family or the role of the peer group.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 0495/22
Paper 22

Key messages

Candidates' knowledge of definitions could have been better. A good understanding of key terms would enable candidates to not only obtain full marks in **part (a)** questions, but would also help them to understand key terminology in other questions.

Question (e) requires a debate – this means there needs to be developed points both for and against, with a conclusion. Some one-sided **(e)** answers were seen which consequently caps the marks awarded.

Candidates should be encouraged to show their sociological knowledge by using terms, concepts, studies and theories whenever possible. This approach allowed a lot of candidates to achieve good marks in this examination series. However, some candidates could only score lower marks as their answers tended to be based on common sense rather than Sociology.

Candidates should spend time thinking about what the questions are asking and planning answers to those longer questions before they start to write – this is particularly important in the 15-mark **part (e)** essay questions to ensure that candidates remain focused on the specific demands of the question set.

Some candidates are not using paragraphs in the longer responses, making it difficult for Examiners to see where points begin and end. A 'point per paragraph' structure is therefore recommended. Candidates would benefit from essay writing skills and techniques for the **part (e)** questions as 'range' and 'development' are key factors.

Candidates should be encouraged to use the marks per question as guidance for how much should be written and how long should be spent on a particular question. At times, for example, candidates were writing as much for a **part (c)** question worth 6 marks as for a **part (e)** question worth 15. Time management skills and regular practice of timed examination questions in the classroom will really help with this.

Command words are crucial. In the **part (b)** questions, for example, some answers were insufficiently developed (the command word is to 'describe'). Similar issues were seen in **parts (c), (d)** and **(e)**. Some training in the classroom into the requirements of the various command words would prove beneficial.

General comments

Many responses showed a generally good level of engagement with the question paper and the assessment objectives. Time management appears to have been good with very few candidates who did not manage to finish the paper. Some candidates were enumerating points which is helpful, though some candidates did not write in paragraphs in longer essay-style questions. The base understanding of the topics was good. There were very few very rubric errors or non-responses. Examiners felt that the examination paper was accessible to all and performed well.

Section A (Family) was the most popular option, followed by *Section B* (Education) and *Section C* (Crime). The least answered option was *Section D* (Media).

Many candidates successfully used relevant contemporary, global and localised examples alongside the more traditional 'textbook' evidence in order to justify and substantiate several of the points made. This demonstrated both sociological knowledge and the ability to apply sociological concepts and theory to the real world and so should be encouraged.

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In terms of the 15-mark **part (e)** question, candidates should be encouraged to organise their answers into paragraphs and to develop each idea fully using theory, studies, examples and/or concepts wherever relevant. Candidates should aim for three developed points for and three developed points against the claim in the question. There also needs to be a well-focused conclusion that makes a supported judgement on the claim in the question. Each point made should be directly focused upon what the question is asking and should engage sociologically and conceptually wherever possible.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Family

Question 1

(a)   Most candidates achieved one rather than two marks with some confusion between the concepts of gender and biological sex.

(b)   The question was answered well by the vast majority of the candidates and many responses were credited with full marks. Practical support such as taking care of children while the parents are at work, emotional support such as giving advice and helping in the socialisation of their grandchildren, as well as financial support were cited most commonly. A few weaker answers lacked development and some misinterpretations of the question were seen.

(c)   There was a diversity of ideas seen here with some good responses that mainly referenced the decline of extended family, changes in gender roles and the formation of the privatised nuclear family. Some candidates conflated urbanisation with secularisation and were hence not fully focused on question. Some responses were narrow in range, for example giving only one reason (often well explained). A common error was to describe traditional societies without making it relevant to the question.

(d)   A wide range of responses were seen for this question. The best answers homed in on particular family functions, e.g. socialisation, reproduction, stabilisation of adult personalities and then focused on why these functions had been lost, i.e. the introduction of other agencies, cost of children etc. Good use was made of functionalism, feminism and The New Right in the strongest answers. Some answers were too vague, i.e. mentioning divorce, and did not focus sufficiently on the question which was about 'functions'.

(e)   Overall, this question was answered well with the majority of the candidates presenting balanced answers and offering a range of valid arguments for both sides of the debate. To argue 'for' the family being patriarchal, most responses discussed segregated conjugal roles linking this to men having more power as the breadwinners, the dual burden/triple shift women have, gender role socialisation, domestic violence and inequalities in male and female education among other factors. The best answers provided developed points with clear links to the question throughout. For evaluation, many candidates considered the changing norms and values in society, such as a

shift to symmetrical families, a higher level of financial independence of women and thus more decision-making power, as well as using examples of different ethnicities such as the matrifocal Afro-Caribbean family. There were some good theoretical references to feminism, Marxism and functionalism and studies such as Oakley and Dobash and Dobash.

Section B: Education

Question 2

(a) This question was well answered with most candidates achieving two marks by linking to the idea of a group of students and the development of a set of norms and values that are in opposition to those of the school. Where candidates only scored one mark it was usually due to them repeating the term 'sub-culture' from the question without any additional knowledge.

(b) While some candidates answered the question correctly by identifying and describing two features of comprehensive schools, such as schools that are not selective, schools that provide equality for all their students, schools that have a local catchment area and schools that are free. Other responses incorrectly described other types of schools and and/or provided vague and/or underdeveloped points about schools generally that could not score full marks e.g. 'don't have many resources'.

(c) Lots of examples were given to show how what is being taught in schools is linked to socially acceptable behaviour. Weaker responses left those links implicit or made points that worked but did not develop them to show what was being taught or how it prepared candidates for social expectations. The better answers were more specific in terms of how social expectations are taught, considering factors such as norms and values imparted through the hidden curriculum, positive and negative sanctions, gender roles and teacher labelling. A common error here was to talk about the peer group or peer pressure rather than schools.

(d) This theoretical question gained mixed responses that showed the full range of knowledge about Marxism and social control. Most candidates linked Marxism with the class divide and used terms such as 'capitalist', 'bourgeoisie' and 'proletariat' correctly. At the top end candidates gave sophisticated accounts of false consciousness and indoctrination via education as an example of Althusser's ISA's. A few candidates confused the working class and middle class and a minority were achieved only band one as answers were limited to social control without considering the Marxist perspective.

(e) Overall, the majority of the candidates provided balanced and evaluative answers, offering a range of valid arguments for both sides of the debate. To argue 'for' the statement, candidates discussed factors such as racism and discrimination, teacher stereotypes and labelling and/or the ethnocentric curriculum. Many gave specific examples, referring to different ethnicities such as the Chinese, Pakistani and/or Afro-Caribbean which were often well substantiated with sociological studies e.g. Archer. The evaluation points on the 'against' side were most commonly related to other factors that may also influence educational achievement other than ethnicity, such as gender, social class and/or home factors. Some candidates demonstrated good sociological knowledge but could not be fully credited for it as they did not sufficiently focus on the 'educational achievement' part of the question.

Section C: Crime, deviance and social control

Question 3

(a) Some clear responses were seen with good specific examples of crime prevention e.g. surveillance – others provided partial responses such as 'stop crime'. A number of responses referenced deterrence measures which were duly credited.

(b) This was a very well answered question, with candidates demonstrating their knowledge of cybercrime. Generally most answers scored highly with hacking, cyber bullying, cyber terrorism and identity theft used frequently.

(c) Typically, candidates referred to the young and the elderly within their responses. Many candidates discussed the ageing population in Japan with the increase in crime committed by the elderly and how young people are most likely to commit crime for various reasons, e.g. status frustration,

thrills, relative deprivation. It was a well answered question that allowed candidates to engage sociologically.

(d)   This question provoked a range of interesting and pertinent answers from candidates. Social class, ethnicity and age were discussed in the majority of responses. A few answers considered different types of masculinity to good effect also. While the better answers referred to some theory, most often Marxism, the weaker responses offered general points and/or did not link points to males specifically and/or referred to female crime as well.

(e)   The core elements of labelling theory as an explanation for crime and deviance were generally well understood by most candidates. Some candidates made effective links to Cohen's moral panic theory and Lea and Young's deviancy amplification theory. Concepts such as targeting, master status and the self-fulfilling prophecy were well integrated. However, a common issue was that candidates often simply described the various facets of the theory (master status, self-fulfilling prophesy, deviant career etc.) without explaining why it is a good explanation for crime. Many candidates took a deterministic view suggesting that once an individual is labelled then the future is inevitable. Common arguments against the claim in the question included Merton's strain theory, Cohen's status frustration, material deprivation and Marxism – although sometimes candidates coalesced elements of these theories into labelling theory itself. Some candidates referred to the self-negating prophecy whilst others used gender, social class and ethnicity as foci for counterpoints against labelling theory. A few candidates took a largely descriptive tour of multiple theories and consequently achieved limited success.

Section D: Media

Question 4

(a)   A number of candidates who opted to answer this question identified the term 'agenda setting' correctly, linking it to the media making some topics more important than others. The weaker answers presented vague definitions that scored one mark.

(b)   This question required candidates to provide examples of media gatekeeping. It drew some interesting answers including censorship, paywalls, the watershed, news editors/agenda setting.

(c)   This question was well done in the main; ideas such as political bias, government policies and censorship were frequently used alongside the use of allegedly 'fake' materials to persuade British politicians and the public to support the invasion of Iraq. Examples like Fox News and Nazi Germany often substantiated the points made as well as reference to censorship of the news in more controlled societies such as North Korea and China. The least successful answers lacked examples and sometimes confused propaganda with persuasive advertising techniques, e.g. for beauty products.

(d)   A few candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of the question and while most answers correctly stated why advertising was used, many lacked clear links to media content. Better responses discussed new media and pop ups through the use of cookies, product placement, sponsorship of TV programmes and films and the use of stereotypes, e.g. in adverts targeted at children. Candidates who scored less well tended to lack full development of their points.

(e)   Relatively few candidates showed a good understanding of the uses and gratifications model. Some candidates linked it with the pluralist perspective and identified uses such as entertainment, personal relationships, information/news etc. However, most did not unpack these ideas in sufficient detail to score highly. The most frequent evaluation points used were other models of media effects such as the hypodermic syringe model, active audience or the cultural effects theory.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 0495/23
Paper 23

Key messages

Question (e) requires a debate – this means there needs to be developed points both for and against, with a conclusion. Some one-sided **(e)** answers were seen which consequently caps the marks awarded.

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General comments

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Comments on specific questions

Section A: Family

Question 1

(a)   Candidates generally answered this question well, although there was some confusion between 'empty-nest' and 'empty-shell' families seen.

(b)   This was a well answered question on the whole. Many answers referred to conjugal roles, paid employment and power. Some good development was also seen here.

(c)   This question performed well and allowed candidates to demonstrate their sociological knowledge and understanding of family functions. The most common functions seen were reproduction, socialisation and social control. These were typically well explained. Theory was also used well in this question – feminism, functionalism and Marxism.

(d)   Most candidates knew what a cereal packet family was and said that there were different types of families. A number of candidates did not focus on why some families did not fit the stereotype. There were some excellent answers using Leach and families not being able to conform to the ideal, plus the dark side of the family was well used as evidence.

(e)   The majority of candidates made points on both sides of the debate whilst also bringing in sociological concepts, studies and theories to support these points. Generally responses were better on the 'for' side, using family types, role of women, conjugal roles and children as key points. Many candidates used changing values to talk about divorce, acceptance of new types of families and the rise of feminism to good effect. The 'against' side tended to be less successful. Most commonly used ideas were conjugal roles not changing (feminism) and extended families staying the same (support, guidance etc.).

Section B: Education

Question 2

(a)   Most candidates knew what discrimination was described it. Some candidates confused the term with prejudice and thus were not able to score the full 2 marks. Adding a clear example was the most common way for candidates to confirm their understanding of the term.

(b)   This question was generally well answered, informal education was clearly understood. Most candidates used hidden curriculum, peer group or actions at home as their points. Some candidates confused informal education with home schooling and/or online learning during the pandemic.

(c)   There were some excellent answers seen, using ideas such as functionalism, universal standards and comprehensive schools. However, there was some confusion seen about the meaning of meritocracy which limited marks. A number of 'no responses' were seen on this question.

(d)   This was a generally well answered question with most candidates discussing several feminist criticisms of the education system. There were some common-sense answers seen that did not

focus on the feminist element of the question. There was a good use of sociology with many candidates using the reinforcing of patriarchy, lack of female role models and gendered subject choice. Many responses were well developed and included good explanations of points.

(e)   Candidates generally did better on the 'for' side of the debate for this question. candidates typically linked rewards/sanctions in school to social conformity through ideas such as praise, punishment, motivation, deterrence etc. On the 'against' side many candidates discussed anti-school sub-cultures or peer pressure.

Section C: Crime, deviance and social control

Question 3

(a)   The term 'informal social control' was generally well understood and defined with candidates basing answers on an agent of social control linking with norms and values being enforced. Very few candidates confused the term in the question with formal social control.

(b)   Most candidates gave two examples of white-collar crime. However, some responses were examples of generic crimes e.g. murder, theft etc. which could not be credited. A few candidates confused white-collar crime with cyber-crime.

(c)   This question was particularly well answered by candidates, with them demonstrating conceptual, high-order understanding of the topic. There was strong use of sociology through discussion of ideas such as canteen culture, targeting, labelling, racism and some excellent answers focusing on domestic violence.

(d)   This question produced mixed responses with some candidates demonstrating knowledge of sub-cultures but not linking them with crime and deviance. Answers tended to be repetitive, just changing the sub-culture, e.g. skinheads to punks but adding nothing new. Very few candidates ventured outside the realm of youth sub-cultures. There were some high-end answers that used Cohen/Merton well.

(e)   This question performed similarly to the other **part (e)** questions, being wide ranging and again better on the 'for' side. Candidates tended to go through all the different agents of socialisation, family, education, media being the most common, which was generally well done in terms of effective socialisation preventing crime. On the 'against' side poverty, formal agents and social class were often seen but the links back to why socialisation would not be effective in these cases tended to be weaker.

Section D: Media

Question 4

(a)   'Convergence' was not well understood by candidates. As a key term in the syllabus it is expected that candidates will be familiar with it. Several confused it with media concentration.

(b)   This was a well answered question on the whole with most candidates giving two different ways the working class use the media differently to other social classes. Weaker responses generally made no comparison with another social class.

(c)   Many candidates clearly knew what a folk devil was and the process of creating them. Sociological concepts and terms were well used with good use of sensationalism, labelling, master status and demands for action.

(d)   In the main this question was very well answered. Candidates typically used Marxism, propaganda and censorship to lead their points and discussion. Others took a different approach, using bias in terms of race/gender with equal success.

(e)   This was also a well answered question, with a wide range of responses. Pluralism, postmodernism, interactivity and prosumers were all used to very good effect on the 'for' side. This was coupled with strong focus on media content. Gatekeepers, propaganda, censorship and Marxism were used well on the 'against' side, again with a good focus on media content. Some excellent, conceptual content seen.