

**MARK SCHEME for the October/November 2010 question paper
for the guidance of teachers**

9699 SOCIOLOGY

9699/11

Paper 1 (Essay), maximum raw mark 50

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes must be read in conjunction with the question papers and the report on the examination.

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Section A

1 Assess the strengths and limitations of the functionalist theory of socialisation.

- 0–6 A few general statements about socialisation would fit the middle of the band. At the top of the band, the discussion of general features of socialisation might be linked briefly to functionalism, though with only a rudimentary understanding of that perspective.
- 7–12 An answer that shows a sound understanding of the concept of socialisation within a broadly functionalist perspective would fit the lower part of the band. Higher in the band we might expect a more focused and/or explicit descriptive account of the functionalist theory of socialisation. There may be little or no attempt at assessment at this level.
- 13–18 The functionalist theory of socialisation will be described with reasonable accuracy and a basic attempt will be made to assess that theory. At the lower end, the assessment may be through juxtaposition with other theories of socialisation, particularly those within the interactionist perspective. At the top of the band, the assessment will start to go beyond mere juxtaposition of contrasting views, though the analysis may still be somewhat limited in range and depth.
- 19–25 As for the previous band, except that the assessment will be more detailed and sustained. The interactionist perspective may be used to good effect to illustrate the limitations of the functionalist theory of socialisation. This may be complemented by other lines of analysis, possibly focusing on the conservative and/or deterministic assumptions inherent in the functionalist perspective. Answers at the top of the band will consider a range of relevant criticisms in some detail and may also attempt to provide a reasoned and balanced conclusion about the overall value of the functionalist theory of socialisation.

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2 "Marxist theory no longer has any relevance for understanding modern societies." Explain and assess this view.

- 0–6 A few poorly-expressed points demonstrating a simple understanding of Marxist theory would fit the upper half of the band. Lower in the band, we might see answers that identify a few features of modern industrial society without making any reference to sociological theories.
- 7–12 A basic account of a few features of Marxist theory with no further development would fit the lower part of the band. A fuller descriptive account of Marxist theory would trigger the higher part of the band. Any references to different strands of Marxist theory are likely to be limited in scope at this level. Assessment of Marxist theory is not a requirement to fit this band.
- 13–18 A sound account of Marxist theory will be provided and there will be a basic attempt to assess its relevance for understanding modern industrial societies. The assessment may be developed in various ways including, for example, through consideration of relevant empirical studies and/or references to contrasting theories such as those associated with Weber, feminist theory and post-modernism. Contrasts with functionalist theory may have some value, but this approach is unlikely to provide a rich response to the question set. At the top end of the band, look for developments such as consideration of different strands of Marxist theory and/or some nascent recognition of the complexity of the issues addressed.
- 19–25 Answers at this level will demonstrate a good understanding of Marxist theory and make a concerted and well-informed attempt to assess the relevance of that theory for understanding modern industrial societies. At the lower end of the band, the assessment may rely heavily on identifying general weaknesses and/or strengths with Marxist theory. Higher in the band, the focus will be on specific points about the relevance of that theory for understanding modern industrial societies, albeit that this may be conveyed through theoretical debates rather than by reference to relevant empirical material.

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Section B

3 "Most types of secondary data are too subjective to be useful in sociological research." Explain and assess this claim.

- 0–6 At the lower end of the band there may be complete misunderstanding about the nature of secondary data, perhaps confusing it with primary research using questionnaires and interviews. Higher in the band, answers will contain a few relevant, though poorly-developed, points about the strengths and/or limitations of secondary data in general.
- 7–12 Lower in the band, responses may be limited to a rather general discussion of approaches to research methods and/or different types of data, with any links to secondary data left somewhat unclear. Better answers within this band will identify some specific advantages and/or limitations of secondary data, but may be lacking in detail and/or range of material covered. For example, the response may be restricted to considering only quantitative secondary data (e.g. official statistics), and/or it may address only practical advantages and limitations. There is likely to be little or no explicit discussion of the issue of subjectivity at this level.
- 13–18 A wide range of advantages and limitations of secondary data will be identified, and these will cover (though not necessarily with equal emphasis) both quantitative and qualitative sources of secondary data. Examples from studies may be used to illustrate key points. At the top of the band, there will also be some treatment of relevant theoretical issues (objectivity, validity, reliability) and/or sociological perspectives, alongside the practical points. The assessment may be mostly implicit, i.e. through juxtaposing points about advantages and limitations. At the top of the band, though, some explicit assessment is required and this must include explicit reference to the issue of subjectivity raised by the question.
- 19–25 As for the previous band, except that now the assessment will be more detailed and sustained, particularly in relation to the discussion of subjectivity. It is likely that a wide range of different sources of secondary data will be considered and the advantages and limitations of each will be discussed. However, higher in the band the assessment will also reach conclusions about the value of secondary data in general and the extent to which the usefulness of such data may be affected by problems of subjectivity. Answers that consider how sociologists in different theoretical perspectives utilise secondary data and, perhaps, discuss how secondary data has been employed in particular studies are likely to feature in this band.

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**4 “The values of the researcher greatly influence the findings of their sociological research.”
Explain and assess this claim.**

- 0–6 Answers that are confined to a few simple observations about research methods, with little or no linkage to the question, will fit this band. Any reference to researcher bias or demand characteristics would elevate such a scant answer to the top of the band.
- 7–12 A simple description of the main features of a few research methods would merit a mark at the lower end of the band. If this type of answer also includes a rudimentary attempt to explain some of the ways in which a researcher may influence the outcome of a study, a mark at the top of the band would be justified.
- 13–18 At this level, the candidate will demonstrate a sound understanding of different sociological research methods and provide several examples of the ways in which the values of the researcher may influence the outcome of a study. At the top of the band, there will also be an attempt to assess the claim that it is difficult for the researcher to avoid contaminating his or her research. However, the assessment will probably lack depth and/or detail. An answer that focuses on theoretical debates about the role of values in sociology, with few or no references to particular research methods, could score up to 15 marks if done well, but no higher.
- 19–25 As for the previous band, though the assessment will be more developed and better informed. The candidate may, for example, attempt to rank the different research methods in terms of how likely it is that researcher bias may occur. Conversely, the evaluative content of the answer may focus on supporting the claim that there is little difference between research methods in terms of how likely it is for the researcher to influence the outcome of the study. At the top of the band, the candidate will demonstrate a good understanding of a range of ways in which study findings may be influenced by the researcher and will have assessed a number of research methods in relation to the issues raised by the question.

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Section C

5 "Economic and cultural divisions between the working class and the middle class disappearing in modern industrial societies." Explain and assess this view.

- 0–6 At this level, we may anticipate a few general statements about social class. At the top of the band, this may be linked to a discussion of changes in the class structure, though with little detail or development.
- 7–12 At this level, answers may provide a descriptive account of one or more relevant debates, e.g. embourgeoisement, proletarianisation, class fragmentation, post-modernist theories of class, etc. Lower in the band, the answers will lack detail and may contain some inaccuracy. Higher in the band, the accounts will be more detailed and possibly include references to some relevant studies. Assessment is not a requirement to reach the top of this band.
- 13–18 Answers that trigger this band must focus directly on discussing the relationship between the working class and the middle class in modern industrial societies today. An accurate account of the embourgeoisement thesis and/or the proletarianisation debate, with some simple assessment, would fit the lower part of the band. If a wider range of relevant material is used to discuss the key issues raised by the question, a mark higher in the band would be justified. Likewise, a more detailed assessment of the embourgeoisement or proletarianisation theories could reach the top of the band.
- 19–25 As for the previous band, except that the assessment will be more developed and better informed. However, answers that stop at 1950s/1960s debates (embourgeoisement, proletarianisation, etc.) would need to be very well done to trigger this level and even then could not reach the top of the band. Some awareness of developments in the class structure in recent decades is essential to reach the top of the band, and this may be achieved by, for example, appropriate references to post-modernist theory and/or accounts of recent changes in the occupational structure of modern industrial societies.

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6 "Inequality based on gender no longer exists in modern industrial societies." Examine and assess this claim.

- 0–6 At this level, answers may be confined to a few observations about the forms of inequality associated with gender divisions. Higher in the band, there may be a simple response to the question based on assertion rather than sociological evidence and reasoning.
- 7–12 Lower in the band, answers may focus mainly on describing different forms of gender-based inequality, with no clear conclusions emerging in relation to the question set. Higher in the band, there may be some attempt to explain the causes of gender inequality through, for example, references to different feminist theories and/or other relevant sociological perspectives. There may be little or no attempt to assess the claim on which the question is based in answers that fit this band.
- 13–18 Different explanations of gender inequality may be explored, but at this level there will also be an attempt to address directly the analytical issues raised by the question. Lower in the band, the response may be confined mainly to a limited account of evidence from studies that show continuing inequality between the sexes in areas such as paid employment, housework and child care. Higher in the band, the analysis will be more detailed and might also include references to appropriate theoretical perspectives.
- 19–25 As for the previous band, except that the assessment will be more developed and better informed. Answers that make good use of references to a range of recent studies of gender-based inequality are likely to feature in this band, though to achieve marks at the top of the range there needs to be some consideration of appropriate theories. Answers that make good use of post-modernist theory to challenge the notion that gender-based inequality remains a key feature of modern societies today are likely to feature in this band.