



National
Qualifications
2024

2024 Sociology

Higher

Question Paper Finalised Marking Instructions

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General marking principles for Higher Sociology

Always apply these general principles. Use them in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidates' responses.

- (a) Always use positive marking. This means candidates accumulate marks for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding; marks are not deducted for errors or omissions.
- (b) If a candidate response does not seem to be covered by either the principles or detailed marking instructions, and you are uncertain how to assess it, you must seek guidance from your team leader.
- (c) The term 'or any other relevant response' allows for possible variation in candidates' responses. Always award marks according to the accuracy and relevance of an answer.
- (d) 'Describe' requires candidates to make factual points or state characteristics and/or features. This will be more than an outline or a list and may refer to, for example, a concept, process, experiment, situation, or facts.
- (e) 'Explain' requires candidates to relate cause and effect and/or make relationships between things clear. This explanation may be the product of a process that includes evaluation and/or analysis.
- (f) 'Analyse' requires candidates to identify parts, the relationship between them, and their relationships with the whole; draw out and relate implications; and analyse data (possibly including calculations and/or a conclusion).
- (g) 'Evaluate' requires candidates to make a judgement based on criteria to determine the value of something.
- (h) A development of a point (of description, explanation, analysis or evaluation) will provide further related information and might include exemplification of the point.
- (i) Candidates gain marks by responding to the questions using sociological knowledge and understanding. Do not award marks for personal opinion that is not supported by sociological knowledge and understanding.
- (j) There may be some degree of flexibility in the way that marks are awarded in a question. This is clearly noted in the specific marking instructions for that question.

Marking instruction for each question

Section 1 – Human society

Question	General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
1.	Describe questions require candidates to make factual points or state characteristics and/or features.	4	<p>Candidates are asked to describe two features of symbolic interactionism. Candidates can be awarded up to 4 marks.</p> <p>Candidates are asked to describe two features of symbolic interactionism. Award up to 2 marks for each description. A maximum of 2 marks can be awarded where they give a generic answer on action theory.</p> <p>Example: One feature of symbolic interactionism is that it adopts a micro sociological approach to explain human society. It focuses on how individuals help to shape the social world they live in through their interactions, to help create a world of shared social meaning. (2 marks)</p> <p>Another feature of symbolic interactionism is the concept of the significant other that helps individuals develop their sense of who they are. These are the people that individuals interact with most often, especially within the family. (2 marks)</p> <p>Or any other appropriate answer.</p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
2.		Explain questions require candidates to relate cause and effect and/or make relationships between things clear.	3	<p>Candidates are asked to explain one difference between Marxism and Weberism. Candidates can be awarded up to 3 marks.</p> <p>Example: One difference between Marxism and Weberism is that Marxism takes a macro approach, examining society as a whole and the influence of class and institutions on individuals. In contrast Weberism can take a micro approach, examining individuals and/or small groups, roles and claim that individuals can help shape their own destiny. (3 marks)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>One difference between Marxism and Weberism is their different views on social class. Marx believed that social class was the dominant determinant in society whereas Weber thought that status and party were also important factors. (2 marks) For example, status can be gained through higher education. (1 mark)</p> <p>Or any other appropriate answer.</p>

Question	General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
3.	Analyse questions ask candidates to make points that identify parts, the relationship between them, and their relationships with the whole; draw out and relate implications.	9	<p>Candidates are asked to analyse similarities and differences between conflict and consensus theories.</p> <p>A maximum of 4 marks can be awarded for any similarity or difference.</p> <p>Answers can include differences between specific consensus (Functionalism) and conflict (Marxism, Feminist) theories or between generic structural and action perspectives.</p> <p>Analysis of a similarity could be: Both structural consensus (for example, functionalism) and structural conflict (such as feminism) are structural theories. This means that they both look at society as a whole. They therefore claim that the institutions in society have influence over the individuals. Functionalists and feminists both claim that the institutions in society are responsible for the state of equilibrium, or lack of it, in society rather than merely the actions of individuals shaping the degree of consensus/conflict. (3 marks)</p> <p>Analysis of a difference could be: One difference between consensus and conflict is that functionalism claims that society is governed by consensus, whereas feminism claims that society contains groups who are in conflict with each other. Hence, functionalists claim that there is value consensus which is the overriding hallmark of society: this set of beliefs is commonly shared and agreed upon. Feminists on the other hand view the values of a society as an imposition by men and any apparent consensus in a patriarchal society is a product of the male dominated structures of society. (3 marks) For example feminists would highlight the persistence of a gender pay gap. (1 mark)</p> <p>Another analysis of a difference could be: Consensus/Functionalism claims that there is no one dominant group in society, whereas conflict such as Marxists claim that owners of the means of production (Bourgeoisie) or Feminists claim that men, are the dominant group. Functionalists claim that all institutions in society work together for the good of all. (2 marks)</p> <p>Or any other appropriate answer.</p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
4.		Describe questions require candidates to make factual points or state characteristics and/or features.	4	<p>Candidates are asked to describe two stages in the research process.</p> <p>Candidates can be awarded up to 4 marks.</p> <p>Award up to 2 marks for each stage described, depending on the quality of the description. Please note – no marks should be awarded for answers that merely state a step but don't describe the stage. Answers can include any stage in the process: theory, hypothesis, operationalisation, fieldwork, presentaton of results.</p> <p>Example:</p> <p>Hypothesis is the second stage in the research process and is a statement that can be proved true or false. This is a basis for the research undertaken. (2 marks)</p> <p>A substage of operationalisation is definition of terms. This means the specific meaning of key terms such as 'teenager' or 'social media' may need clearly defined in a research study about the impact of social media on teenagers. (2 marks)</p> <p>Or any other appropriate answer.</p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
5.		Describe questions require candidates to make factual points or state characteristics and/or features.	4	<p>Candidates are asked to describe two features of a focus group. A maximum of 2 marks are available for each description. Award a maximum of 2 marks for generic answers focusing on primary and/or qualitative data.</p> <p>Example: One feature of a focus group is that it is a primary method producing qualitative data. This means the researcher gains first-hand, face-to face, an in-depth understanding of the different views of the members of the group, as they discuss the research topic in question. (2 marks)</p> <p>Another feature of a focus group is that members of the group can discuss the topic with each other, rather than only with the researcher. This means members can agree or disagree with other members of the focus group, or can make comments on other members' points, giving the researcher an understanding of the range of opinion within the group. (2 marks)</p> <p>Or any other appropriate answer.</p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
6.		Evaluate questions require candidates to make a judgement based on criteria to determine the value of something.	6	<p>Candidates are asked to evaluate participant observation as a research method. Candidates can be awarded up to 6 marks.</p> <p>Where candidates have answered generically about qualitative methods, award a maximum of 3 marks.</p> <p>Award up to 4 marks for each developed evaluative point; for instance an advantage or disadvantage.</p> <p>Example: Participant observation is good at providing rich and descriptive qualitative data. Hence researchers who want to examine relationships between and within small groups/individuals can use participant observation to so do effectively. (2 marks) This is because this method provides the opportunity to become part of the group being examined and to observe naturally occurring behaviour. This is especially true if the participant observation is covert and only a small number of the group being observed know the researcher is part of the group. (2 marks)</p> <p>A disadvantage of participant observation is that you cannot control extraneous variables such as relationship with the researcher. It is therefore difficult to replicate. (2 marks)</p> <p>Or any other appropriate answer.</p>

Section 2 – Culture and identity

Question	General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
7.	Explain questions require candidates to relate cause and effect and/or make relationships between things clear.	8	<p>Candidates are asked to explain the impact of socialisation on the formation of identity.</p> <p>Award a maximum of 8 marks.</p> <p>Award up to 3 marks for a developed point of explanation of the impact that socialisation has on the formation of identity.</p> <p>Candidates can access these marks in a number of ways and may choose to focus on one or more types of identity.</p> <p>Points of explanation may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the impact of primary and/or secondary socialisation on the formation of gender and/or age identity • the impact of agents of socialisation such as peer groups on the formation of a social identity • the impact of the media on the formation of identity. <p>For example:</p> <p>In primary socialisation, the family is the main agent and it is through them that we first begin to form our sense of identity. (1 mark) Gender roles are easily assigned during this stage and canalisation can occur, where parents encourage or discourage behaviours associated with a particular gender, such as steering girls towards dolls and boys to action figures. (2 marks)</p> <p>In secondary socialisation, peer groups can act as an agent having a large impact on the formation of our social identity. (1 mark) Social identity is the sense that we belong to a particular group. (1 mark) Peer groups help us develop a sense of belonging and give support which encourages identification with the traits of that group. (1 mark)</p> <p>The media has a huge influence on the formation of identity in secondary socialisation through online, printed and TV/films. (1 mark) From which clothes we wear to how our bodies should look, we are bombarded with messages which form our sense of what we should be like. (1 mark)</p> <p>Or any other appropriate answer.</p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
8.		Explain questions require candidates to relate cause and effect and/or make relationships between things clear.	7	<p>Candidates are asked to explain high and popular culture using one sociological theory.</p> <p>Award up to 7 marks in total for this question.</p> <p>Up to 3 marks for a developed point of explanation.</p> <p>If no sociological theory is used award a maximum of 4 marks.</p> <p>For example: High culture is the consumption patterns, amusement, leisure activities, and tastes and preferences of a society's elite. (1 mark) This may include classical music, the theatre and fine arts. (1 mark) Popular culture is that which is enjoyed by the majority of the population, such as television programmes such as Love Island and watching football on television. (2 marks) Marxists would view high culture and popular culture in terms of the main class divide in society. High culture is associated with the bourgeoisie and is considered to be higher quality, due to their control of the ideology which places a greater value on it. (2 marks) However, the bourgeoisie also control the output of popular culture as it suits their needs to keep the proletariat occupied with trivia. (1 mark)</p> <p>Or any other appropriate answer.</p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
9.	(a)	Describe questions require candidates to make factual points or state characteristics and/or features.	4	<p>Candidates are expected to describe two findings of Folk Devils and Moral Panics. Award up to 4 marks for this question.</p> <p>Award up to 2 marks for each description.</p> <p>For example: One finding of Cohen was that there were fewer actual crimes than had been reported in the media. The media deliberately over reported the disturbances which did take place. (2 marks)</p> <p>Cohen also found that the youth sub-cultures, the Mods and the Rockers, had been turned into Folk Devils, that is groups to be scapegoated, feared and shunned by wider society. (2 marks)</p> <p>Or any other appropriate answer.</p>
	(b)	Evaluate questions require candidates to make a judgement based on criteria to determine the value of something.	6	<p>Candidates are required to evaluate Folk Devils and Moral Panics. Up to 6 marks may be awarded for this question.</p> <p>Award up to 3 marks for a developed point of evaluation. Note that the candidate may be awarded marks for more than two evaluative points.</p> <p>For example: A strength of Cohen's work is that it has made it easier to explain how the powerful groups in society can introduce control legislation. This is generally poorly thought out and would probably not be passed under normal circumstances. (2 marks) For example the moral panic created around immigrants led to events such as the Windrush scandal. (1 mark)</p> <p>A criticism of Cohen has been that the identification of a moral panic doesn't seek to explain what caused the behaviour in the first place, only why people continue to do it. (1 mark) Cohen does not examine the root causes, only the reaction and aftermath. (1 mark) This has been viewed as a deficiency with labelling theory in general as it does not provide the reasons for the origin of the label. (1 mark)</p> <p>Or any other appropriate answer.</p>

Section 3 – Social issues

Question	General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
10.	<p>Analyse questions ask candidates to make points that identify parts, the relationship between them, and their relationships with the whole; draw out and relate implications.</p>	25	<p>Candidates are expected to analyse a social issue of their choice by using two contrasting theories (one of which must be a structural theory) and findings from one study.</p> <p>Candidates can be awarded up to 25 marks.</p> <p>Up to 4 marks may be awarded for an introduction or introductory points.</p> <p>Up to 7 marks for each theory.</p> <p>Up to 7 marks for a study.</p> <p>For full marks candidate must link the study to at least one theory.</p> <p>Candidates may analyse the mandatory social issue (social mobility) or they may choose to analyse their optional social issue.</p> <p>Introductory points may include:</p> <p>Unlawful discrimination relates to the unfair treatment of an individual or a group of people due to a protected characteristic such as: age, disability, race, origin and sexual orientation where it is against the law to discriminate against someone within employment under the Equality Act 2010. (2 marks) This discrimination could occur at any stage of employment or prospective employment – from the application process to constructive dismissal – and/or during employment that is, causing differences in pay or promotional prospects. (2 marks) This essay will focus on discrimination in the workplace due to criminal convictions.</p> <p>Study:</p> <p>A YouGov survey carried out in 2016 surveyed 1,849 adults in UK. This survey found that 50% of those questioned would not consider employing an ex-offender with another 12% answering ‘unsure’. Only 9% answered that they would definitely consider employing an ex-offender. (2 marks)</p> <p>When asked what specific worries the sample had regarding hiring an ex-offender, 40% cited ‘harming the reputation of their business’. (1 mark) This links to labelling theory demonstrating the negative impact of the label ‘ex offender’. (1 mark)</p>

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			<p>YouGov have been carrying out surveys around the globe, using active sampling; a technique that ensures the emphasis is on quality and representativeness of sample. Over the last decade almost 1 million people have participated in these surveys which cover a wide variety of topics. The data collected is cited globally in many academic pieces of work. Due to this, YouGov can be seen as a reliable source giving invaluable data on prospective employers' opinions of ex-offenders. (3 marks)</p> <p>Theories: Sociologists are interested in inequalities that arise from the social issues in society. From a Marxist point of view, the construction of law and implementing of law is biased in favour of the ruling elite. The laws are made by the state which favour and protect the ownership of the ruling classes. (2 marks) For Marxist Chambliss, all strata break the law but only those at the bottom of the hierarchy are policed. This causes higher representation of the working and underclass in crime statistics which give the impression that only those at the bottom of the hierarchy commit crime (2 marks). There is also evidence to suggest that when cases involving prestigious individuals are taken to court, they don't often end in a conviction for example the case of OJ Simpson. (1 mark)</p> <p>Marxists help highlight that the statistics are socially constructed through policing habits and court cases that seem to allow the class of an individual to enter the decision of guilt. If more working-class offenders are policed and convicted, then it makes sense to presume that it is more working-class individuals who are facing these discriminatory practices during recruitment. (2 marks)</p> <p>Becker investigated the effects of labelling an individual as deviant or criminal. He proposed that when labelling someone as criminal this then becomes their master status which overrides all other statuses. (1 mark) People will associate the individual with expected behaviour of the label of criminal (untrustworthy, unreliable etc) which then influences future interactions with said labelled individual. This can also lead to self-fulfilling prophecy which is that the predicted outcome will come true as the labelled individual starts to see themselves in the way of the label. (2 marks) This may lead to an increase in the deviant behaviour. (1 mark)</p>

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			<p>Labelling can be applied to the YouGov survey as it shows that people are labelling ex-offenders and not giving them the opportunity (recruitment to company) to prove the label wrong. (1 mark) However, future offending may not be due to the self-fulfilling prophecy as such but may actually be driven by need for survival. If ex-offenders cannot secure housing, employment etc. then they may find themselves in circumstances that they feel they have no other choice but to break the law in order to secure food, clothes etc. (2 marks)</p> <p>The results of the YouGov survey shows that there is still a long way to go with changing the publics perceptions of ex-offenders and their ability to carry out employment roles effectively, safely and to no detriment to company's reputations. (1 mark) Please note – this point relates to study.</p>

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTION]