

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 0495/11
Paper 11

Key messages

- In Section A of this examination paper ‘ethical issues’ are those involved in the conduct of research (such as consent or deception) rather than social inequalities (such as racism or discrimination).
- In Section A references to research methods should be understood to mean primary methods (e.g. observation) rather than secondary sources (e.g. statistics) or sampling techniques (e.g. snowball sampling).
- Candidates should make an explicit reference to the source, possibly through a quotation, which they should then go on to develop through description.
- In both **Question 1 (d)** and **Question 1 (e)** candidates must link each strength or limitation to a particular feature of the method in the question. For example, in **Question 1 (d)** showing how the qualitative data from an open question can lead to more depth, detail and thus validity.
- In the option **Questions ((c), (d) and (e))** candidates should develop at least three points with evidence.

General comments

In general, many responses showed a 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 finish the paper. Many candidates enumerated points, which is helpful, though some candidates needed to write in paragraphs in longer essay-style questions. The base understanding of methodology was mixed and application and analysis of the source for **Question 1 (c)** was variable. However, many candidates discussed the strengths and limitations of methods well. In essay responses the evaluation skills evidenced by some candidates was good, though some candidates needed to develop a range of points with suitable evidence. There was an even split in the popularity of the two option questions ‘Culture, identity and socialisation’ and ‘Social inequality.’ In both, candidates showed a good grasp of the key theories, concepts and arguments and often used these to good effect. There were few very rubric errors or non-responses.

Section A

Question 1

- (a) Many candidates used the source to identify two ethical issues raised by the research, usually the fact that the companies were unaware of the purpose of the study or that they were even part of a study. Some candidates understood the term ‘ethical issue’ in a non-methodological sense and therefore gave non-creditworthy responses such as racism, discrimination or ethnocentrism.
- (b) Some candidates correctly identified two methods that interpretivists could use apart from field experiments. The best answers included participant observation, unstructured interviews and case studies – all methods used to gain in-depth, qualitative data prized by interpretivists. Some candidates included questionnaire which is not a research tool often used by interpretivists. A few candidates cited secondary sources of evidence (such as statistics and diaries) or sampling techniques (such as snowball sampling) which were not creditworthy.
- (c) This question drew a range of answers. Many candidates successfully identified the idea that other factors may have been responsible for the results and that there were several issues with the sampling which meant that the sample was not representative and thus the results were not generalisable to the whole of the UK. Many candidates quoted from the source in identifying a point well. The best responses then fully unpacked the point to achieve the full four marks. A small number of candidates interpreted ‘problem’ to mean ‘social problem’ rather than methodological problem and hence discussed the idea that the implied conclusion that racism occurred is a

problem for the UK. Some weaker responses identified a generalised problem in conducting research, such as researcher bias, without any reference to the source.

- (d) The best responses to this question showed a clear understanding of the limitations of laboratory experiments in sociological research. Popular answers focused on the idea that these experiments are conducted in a laboratory rather than a natural setting and hence the results may not be true to real life or that participants know they are taking part in an experiment and may change their behaviour accordingly resulting in a lack of validity. Candidates should avoid making generic points which could apply to almost any method, for example that the findings may be inaccurate or the data lacks validity. To achieve full credit, candidates must make an explicit link to an aspect of the method in question, namely laboratory experiments.
- (e) Overall, there was a mixed response to this question about the strengths and weaknesses of using diaries in sociological research. Common strengths cited included the idea that diaries are qualitative data, which is in the subject's own words, and can give rich detail, that using diaries can offer insight into the experiences of those in the past and that using diaries as secondary evidence can save the researcher both time and money that would otherwise be devoted to primary research. Popular limitations included the idea that diaries may be biased, be unrepresentative and unreliable as they cannot be repeated to check the data in them. The best responses identified points and unpacked them fully to achieve high marks. A small number of candidates misunderstood how diaries are used by researchers as secondary evidence and instead wrote about the researcher keeping a diary which was not usually creditworthy.
- (f) This question proved to be quite challenging. It asked candidates to discuss the reasons why it can be difficult to plan and prepare to do sociological research. Popular answers focused on issues such as identifying aims and objectives, sampling choices, choice of method and ethical issues that may arise. The best responses included three well-developed points to achieve band three. Weaker answers were both brief and descriptive of aspects of the research process rather than discussing why these issues are problematic. For example, research using triangulation requires a team of researchers and it can be difficult to ensure that all researchers are operating in the same way to ensure good reliability. Or, it is difficult to ensure ethics are followed for some subjects where covert observation may be the best method for gaining valid data.
- (g) There was a varied response to the question as to the extent to which data gathered by the positivist approach is the most useful. On the positivist side of the argument some candidates referred to the desirability of objectivity, reliability and a quantitative, macro approach to establish social facts. The other side of the argument tended to take the form of a description of various aspects of the interpretivist approach such as that human beings lack predictability and hence a scientific approach is inappropriate or that qualitative data gives depth, detail and more validity to research. The best answers developed a range of points on both sides of the debate, linking to sociological concepts. Many responses contained a conclusion. The best conclusions were evaluative rather than summative. The best answers included six well-developed points in a balanced argument. Weaker responses tended to be list-like with a limited range of points.

Section B

Question 2

- (a) Most candidates scored at least one mark for their definition of 'value consensus.' To score two marks responses needed to include both the idea of agreement about values and the idea that this agreement stretches right across society or social group. Candidates needed to take care with the difference in meaning between values or ideals and norms which are behaviours based on values.
- (b) Many candidates responded well to the command to describe two examples of youth cultures. Definitions of youth sub-culture were not creditworthy. Popular answers included punks, skaters, goths and otaku (anime and manga) and hippies. To gain full marks, responses needed to unpack youth sub-culture by describing their clothes/style, hair, music or norms and values.
- (c) This question asked candidates to explain how children are socialised by agencies of secondary socialisation. The best responses made three (or more) developed points. The most popular answers were the hidden curriculum in schools, the use of peer pressure and ostracism by peer groups, media role models and the use of sanctions across the different agencies. Weaker responses typically made few points which may have been undeveloped.

- (d) Marks awarded for this question were generally low. The best answers contained three or more well-developed points. Many candidates had plenty of examples of what being child-centred means but needed to also explain *why* it is such a feature of modern industrial societies. There were some interesting points raised, such as the functionalist view that children are needed for the future economy and much time and effort is spent on socialisation, the fact that with decreasing birth rates children become more precious and thus attract more investment in terms of parental time and money plus the idea that due to an increasing awareness of the dangers faced by children are now better protected by both parents and the law.
- (e) There was a mixed response to this question. To achieve band four, responses needed to include a range of points and detailed arguments. Those who argued that a global culture is now emerging referenced Westernisation, global food chains, global media consumption and trends, a growing uniformity in terms of basic human rights and the Marxist idea that capitalism has now become a global system. Some responses lacked sociological evidence for global culture and hence only received credit for partial development of their points. In evaluation, popular ideas were that cultures continue to speak their own language and customs, that laws differ cross culturally and that the rise of nationalism in some places shows that local pride in a distinct cultural identity remains strong. There were a few one-sided responses. Weaker responses were often brief and characterised by points lacking development and conceptuality.

Section C

Question 3

- (a) Some candidates gave a clear definition of the term 'industrial societies,' referring to the idea that technology is used for the mass production of goods in contrast to traditional societies. Candidates who scored one mark invariably only referred to the idea of modernisation or the idea of mechanised industry.
- (b) This question asked candidates to describe two examples of closed societies. Popular correct answers included the caste system, slavery and feudalism. A few candidates defined the term rather than giving examples and a sizeable number of candidates did not know what the term meant.
- (c) In this question candidates were asked to explain how patriarchy affects individuals. Many candidates discussed sexism in the workplace with women being denied promotion (glass ceiling and vertical segregation), equal pay or suffering sexual harassment. There were some references to wider societal inequalities such as a lack of rights and status for women in society and the pressure to conform to rigid gender stereotypes. Weaker responses tended to include less detail or be more 'commonsense' rather than sociological in focus.
- (d) This question asked candidates to discuss why social classes may be changing. Points discussed by candidates included how there is now greater opportunity for social advancement, sometimes this was linked to embourgeoisement. Alternatively, a few candidates mentioned the impact of proletarianisation of the lower middle class and the idea that there are now more sub-divisions within each class, for example we now talk about the middle classes. There were some references to the impact of the global pandemic and how people may experience downward social mobility from one class to another due to unemployment. Weaker answers tended to make fewer points often only partially developed with evidence.
- (e) This question required candidates to discuss the extent to which discrimination still exists in societies. Good responses discussed sexism, ageism, racism or discrimination due to disability or social class. The best answers contained six well-developed and conceptual paragraphs organised in a balanced structure with a conclusion. Weaker responses were lacking in depth and detail. Popular arguments for the view included the idea that society remains patriarchal and women continue to suffer vertical and horizontal segregation, the damaging effects of racism through the ethnocentric curriculum and negative labelling of ethnic minority groups, the inherent class bias in capitalism and the social exclusion of the underclass. Candidates needed to evaluate the view in the question. Arguments typically focused on using feminist attempts to achieve equal rights, functionalist arguments about the assimilation of ethnic minorities, trade union successes and the work of charities in the fight against discrimination. A few candidates also referenced the general opening of society with improved chances for social mobility as a counter to the claim of

discrimination. The best responses addressed the 'to what extent' aspect of the question in their conclusion.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 0495/12
Paper 12

Key messages

- Candidates should practise their exam technique for **Question 1 (c)**. Answers should contain an explicit reference to the source, possibly through a quotation, which should then go on to be developed through description.
- In both **Question 1 (d)** and **Question 1 (e)** candidates must link each strength or limitation to a particular feature of the method in the question. For example, in **Question 1 (d)**, showing how re-visiting a sample at regular time intervals allows researchers to track changes in people's lives.
- In **Question 1(f)** questions candidates should avoid lengthy introductions or conclusions and move straight into developing three (or more) points. It is always helpful to enumerate points using 'firstly ...secondly ...'.
- In **Question 1 (g)** candidates should be aware that the essay can focus on sociological theories (consensus or conflict, functionalism, Marxism or feminism) and not always on methodological perspectives (such as positivism or interpretivism).
- Candidates should avoid spending time defining key terms in the question before beginning their answers.

General comments

Responses showed a very good level of engagement with the question paper and the assessment objectives. In particular, candidates showed a sound knowledge and understanding of sociological concepts and theory and were able to apply this knowledge well to the demands of the questions. Time management appears to have been very good indeed with some lengthy answers and very few candidates who did not finish the paper. Many candidates enumerated points which is helpful, though some candidates needed to write in paragraphs in longer essay-style questions. In general, candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the differences between the concepts of validity and reliability. In Section A base knowledge of methodology was very good, though use of the source for **Question 1 (c)** was variable. Most candidates discussed several strengths and limitations of methods. In essay responses some candidates demonstrated strong evaluation skills, going beyond juxtaposition by using other perspectives to interrogate the view in the question. The option 'Culture, identity and socialisation' was more popular than 'Social Inequality', but in both, candidates showed a good grasp of the key theories, ideas, concepts and arguments and many used these to good effect. There were few very rubric errors.

Section A

Question 1

- (a) Most candidates used the source to identify two ethical issues with laboratory experiments. Most picked out consent and harm. A small number of candidates wrote too much for a two mark 'identify' question.
- (b) Most candidates correctly identified two methods that could be used to gain quantitative data, apart from laboratory experiments. Popular answers included questionnaires, structured interviews and content analysis. Some candidates wrote unnecessary descriptions or justifications of their choices. A few candidates referred to secondary evidence such as statistics or sampling methods. Generic methods such as 'observation' or 'interview' required more detail to be creditworthy. For example, non-participant observation is much more likely to yield quantitative data than participant.
- (c) This question drew some good quality answers focusing on the reasons why a laboratory experiment was considered useful within the context of the source. Common answers featured the

idea that the experiments were standardised, allowing for replicability and hence reliability in the data about children and violence. Others described the usefulness of being able to control variables to establish the fact that it was being shown violence that caused the violence the children then showed in the laboratory. Whilst it is a good idea to quote from the source in identifying a point, weaker responses did not go beyond this to unpack why the point chosen about laboratory experiments was useful. Responses which copied a section of the source could only gain one mark per point identified.

- (d) The best responses to this question showed a clear understanding of the strengths of longitudinal studies, firstly identifying a feature of longitudinal studies and then clearly describing how that feature is a strength. For example, many likened the studies to a movie which gives researchers a picture that evolves over time rather than the quick snapshot that researchers get from a one-off method. Many candidates discussed the idea that, as the sample were committed to a long process, a rapport could be developed with researchers which is more likely to yield valid data. Weaker responses described longitudinal studies but did not focus on strengths. Candidates who asserted that longitudinal studies were more valid/in depth or more reliable than other methods did not achieve marks unless the point was linked explicitly to a feature of the longitudinal approach.
- (e) Overall, there were a considerable number of excellent and focused responses to this question. Many candidates referred to the idea that researchers can cross check data using different methods or are able to combine qualitative and quantitative data or indeed mix elements from interpretivist and positivist approaches. Popular limitations involved the time and cost needed to run several research methods, the necessity for skilled researchers or the difficulty of bringing together data from a combination of interpretivist and positivist methods. Weaker responses did not develop the description given or did not link points to triangulation.
- (f) The best responses to this question showed a clear focus on the reasons why some sociologists criticise the data from unstructured interviews. Popular answers focused on issues such as interviewer bias, the interviewer effect, the close relationship between interviewer and interviewee or the lack of standardised questions. The best responses included three well developed, conceptual points. The emphasis on data is important; the question did not ask candidates to discuss the limitations of unstructured interviews in general terms. Thus, points about the time-consuming nature of the actual interviews or the costs were not appropriate here. Some responses discussed of the advantages of using unstructured interviews which was not creditworthy.
- (g) Many responded well to the demands of this challenging question demonstrating a sound understanding of the debate between the consensus and conflict views of society. On the consensus side functionalism featured prominently with candidates discussing the organic analogy and then often focusing on the functionality of institutions such as the family and schools in socialising individuals or the function of formal agencies of social control in maintaining social order and averting anomie. Candidates who discussed Durkheim's study of suicide often used it well as part of a discussion of the structuralist approach favoured by functionalists. In terms of the conflict view, most candidates focused on elements of the Marxist and feminist views with a few candidates also discussing race and racism as an area of social conflict in many societies. Some candidates focused on Weberian theory, though with varying levels of success. The best answers developed a range of points on both sides of the debate and made links to sociological concepts and theory in a sophisticated way. Many responses included a conclusion though often these were summative rather than evaluative. Weaker responses were list-like with a limited range of points. Some candidates misunderstood the question and there was some confusion with methodological debates between positivists and interpretivists with incorrect or tenuous links being made to the consensus and conflict views of society.

Section B

Question 2

- (a) Most candidates scored at least one mark for their definition of 'lifestyle', linking well to the idea of how individuals live in society. Answers which scored full marks often included examples such as clothing, diet and general consumer choices.
- (b) Many candidates responded well to this question on global culture. Popular answers included global brands, food chains, sports and fashion or global media such as Hollywood/Bollywood and the internet as a site for social media communication across the world. Some candidates went off track writing about cultural diversity or multi culturalism. A minority focused on universals such as the institution of the family which gained no credit.
- (c) This question asked candidates to explain how negative sanctions are used to control individuals. The best responses gave examples of sanctions used by different agents and then discussed how these sanctions result in control or conformity. For example, a prison sentence deters others from committing the same offence or a warning in the workplace makes people afraid of losing their job and hence they conform to the expected norms and rules. Weaker responses described only negative sanctions and did not engage with the 'explain how' aspect of the question.
- (d) Many candidates found the question of why age is a social construction a challenge. The best answers gave three or more well-developed points. A popular point was the idea that childhood never existed in former historical periods (Aries), whereas now childhood is seen as a distinct phase with its own norms and values. Some candidates discussed the idea of relativity and that childhood or old age is viewed differently cross-culturally, for example in laws. Others cited the Postman study and the media's role in changing ideals of childhood innocence. Weaker responses described life stages or discussed the stages of socialisation, but with minimal or implicit understanding of the idea of 'social construction.'
- (e) Many candidates responded well to this question and engaged in an interesting debate about the relative influence of primary and secondary socialisation, deploying good knowledge and understanding. Responses which scored highly focused on a balanced debate with range, detail and conceptual knowledge. In favour of secondary socialisation, candidates discussed a range of agents. For example, many focused on education and the hidden curriculum, peer group use of peer pressure (e.g. ostracism), media role models and stereotypes, workplace 're-socialisation' and the norms and values taught in religion. There were frequent references to studies such as Parsons, Mead, Oakley etc. and went a lot further with primary socialisation, which weaker answers could only make up for if they offered volume for the secondary socialisation part of their essay. Arguments for primary socialisation being more influential included feral children, learned gender roles (Oakley and Parsons) and the idea of the family as the foundation for all subsequent learning and culture. There were very few one-sided responses. Less successful responses were often brief and characterised by points lacking development and conceptuality.

Section C

Question 3

- (a) Most candidates gave a clear definition of the 'closed society', referring to rigid stratification and the impossibility of social mobility. Some cited examples such as the caste system or apartheid. A few responses confused a closed society with patriarchy or a society with closed borders.
- (b) This question drew a mixed response. Few candidates named specific laws. Laws that were named were the Equality Act and the Sex Discrimination Act. Localised examples were also creditworthy. Many candidates discussed key legislative areas such as equal pay or equal opportunities for disabled people and described their impact. A few weaker responses discussed issues linked to the welfare state which was not credit worthy.
- (c) In this question candidates were asked to explain how women experience inequality in the workplace. Many good conceptual responses focused on vertical and horizontal segregation, the glass ceiling, the gender pay gap and sexual harassment. Very few answers strayed from the workplace as the focus area. Weaker responses included less detail or were more 'commonsense' rather than sociological in focus.

- (d) The question as to why racial discrimination may be negative for an individual drew some good responses. Many candidates often cited labelling, job discrimination and the ethnocentric curriculum and then proceeded to discuss a range of negative effects in terms of lower life chances, poverty, underachievement in school etc. Less successful answers focused on the discrimination without really exploring what would happen to the individual as a result or offered generalised ideas about mental health. Many candidates discussed issues such as hate speech and how it can have a negative impact upon individuals in ethnic minority communities.
- (e) This question required candidates to discuss the extent to which it is possible to escape poverty. Strong responses included six well-developed and conceptual paragraphs organised in a balanced structure with a conclusion. The best answers fully developed their arguments in paragraphs and wrote an evaluative, rather than just a summative, conclusion. Popular arguments for the view included references to functionalism, meritocracy and the possibility for social mobility, often underpinned by legal changes prohibiting discrimination, the redistribution of wealth, the welfare state and free education. Arguments against the view were very well represented with concepts such as poverty trap, culture of poverty and dependency culture. Candidates demonstrated a particularly good knowledge of Marxist theory. A small number of candidates spent time defining poverty (absolute and relative) without applying this knowledge to the question. The best responses addressed the ‘to what extent’ aspect of the question in the conclusion.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 0495/13
Paper 13

Key messages

- In Section A references to research methods should be understood to mean primary methods rather than secondary sources such as statistics.
- Candidates should make an explicit reference to the source, possibly through a quotation, which they should then go on to develop through description.
- In both **Question 1(d)** and **1(e)** candidates must link each strength or limitation to a particular feature of the method in the question. For example, in **Question 1(d)** showing how the qualitative data from an open question can lead to more depth, detail and thus validity.
- In **Question 1(f)** candidates should avoid lengthy introductions or conclusions and move straight into developing three (or more) points. It is always helpful to enumerate points using 'firstly ...secondly ...'.
- Candidates should avoid spending time defining key terms in the question before beginning their answers.

General comments

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 finish the paper. Many candidates enumerated points which is helpful, though some candidates needed to write in paragraphs in longer essay-style questions. In Section A candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the differences between the concepts of validity and reliability. The base knowledge and understanding of methodology were good, though application and analysis of the source for **Question 1(c)** was variable. The majority of candidates discussed several strengths and limitations of methods well. In essay responses the evaluation skills that candidates demonstrated were good, with some responses going beyond juxtaposition by using other perspectives to interrogate the view in the question. The option 'Social inequality' was more popular than 'Culture, identity and socialisation'. In both options, many candidates showed a good grasp of the key theories, concepts and arguments and used these to good effect. There were few rubric errors or non-responses.

Section A

Question 1

- (a) Most candidates used the source to identify the research method being used. Responses to gain two included coded questionnaire, survey with closed questions or structured interview.
- (b) Most candidates correctly identified two methods that could be used to find out about people's media use, apart from the one in Source A. A few candidates cited secondary sources of evidence such as statistics and diaries which were not creditworthy.
- (c) This question drew some good quality answers focusing on the reasons why the data collected might not be valid. Common answers featured the idea that the coded questions may not fit the respondent's experience and hence they may choose an inappropriate response or that the researcher was forced to estimate the age of respondents which may be inaccurate. Others pointed to the fact that Question C may have brought invalid data as employment status may be sensitive and private. Many candidates quoted from the source in identifying a point well. The best responses then fully unpacked the point in terms of validity. The term validity is part of the question and so candidates needed to show that they understood that it means accuracy or the idea that the data truly reflects the social reality being studied, in this case newspaper readership. Some weaker

responses identified a generalised point about validity such, as the idea that people may lie, but without any reference to the source.

- (d) The best responses to this question showed a clear understanding of the limitations of open questions. Popular answers focused on the idea that open questions lack reliability, they yield no quantitative data and hence patterns and trends cannot be readily identified and that data from open questions is harder and more time-consuming to analyse than data from closed questions. Weaker responses tended to focus on tangential issues such as response rate or the idea that respondents may misunderstand the open question. A small number of responses confused open questions with closed questions.
- (e) Overall, there was a good response to this question about the strengths and weaknesses of secondary data in sociological research. The best responses either made an accurate general point about secondary data, such as it is often relatively easy to access on the internet and thus saves time; or they made a correct point about a specific form of secondary data, for example that official statistics are often conducted on a large scale and are hence representative of whole populations. Popular limitations included the idea that secondary data may be out of date, be biased, or that it may be of limited application as it was created to meet aims which may not reflect those of the researcher. Some candidates wrote in generic terms linking secondary sources with either quantitative or qualitative data with no indication of why this may be a strength or weakness.
- (f) The best responses to this question showed a clear focus on the reasons why unstructured interviews are thought to be more valid than other forms of interview. Popular answers focused on issues such as open questions, probing, greater flexibility and that the ability to create rapport will result in more accurate and honest data. The best answers contained three well-developed, conceptual points. Some answers which showed good knowledge scored in band two because they needed to answer all parts of the question and make a link back to 'other forms of interview'. Some responses discussed the disadvantages of using unstructured interviews which were not creditworthy.
- (g) There was a varied response to the demands of the question as to the extent to which positivists are correct in stating that 'sociology is a science'. On the positivist side of the argument some candidates referred to the need for objectivity, reliability and a quantitative, macro approach to establish social facts. There were some good references to Durkheim's study on suicide as an illustration of some of these points. The other side of the argument tended to take the form of a description of various aspects of the interpretivist approach, such as that human beings lack predictability and hence the approaches outlined in a scientific approach are inappropriate. The best answers developed a range of points on both sides of the debate, linking to sociological concepts and theory in a sophisticated way. Many responses included a conclusion, though often these were summative rather than evaluative. Weaker responses were list-like with a limited range of points.

Section B

Question 2

- (a) Most candidates scored at least one mark for their definition of 'social conformity.' For two marks both the idea of behaviour and the idea that it coheres with that of a wider group were needed. A few candidates repeated the word 'conform' from the question which was not creditworthy.
- (b) Many candidates responded well to the command to describe two agencies of social control. The best responses focused on the sanctions used by the agencies and how they control us. References to both formal and informal agencies were creditworthy. Popular answers included the work of police, education, the family and workplace. A few candidates focused on socialisation rather than social control in their descriptions and hence did not achieve full marks.
- (c) This question asked candidates to explain how informal agencies of social control use rewards and sanctions to ensure conformity. To achieve full marks some reference to both sanctions and rewards was needed. The best responses gave examples of rewards and sanctions used by different agents and then discussed how these sanctions result in conformity. For example, a prison sentence deters others from committing the same offence or a promotion in the workplace encourages people to strive even harder to fulfil their role and behave as their employers wish. Some identified types of sanctions or rewards but needed to explain *how* they ensure conformity.

- (d) Marks awarded for this question were generally low. The best answers contained three or more well-developed points. Many candidates gave lots of examples of differing cross cultural norms and values but needed to also explain *why* they differ. A popular point was the idea that different countries have different cultures with some, for example, being heavily influenced by religion. Other points included the idea that the geographical or climatic situation or the developmental stage of the country may explain different norms and values.
- (e) There was a mixed response to this question. To achieve band four, candidates needed to include a range of points and detailed arguments. Those who argued that role conflict was more of an issue for modern societies pointed to the idea that people now have many more roles and gave examples such as women's dual burden, the internal gender conflict between a New Man and the traditional hegemonic expectations or the conflicts experienced by candidates who also work. Some responses needed to spell out exactly what the conflicts were about to receive credit for development of their points. In evaluation, popular ideas were that people can now choose to ignore more traditional gender expectations, that we now employ others to take care of former roles e.g. women having a cleaner or a babysitter. There were a few one-sided responses. Weaker responses were often brief and characterised by points lacking development and conceptuality. A minority of candidates did not understand the meaning of role conflict.

Section C

Question 3

- (a) Most candidates gave a clear definition of the term 'working class,' referring to manual or blue-collar work and the idea that they were placed below both the upper and middle class in terms of rewards and status. Some candidates conflated the working class with those in poverty, which was not creditworthy, or referred to them as the proletariat without further elaboration, scoring one mark.
- (b) This question was answered well. Most responses described the upper, underclass and middle class. Some candidates used Marxist terminology and spoke about the bourgeoisie owning the means of production. Some candidates achieved three rather than four marks due to imprecision or vagueness in their description.
- (c) In this question candidates were asked to explain how the working class has changed in modern industrial society. The best answers addressed the idea that the working class is now smaller due to fewer blue-collar jobs, their increasing prosperity due to better chances for social mobility and the idea that a section of the working class is undergoing embourgeoisement and converging with the lower middle class. Weaker responses included less detail or were more 'commonsense' rather than sociological in focus.
- (d) This question asked candidates to discuss why Marxists believe social class is the most important characteristic in determining life chances. Points discussed by candidates included how schools prepare working class children for future workplace exploitation, the reserve army of labour idea, how the bourgeoisie own the means of production and keep the proletariat as 'wage slaves' and how the media often label and stereotype working class people as criminals which can then become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Weaker answers tended to describe how the lower classes are less fortunate and upper classes more fortunate, often only partially developed, and needed to bring their point back round to life chances.
- (e) This question required candidates to discuss the extent to which ethnicity is the most important cause of inequality in modern industrial societies. Strong responses contained six well-developed and conceptual paragraphs organised in a balanced structure with a conclusion. The best answers included fully developed arguments in paragraphs and an evaluative, rather than a summative, conclusion. Popular arguments for the view included the damaging effects of the ethnocentric curriculum, institutional discrimination and labelling on ethnic minority groups. Arguments against the view focused on using Marxist arguments about the centrality of class and feminist arguments about gender being the most important cause of inequality, though ageism also featured as a cause. Some candidates also discussed equal opportunity legislation and improved chances for social mobility as a counter to the claim of ethnic discrimination. The best responses addressed the 'to what extent' aspect of the question in their conclusion.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 0495/21
Paper 21

Key messages

- Candidate responses to **Questions 1(b)** 'family functions', **3(c)** 'relative' and **4(a)** 'public funding' indicated that candidates should be encouraged to read the questions carefully and understand the significance of terms used. As the key terms in the questions will be drawn directly from the specification, candidates should become familiar with all of these in their examination preparation.
- To score full marks in **part (e)** questions a debate is required – for and against developed points, with a conclusion.
- Candidates should be encouraged to show their sociological knowledge by using terms, concepts, studies and theories whenever possible. Some candidates expressed ideas without explicitly doing this.
- Candidates should spend time thinking about what the questions are asking and plan answers to those specific questions in their reading time – this is particularly important in the 15-mark essay questions to ensure that responses remain focused on the specific demands of the question.
- Some candidate responses did not use paragraphs in the longer responses, which made it difficult for examiners to see where points began and ended. The 'point per paragraph' structure is thus recommended. Centres should encourage candidates to develop discrete essay writing skills and techniques to help them answer the **part (e)** questions.
- Encourage candidates to use the marks per question as guidance for how much is to be written and how long should be spent on a particular question. Some candidates wrote as much for a **part (c)** question, worth 6 marks, as for a **part (e)** question worth 15. Candidates should be encouraged to manage their time to maximise the marks achieved.
- Understanding of the command words is crucial. In the **part (b)** questions, for example, some answers were insufficiently developed (the command word is to 'describe'), so the candidate did not achieve full marks even though some relevant knowledge was shown.

General comments

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

Relevant contemporary, global and localised examples were used well alongside the more traditional 'textbook' evidence in order to justify and substantiate several of the points. These were all duly credited.

Very few rubric errors at all were seen, allowing most candidates to maximise their chances of success. However, some candidates did not number or incorrectly numbered their answers, and centres should encourage candidates to be aware of the importance of doing this diligently.

There was a good range of answers produced, with marks awarded across the full spread of available marks. In **part (a)** questions, candidates should include **two** separate elements in their definition. Examples can be a really useful way of adding a second element to an answer and should be encouraged. **Part (b)** questions require **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 the same approach as for **(c)** but 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.

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 for the 15 mark **part (e)** questions. Candidates should aim for three developed points 'for' and three developed points 'against' the claim in the question. A well-focused conclusion that makes a supported judgement on the claim in the question is also required. Each point should be directly focused on what the question is asking and should engage sociologically and conceptually wherever possible.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1: Family

- (a) Responses to this question were good, showing a clear understanding of industrialisation as a concept. Some candidates were vague in their responses, and thus achieved reward for a partial definition.
- (b) This was a question about changing family functions and this therefore needed to be the focus of candidate answers. Several discussed how the family had changed or how roles within the family had changed rather than focusing specifically on family functions. Explicit engagement was required, e.g. socialisation, social control, reproduction, external agencies taking over from the family etc. The best answers focused on family functions and showed excellent knowledge and understanding.
- (c) Responses were mixed for this question. The changing role of children was considered well by many candidates, considering concepts such as peer power and consumption, education, child-centeredness and legislation. Some answers needed a greater range of points or took more of a 'common-sense' approach.
- (d) This question was answered well. The best answers considered family diversity, cross-cultural examples, religion, gender roles etc. whereas the least successful responses described family life in a non-sociological way and/or lacked development and range.
- (e) This question was typically well answered and most candidates made points on both sides of the debate. Ideas often seen on the 'for' side included dual worker families, childcare, emotional and financial support, advice given and socialisation. In evaluation, the pivot generation was often discussed, alongside ideas such as being a burden, financial costs and external agencies.

Section B

Question 2: Education

- (a) This question was not answered well. There was some misunderstanding of the term 'informal education' demonstrated.
- (b) This question was answered very well. Responses gave good descriptions of the official curriculum. Common references were the syllabus, prescribed content, teacher instruction, standardised testing and universal standards.
- (c) This question was very well answered and there was much sociological engagement with this concept of 'ethnocentrism'. Candidates linked it to the curriculum, linguistic factors and teacher expectations/stereotypes. Examples were often used to substantiate points made e.g. from History lessons and content.
- (d) Most candidates engaged well with this question. The better answers integrated concepts and theory to explanations, such as feminism, patriarchy, teacher labelling, setting and streaming,

social control and the gendered curriculum. Weaker responses were descriptive and common-sense in focus.

- (e) The best answers integrated concepts and theories well, referring to Marxism, status frustration, relative deprivation, private schools, cultural capital and language codes to formulate the 'for' points. In evaluation, most candidates suggested that perhaps it was more to do with ethnicity or gender instead of social class and most offered evidence to support these counter claims. Some candidates found this question challenging because they were not clear what was meant by social class.

Section C

Question 3: Crime, deviance and social control

- (a) The majority of candidates understood the term 'socialisation' well. Candidates received a partial credit where they repeated the key term in the definition. The better responses described it clearly as learning society's norms and values, sometimes referring to agencies of socialisation as well.
- (b) This question was well answered. Candidates demonstrated clear understanding of what was meant by informal social control and gave descriptions and examples to substantiate. Sanctions were often referred to. Both informal methods and informal agents were seen. Some responses confused formal and informal control, which was not credited.
- (c) Many candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the meaning of the concept 'relativity'. Excellent responses focused on cross-cultural, historical, role based and situational deviance. The best responses supported their points with specific and well-chosen examples. Some candidates wrote about crimes committed by family relatives; this was not credited. Other candidates described differences between crime and deviance which was only partially relevant to the question.
- (d) Most candidates demonstrated an understanding of the difference between formal and informal social control and focused on relevant facts and points within their responses. Some candidates did not pick out formal agencies and instead talked more generally about formal methods of social control which typically resulted in partially creditable answers. The most successful answers considered different formal agencies such as the police, prisons, the government and the courts and discussed how they prevented crime. Such answers showed a very good depth of knowledge. Other good responses focused on fewer formal agencies but in more detail e.g. making two different points about the police and crime prevention alongside another point about prisons.
- (e) There was a mixed response to this question. Most candidates engaged with relevant issues but some needed to engage with the question more specifically. In terms of stereotyping, the most common areas for discussion were gender (both men and women), ethnicity and age. The best answers considered different areas of social life in their responses e.g. stereotyping in the media, in the police force and in the court room. This ensured a wide range of points were made. Evaluation points were typically stronger than the 'for' arguments as candidates explained alternative reasons for crime well. These were often theoretical and/or conceptual in focus e.g. status frustration, poverty, resistance etc. Some candidates needed to signal their points more clearly to make it clear if it is a 'for' or 'against' argument.

Section D

Question 4: Media

- (a) This question was not answered well. Candidates needed to demonstrate an understanding of the key term 'public funding'.
- (b) This was a well answered question. The majority of candidates gave two examples, such as frail, a burden, or out of touch/digital divide. Localised examples were well applied here to substantiate points made.
- (c) Many candidates demonstrated good sociological knowledge and understanding. Ideas about access, content, networks and communication were well integrated and produced some very good answers.

- (d) Candidates dealt well with the theoretical slant of the question and used it as an opportunity to integrate relevant studies and concepts into their answers. Ideas about tokenism, under-representation, sexualisation, objectification and patriarchy were all considered. Contemporary examples were used well to support points made.
- (e) Most candidates showed a good understanding of what was meant by 'media censorship' to engage with the debate. The better responses included a wider range of ideas into the answer and used clearly sociological evidence to develop points. Common ideas on the 'for' side were propaganda, government secrets, protection of the vulnerable and industry self-regulation measures. In the counter arguments the stronger responses integrated points about new media which they rightly identified as being more difficult to effectively censor. Notions of the active audience and the role of the internet, interactivity and citizen journalism were also well used.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 0495/22
Paper 22

Key messages

- Responses to **Questions (1b) and 4(c)** indicated that candidates should be encouraged to read questions carefully and understand the significance of terms used.
- To score full marks in **part (e)** questions, a debate is required— for and against developed points, with a conclusion.
- Candidates should be encouraged to show their sociological knowledge by using terms, concepts, studies and theories whenever possible. Some candidates expressed ideas without explicitly doing this.
- Candidates should spend time thinking about what the questions are asking and plan answers to those specific questions in their reading time – this is particularly important in the 15-mark essay questions to ensure that responses remain focused on the specific demands of the question.
- Some candidate responses did not use paragraphs in the longer responses, which made it difficult for examiners to see where points began and ended. The ‘point per paragraph’ structure is thus recommended. Centres should encourage candidates to develop discrete essay writing skills and techniques to help them answer the **part (e)** questions.
- Encourage candidates to use the marks per question as guidance for how much is to be written and how long should be spent on a particular question. Some candidates wrote as much for a **part (c)** question, worth 6 marks, as for a **part (e)** question worth 15. Candidates should be encouraged to manage their time to maximise the marks achieved.
- Understanding of the command words is crucial. In the **part (b)** questions, for example, some answers were insufficiently developed (the command word is to ‘describe’), and the candidates did not achieve full marks even though some relevant knowledge was shown.

General comments

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

Relevant contemporary, global and localised examples were used well alongside the more traditional ‘textbook’ evidence in order to justify and substantiate several of the points. These were all duly credited.

Very few rubric errors at all were seen, allowing most candidates to maximise their chances of success. However, some candidates did not number or incorrectly numbered their answers, and centres should encourage candidates to be aware of the importance of doing this diligently.

There was a good range of answers produced, with marks awarded across the full spread of available marks. In **part (a)** questions, candidates should include **two** separate elements in their definition. Examples can be a really useful way of adding a second element to an answer and should be encouraged. **Part (b)** questions require **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 the same approach as for **(c)** but

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.

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 for the 15-mark **part (e)** questions. Candidates should aim to give three developed points 'for' and three developed points 'against' the claim in the question. A well-focused conclusion that makes a supported judgement on the claim in the question is also required. Each point should be directly focused on what the question is asking and should engage sociologically and conceptually wherever possible. Some candidates chose to answer the 15-mark questions first to make sure that they did not run out of time – this worked well for several candidates.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1: Family

- (a) Most candidates answered this question well, linking the term 'polyandry' to a woman having more than one husband; some answers stressed that this occurs 'at the same time'. Some responses defined the term as a marriage to more than one person, and therefore presented a partial response. A few mistook it for the term 'polygyny' which was not correct.
- (b) The majority of candidates correctly identified two trends in marriage in modern industrial societies, citing most commonly increasing numbers of same-sex marriages, rising divorce, cohabitation chosen over marriage and/or serial monogamy. Some responses needed to develop their points further, making clear links to marriage. Answers which described types of marriages in different cultures rather than focusing on trends in marriage were not credited. When considering 'trends', candidates should think about changes, increases and decreases.
- (c) Many candidates demonstrated knowledge and understanding of primary socialisation carried out by the family. The more successful answers focused on the question and explained the processes of socialisation (how individuals are socialised). Less successful responses provided a generic description of socialisation. Teaching norms and values, role modelling, imitation and learning gender roles through the processes of manipulation and canalisation were often discussed. A few candidates misunderstood the question, writing about children socialising with friends or family members instead which did not gain credit.
- (d) Candidates engaged well with the question and gave some good answers. Most candidates offered a range of credible reasons as to why family life may benefit males, with clear references to feminism through ideas such as patriarchy and the triple shift. Marxism and functionalism were also well used by some candidates through relevant concepts such as the 'warm bath theory' and the 'domestic division of labour'. Weaker answers did not engage sociologically, offering a common-sense interpretation which could not be highly credited. The best answers were well-developed and explained.
- (e) This question was answered well. Responses discussed a range of reasons why extended families may be the best type of family to live in, such as financial and emotional support, care provided for both grandparents and grandchildren and effective primary socialisation. The evaluation points were sometimes not fully applied to the question as they did not offer comparisons with the extended family but discussed other types of family, most commonly the nuclear family, instead. The best responses gave six or more well-developed points and consistently engaged with the extended family. Weaker responses discussed the strengths of alternatives to the extended family.

Section B

Question 2: Education

- (a) Many candidates correctly defined the term 'restricted code', linking it to informal language, used with family and friends and/or often by the working class. Most candidates at least partially defined the term. A few said it was a code of conduct in school which did not score any marks.

- (b) This question was answered well. The majority of candidates identified and described two ways schools use rewards to motivate students. The most common responses included prizes and certificates, privileges and treat trips, teacher praise and scholarships. The weaker answers needed to develop points. A few responses discussed the system of positive sanctions in general terms rather than focusing on schools.
- (c) Many candidates explained at least two ways through which teacher labelling could affect student achievement in school. However, some needed to support their views with sociological terminology and ideas such as 'self-fulfilling prophecy' and 'self-negating prophecy'.
- (d) Many candidates provided a range of valid reasons to explain why examination results in private schools are often better than in state schools. Candidates frequently mentioned the differences in class sizes, resources and facilities as well as the quality of teaching. The most successful answers discussed concepts such as cultural capital, parental engagement and/or linguistic factors, linking them to relevant theory.
- (e) Most candidates took their lead from the question and focused on functionalism, drawing on Parsons, Davis and Moore and Durkheim (socialisation, social control, sifting and sorting and meritocracy) and many gave really well-developed arguments against from Marxist and feminist perspectives. The best responses had breadth (six points and over) as well as development of the points made. Overall, the majority of the candidates provided balanced answers, offering a range of valid arguments for both sides. Less successful answers offered little sociological engagement, commonly discussing increased opportunities for acquiring better jobs and helping society in general, common-sense terms.

Section C

Question 3: Crime, deviance and social control

- (a) Most candidates managed to define 'penal system' correctly with reference to prisons, police or courts.
- (b) Many candidates achieved full marks for this question, correctly identifying and describing two types of under-reported crimes. Those most commonly seen were white-collar crime, petty/trivial crimes, domestic abuse and sexual crimes.
- (c) Many candidates explained how moral panics are created well. There was good use of concepts such as exaggeration, stigma, master status and folk devils often with reference to studies such as Cohen, with examples – especially the mods and rockers. Some candidates needed to clearly separate their points as sometimes it was difficult to see where one point ended and another began.
- (d) The majority of candidates scored well, making a good range of points – most often referring to peer pressure, masculinity and inadequate socialisation and going into theoretical ideas such as Matza's Drift theory, edgework and status frustration. Some well applied, topical examples were also seen and were duly credited – BLM, for example. A few candidates misinterpreted the question, providing descriptions of juvenile delinquency and/or possible forms of punishments instead.
- (e) This question was answered well. The majority of the candidates interpreted the question correctly, making points for and against the statement. However, in some cases candidates did not make it sufficiently clear whether the point was 'for' or 'against'. Strong answers used signal words well. Many candidates engaged theoretically with Marxist theory as a way of explaining crime in terms of social class. Merton's strain theory and Cohen's status frustration were also well used in the stronger answers. In evaluation, age, gender and ethnicity were frequently discussed as other valid explanations for crime. The best answers developed their points well and substantiated them with evidence and explicit focus on applying knowledge to the question.

Section D

Question 4: Media

- (a) The majority of candidates provided at least a partial definition of 'news values' with examples of these being used to demonstrate understanding e.g. sensationalism, celebrity focus, disaster etc.
- (b) The majority of candidates identified and explained two negative effects of the media on the audience such as violence, stereotyping, body image and pressure to conform. Most points were developed, achieving high marks.
- (c) There was a mixed response to this question. There was some confusion between public and private funding, leading some candidates to explain how private sponsors/conglomerates influenced the content of the media which could not be credited. The best responses were clear and well-informed about what public funding is, making developed points often mentioning government pressure on broadcasters, propaganda and the lack of bias.
- (d) The best responses to this question explained why new media increases interactivity in terms of this being a two-way process. Some of the factors/points discussed were social issues, social movements and protest groups (with examples) and social media (platforms and channels). Weaker responses focused on how new media increases communication in general or globally, without focusing on the question.
- (e) The best responses used good examples from a range of media such as TV and film. In general, there was a slight lack of sociological studies and theory beyond points regarding feminism. Most candidates demonstrated understanding of the term 'stereotypical' well. In the 'for' side of the debate, candidates discussed the male gaze, under-representation and tokenism. Some candidates discussed issues such as social change, strong female role models and changing gender roles in evaluation.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 0495/23
Paper 23

Key messages

- Candidate responses to **Questions 2(c), 3(c) and 4(a)** indicated that candidates should be encouraged to read questions carefully and understand the significance of the terms used. As the key terms in the questions will be drawn directly from the specification, candidates should become familiar with all of these in their examination preparation.
- To score full marks in **part (e)** questions, a debate is required – for and against developed points, with a conclusion.
- Candidates should be encouraged to show their sociological knowledge by using terms, concepts, studies and theories whenever possible. Some candidates expressed ideas without explicitly doing this.
- Candidates should spend time thinking about what the questions are asking and plan answers to those specific questions in their reading time – this is particularly important in the 15-mark essay questions to ensure that responses remain focused on the specific demands of the question.
- Some candidate responses did not use paragraphs in the longer responses, which made it difficult for examiners to see where points began and ended. The ‘point per paragraph’ structure is thus recommended. Centres should encourage candidates to develop discrete essay writing skills and techniques to help them answer the **part (e)** questions..
- Encourage candidates to use the marks per question as guidance for how much is to be written and how long should be spent on a particular question. Some candidates wrote as much for a **part (c)** question, worth 6 marks, as for a **part (e)** question worth 15. Candidates should be encouraged to manage their time to maximise the marks achieved.
- Understanding of the command words is crucial. In the **part (b)** questions, for example, some answers were insufficiently developed (the command word is to ‘describe’), and the candidate did not achieve full marks even though it was evident that they showed some relevant knowledge.

General comments

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

Relevant contemporary, global and localised examples were used well alongside the more traditional ‘textbook’ evidence in order to justify and substantiate several of the points. These were all duly credited.

Very few rubric errors were seen, allowing most candidates to maximise their chances of success. However, some candidates did not number, or incorrectly numbered, their answers, and centres should encourage candidates to be aware of the importance of doing this diligently. There was a good range of answers produced, with marks awarded across the full spread of available marks.

In **part (a)** questions, candidates should include **two** separate elements in their definition. Examples can be a really useful way of adding a second element to an answer and should be encouraged. **Part (b)** questions require **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)** questions candidates should adopt the same approach as for **(c)** but 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.

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 for the 15-mark **part (e)** questions. Candidates should aim for three developed points 'for' and three developed points 'against' the claim in the question. A well-focused conclusion that makes a supported judgement on the claim in the question is also required. Each point should be directly focused on what the question is asking and should engage sociologically and conceptually wherever possible. Some candidates chose to answer the 15-mark questions first to make sure that they did not run out of time, this worked well for some candidates.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1: Family

- (a) There was a mixed response to this question. Some candidates repeated the key terms in their definition of 'domestic division of labour'. Candidates needed to provide answers that demonstrate their understanding without repeating terms from the question.
- (b) This was a well answered question. Many answers referred to domestic violence and child neglect; others used ideas such as inadequate socialisation and the breakdown of relationships through divorce and/or separation. Responses demonstrated some good development.
- (c) The most successful responses demonstrated knowledge of types of marriage such as arranged and forced, monogamy and types of polygamy, and described these well with good examples of cultures or countries where these marriages are or were practised. There was some confusion over the terms in some answers, and some examples were implausible or inaccurate. Some answers wrongly discussed cohabitation as a form of marriage which was not credited.
- (d) This was well answered. The majority of candidates offered several reasons why divorce rates have increased. Changes in social attitudes, the influence of feminist ideas, decreasing costs, women's greater rights and financial independence from men, changes in laws and secularisation were all well applied.
- (e) This question was well answered. Most candidates made points on both sides of the debate and used sociological concepts, studies and theories to support these points. Ideas commonly credited on the 'for' side were dual worker families, feminism, family diversity and changing expectations. In evaluation, several candidates recognised ideas from feminism, patriarchy, the triple shift, domestic violence etc.

Section B

Question 2: Education

- (a) Some responses demonstrated understanding of the term 'cultural deprivation' and explained it clearly, in terms of norms and values of the home background impeding success in education. Others had a general idea of its meaning, typically scoring 1 mark whilst a minority of candidates did not define this term adequately.
- (b) There was some confusion over the term 'informal' by some candidates. Many candidates wrote strong answers using ideas such as the hidden curriculum and examples of the learning of norms and values outside lessons e.g. at home, at lunchtime etc.
- (c) Good answers discussed ideas such as the use of sanctions and peer pressure. A good number of responses discussed patriotism through flags and anthems and assemblies were often referred to. Weaker responses did not focus on the processes used by schools to teach shared values. Candidates needed to address the 'how' part of the question.

- (d) This was a well answered question. Most candidates discussed several reasons for the educational success of girls, such as the influence of feminism, role models, pro-school peer groups and the feminisation of education. Some responses used common-sense explanations rather than demonstrating sociological understanding which did not score highly.
- (e) There was a mixed response to this question. Candidates needed to have a good understanding of the key term 'the comprehensive system'. The best answers addressed the question well, focusing on the 'for side' with ideas about equal opportunities, being non-selective and meritocracy (functionalism). On the 'against' side points such as disadvantages based on gender and ethnicity within the comprehensive system, setting and streaming, teacher labelling and the comprehensive education idea being undermined by the existence of private schools (Marxism) were all discussed.

Section C

Question 3: Crime, deviance and social control

- (a) The majority of candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the term 'youth culture' and defined it well. Candidates based their answers on the norms and values or way of life of teenagers or young people.
- (b) This question was well answered. Candidates showed a good knowledge of the typical reasons crimes may not be reported to the police. Fear of reprisals, the petty nature of some crimes, mistrust in the police, victimless crimes and the sensitive nature of some crimes were all discussed.
- (c) Some candidates were unclear about what a self-report study was, confusing them with victim surveys or stating that information from them was given to the police. The better answers understood the term well and so were able to make points about, for example, uncovering more of the dark figure of crime, using appropriate methodological terms such as validity and confidentiality. The methodology used within self-report studies to uncover information was also discussed by some candidates.
- (d) This question was answered well with candidates making a range of points. These points included targeting by the police, resistance against racism, marginalisation, relative deprivation and peer pressure. Some candidates also applied some well-chosen contemporary or local examples here which were duly credited.
- (e) This question was well answered, with a range of points about different types of punishments and ways in which they may or may not deter crime. The best answers referred to specific punishments and made a range of developed and clearly different points. In evaluation, recidivism, prison life and the positives of rehabilitation were frequently seen.

Section D

Question 4: Media

- (a) This question was not answered well. Candidates needed to demonstrate an understanding of the key term 'agenda setting'.
- (b) This was a well answered question. Most candidates gave two examples, such as citizen journalism, comments on social media or online gaming.
- (c) There were some very good answers to this question. Many candidates provided a range of studies and concepts such as dominant ideology, false consciousness, false needs and ideological state apparatus. Levels of sociological engagement and understanding were very impressive here.
- (d) Answers often had one or two well made and explained points, but needed to go beyond this to achieve a higher mark. Points made included catharsis and sensitisation, though often expressed without using these terms explicitly. Some candidates used arguments against the view in the question, which cannot be credited on (d) questions. Candidates needed to carefully consider and focus on the command words in the question.

- (e) This question was answered well. There was a tendency to focus on representations of females, but many answers also considered men, referring to a range of representations and describing stereotypes, often with impressive contemporary or local examples. These were duly credited. Many responses also referred to feminist theory.