

Sociology

Advanced GCE **2539**

Social Inequality and Difference

Mark Scheme for June 2010

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Question 1

- (a) Using **Item A**, identify **two** differences between higher professional occupations and routine occupations in terms of their housing tenure. **(6 marks)**

Any differences between the two groups are acceptable. They need to be accompanied by reference to the data in Item A. The main differences are:

- higher professional occupations more likely to be outright owners than routine occupations;
- higher professional occupations more likely to own housing with a mortgage than routine occupations;
- routine occupations more likely to rent housing from the social sector than higher professional occupations;
- comparability of both groups in relation to renting housing privately.

Award one mark for the identification of the difference and up to two marks for the accurate use of data in Item A.

AO2 (a): Interpretation and Analysis**4-6 marks**

Shows the ability to select and analyse data from Item A. The data will be taken from Item A, and there will be the use of evidence to support responses.

1-3 marks

Shows some ability to select and analyse data from Item A. The data will be taken from Item A, and there is likely to be some use of evidence to support the response.

0 marks

No relevant sociological points.

- (b) Using Item B, identify two reasons which may explain the housing crisis in the contemporary UK. (6 marks)

Award one mark for the identification of a reason which may explain the housing crisis in the contemporary UK and up to two marks for the use of evidence from the Item to support each one. Each reason is worth a maximum of 3 marks. Candidates who quote from the Item directly without using their own words to interpret should be awarded 2 marks for each.

The reasons are:

- neglect since 1979;
- a high and growing single population;
- continued immigration;
- abandonment and demolition of existing housing.

AO2 (a): Interpretation and Analysis

4-6 marks

Shows the ability to select and analyse two reasons. The two reasons will be taken from Item B, and there will be the use of evidence to support both.

1-3 marks

Shows some ability to select and analyse two reasons which may explain the housing crisis in the contemporary UK. The reasons will be taken from Item B, and there is likely to be some use of evidence used in support.

0 marks

No relevant sociological points.

- (c) Briefly explain two methodological difficulties facing sociologists when researching the experiences of homelessness in the contemporary UK. (12 marks)

Indicative content (other valid points may be offered, if in doubt check with your TL).

Difficulties include:

- accessing a sample/gatekeeper;
- ethics;
- choice of method;
- establishing a rapport/achieving valid data;
- operationalising 'experiences' of the homeless/'homelessness' (may refer to Item B);
- reliability;
- generalisability/representativeness-likelihood of a small or skewed sample size.

AO2 (a): Interpretation and Analysis

10-12 marks

Selects and organises relevant material to provide a clear account of two difficulties sociologists face when researching the experiences of homelessness in the contemporary UK. In this band the difficulties selected will be clearly relevant to research on researching experiences of homelessness.

7-9 marks

Selects relevant material to provide an analysis of two difficulties sociologists face when researching the experiences of homelessness in the contemporary UK.

In this band the points selected are likely to be generalised and not related directly to experiences of homelessness. Responses in this band may be unbalanced or there may be a list of a number of three or four difficulties left undeveloped.

4-6 marks

Selects some relevant material to provide some analysis of the difficulties sociologists face when researching the experiences of homelessness in the contemporary UK. Responses in this band may select and analyse one difficulty and relate it to the context, doing this well to be placed at the top of the band. Alternatively responses will be partial or confused although demonstrating some analysis of methodological concerns.

1-3 marks

A limited interpretation of material relevant to difficulties sociologists face when researching the experiences of homelessness in the contemporary UK. There is likely to be inaccuracy or very brief answers.

0 marks

No relevant sociological points.

- (d) **Using your wider sociological knowledge, outline the evidence to show which social groups are most likely to experience poverty in the contemporary UK. (22 marks)**

Indicative content (other valid points may be offered).

Knowledge may be drawn from any part of the specification in order to illustrate which social groups are most likely to experience poverty in the contemporary UK. Answers are likely to focus on social groups such as; underclass, single parent families, children, pensioners, people with disabilities, homeless, some ethnic groups. Concepts are likely to appear, such as; relative poverty, absolute poverty, cycle of poverty, feminisation of poverty, poverty trap, culture of poverty, dependency, social exclusion, life chances, marginalisation, relative deprivation, situational constraints. Empirical evidence may come from organisations such as the Low Pay Unit, Department for Work and Pensions, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation or the CPAG. Studies may be used such as Oppenheim and Cooke, Mack and Lansley, Lister and Murray. Theoretical evidence is likely to draw on Marxism and feminism. The crucial issue to bring out is that some social groups are more prone to experience poverty than others although it is quite common for individuals to move in and out of poverty throughout their lifetime, this may be related to economic circumstances. Evidence should be used from across the options they have studied.

AO1: Knowledge and Understanding

18-22 marks

Responses will show a wide ranging and detailed knowledge and understanding of evidence related to the social groups most likely to experience poverty in the contemporary UK. Answers in this band will contain a range of sociological concepts, evidence and/or theories covered in detail. There will be a clear emphasis on contemporary material at the top of this band. The candidate will present material in a logical and coherent manner, and in a way which directly addresses the question. There will be few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

12-17 marks

Responses will show a wide ranging *or* detailed knowledge and understanding of concepts, evidence and/or theories related to which social groups are most likely to experience poverty in the contemporary UK. Answers in this band will be more partial than in the band above and will either have either depth or breadth to them, dealing with a limited range of evidence in depth or a broad range of ideas and evidence with a lack of depth. The candidate will present material in a logical and coherent manner, and in a way which addresses the question. There will be occasional errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

6-11 Marks

Responses will show a basic range of knowledge and understanding of concepts, evidence and/or theories related to which social groups are most likely to experience poverty in the contemporary UK. Answers in this band are likely to generalised accounts of poverty, which may become sidetracked onto issues of definition/measurement. Answers will contain some knowledge of relevant sociological evidence although some of this will be imprecise and lacking in quality and/or quantity. The candidate will present material which has some elements of balance, coherence and/or logic and in a way which partially addresses the question. There will be some errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

1-5 marks

Responses will show limited knowledge and understanding of at least one aspect of relevant concepts, evidence or theories relating to the social groups most likely to experience poverty in the contemporary UK. Material used will be sparse and vague or of marginal relevance to the question. Errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar may be noticeable and intrusive.

0 marks

No relevant sociological knowledge or understanding.

- (e) Outline and evaluate structural explanations of poverty in the contemporary UK. (44 marks)**

AO1: Knowledge and Understanding

(20 marks)

Indicative content (other valid points may be offered).

Expect to see references to a range of different sociological theories and concepts covered in some depth/breadth in the top band. The main emphasis of top band answers should be on the range of structural explanations offered for explaining poverty in the contemporary UK. Structural explanations include; Weberian, Marxist and functionalist based explanations. Concepts such as; situational constraints, cycles of poverty, poverty trap, reserve army of labour, social exclusion, marginalisation, polarisation, meritocracy, role allocation, and the underclass may appear. Expect to see writers such as Field, Townsend, Dahrendorf, Brown and Madge and Davies and Moore.

16-20 marks

Responses will show a wide ranging and detailed knowledge and understanding of evidence related to structural explanations of poverty in the contemporary UK. Answers in this band will contain a range of sociological concepts, evidence and theories covered in detail. There will be a clear discussion of different theories in this band. The candidate will present material in a logical and coherent manner, and in a way which directly addresses the question. There will be few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

11-15 marks

Responses will show a wide ranging or detailed knowledge and understanding of concepts, evidence and/or theories related to structural explanations of poverty in the contemporary UK. Answers in this band will contain an awareness of the range of explanations/concepts of poverty but will not cover these in depth. Answers will have either depth or breadth to them, dealing with a narrow range of points in some depth, such as the role of the government in creating and sustaining poverty or with a broader range of ideas without clear evidence. The candidate will present material in a logical and coherent manner, and in a way which addresses the question. There will be occasional, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

6-10 marks

Responses will show a basic range of knowledge and understanding of concepts, evidence and/or theories related to structural explanations of poverty in the contemporary UK. Answers in this band are likely to be generalised accounts of theories or descriptions of poverty with little focus on the sociological explanations. Answers will contain some knowledge although some of this will be imprecise and lacking in quality and/or quantity. The candidate will present material which has some elements of balance, coherence and/or logic and in a way which partially addresses the question. There will be some, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

1-5 marks

Responses will show limited knowledge and understanding of at least one aspect of relevant concepts, evidence or theories relating to explanations of poverty in the contemporary UK. Material used will be sparse and vague or of marginal relevance to the question. Errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar may be noticeable and intrusive.

0 marks

No relevant sociological knowledge or understanding.

Assessment Objective 2 (b): Evaluation**(24 marks)**

NB. We are rewarding evaluation of this sociological view but also evaluative style. The following points of evaluation may be developed, but candidates may reach top band by developing other points through a sustained evaluative approach.

Some points of possible evaluation.

Sociologists disagree in their explanations of poverty and this is likely to provide the opportunity for clear evaluative skills. There is a clear argument between the cultural and structural approaches to explaining poverty and this should figure prominently in top band responses. Some responses may offer the hybrid cultural/structural explanations through the work of Le Grande, Piachard and Byrne. This would constitute a high level response and is likely to be placed in the top band. Evaluation marks can be rewarded for the evaluative use of New Right explanations which show they are distinct from the structural explanations. Structuralists themselves disagree in the foci of their explanations and whether blame lies with the nature of the capitalist system, the power held by the minority or a patriarchal society which effectively sees the feminisation of poverty. Juxtaposed answers are likely to draw from Marxist, Weberian and feminist views, although they will fail to develop the points of disagreement.

18-24 marks

Responses show the ability to make balanced evaluation of specific sociological concepts, theories and evidence focussed on structural explanations of class poverty. Answers in this band will show reasoned and coherent arguments sustaining relevance and engaging with the question throughout. Answers in this band are will focus on theoretical debate in some depth. To be placed at the top of this band precise evaluative points should be developed in relation to theoretical and/or conceptual and/or empirical disagreement.

12-17 marks

Responses show a balanced evaluation of some of the concepts, theories and/or evidence focussed on structural explanations of poverty. Answers in this band may list evaluative points which means sustained evaluation is missing, doing this well to be placed at the top of this band. Other responses in this band may be unbalanced where a couple of evaluative points are developed but others neglected. Answers in this band will show an awareness of theoretical debate, but will fail to develop this much beyond juxtaposition.

6-11 marks

Responses show a basic evaluation of some of the concepts, theories and/or evidence focussed on explanations of poverty. Answers in this band may be characterised by juxtaposition. Other responses may raise critical points but leave them unexplained, eg the problems of defining and measuring poverty. Answers at the bottom of this band will show a more than a simple understanding of evaluative points.

1-5 marks

Responses will show a simple and limited appreciation of at least one point of evaluation focussed on sociological explanations of poverty. This may be based on common-sense or anecdotal assertion.

0 marks

No relevant evaluative points.

Question 2

- (a) Using **Item A**, identify **two** differences in household expenditure between White and Asian ethnic groups. (6 marks)

Any difference between the two groups are acceptable. The main differences are in relation to:

- food and non-alcoholic drinks;
- alcoholic drinks, tobacco and narcotics;
- communication;
- recreation and culture.

However the others are acceptable too.

Award one mark for the identification of the item of expenditure showing the difference and up to two marks for the use of data from the Item in support of the answer.

AO2 (a): Interpretation and Analysis**4-6 marks**

Shows the ability to select and analyse data from Item A. The data will be taken from Item A, and there will be the use of evidence to support each answer.

1-3 marks

Shows some ability to select and analyse data from Item A. The data will be taken from Item A, and there is likely to be some use of evidence to support the answers

0 marks

No relevant sociological points.

- (b) Using **Item B**, identify **two** ways in which there is an increasing similarity of experience between white people and some ethnic minority groups. (6 marks)

Award one mark for the identification of a way in which there is an increasing similarity of experience between white people and some minority ethnic groups and up to two marks for the use of evidence from the Item to support each way. Each way is worth a maximum of 3 marks. Candidates who quote from the Item directly without using their own words to interpret should be awarded 2 marks for each.

The ways are:

- increased social mobility;
- growth of a middle class of professional and managerial workers showing a convergence;
- convergence-becoming similar.

AO2 (a): Interpretation and Analysis

4-6 marks

Shows the ability to select and analyse two ways in which there is an increasing similarity of experience between white people and some ethnic minority groups. The two ways will be taken from Item B, and there will be the use of evidence to support both.

1-3 marks

Shows some ability to select and analyse two ways in which there is an increasing similarity of experience between white people and some ethnic minority groups. The ways will be taken from Item B, and there is likely to be some use of evidence used in support.

0 marks

No relevant sociological points.

- (c) Briefly explain two methodological problems facing sociologists researching weekly household expenditure in the contemporary UK. (12 marks)

Indicative content (other valid points may be offered, if in doubt check with your TL).

Difficulties include:

- accessing the data;
- ethics;
- data would quickly become out of date/snapshot;
- comparability issues, economically active/inactive;
- selecting an appropriate method;
- achieving validity;
- which household member/s to choose as informants;
- varied and changeable composition of a household.

AO2 (a): Interpretation and Analysis

10-12 marks

Selects and organises relevant material to provide a clear account of two problems sociologists face when researching weekly household expenditure in the contemporary UK. In this band the difficulties selected will be clearly relevant to research on weekly household expenditure in the UK.

7-9 marks

Selects relevant material to provide an analysis of two problems sociologists face researching weekly household expenditure in the contemporary UK. In this band the points selected are likely to be generalised and not related directly to researching weekly household expenditure. Responses in this band may be unbalanced or there may be a list of a number of three or four difficulties left undeveloped.

4-6 marks

Selects some relevant material to provide some analysis of the problems sociologists face researching weekly household expenditure in the contemporary UK. Responses in this band may select and analyse one difficulty and relate it to the context, doing this well to be placed at the top of the band. Alternatively responses will be partial or confused although demonstrating some analysis of methodological concerns.

1-3 marks

A limited interpretation of material relevant to problems sociologists face when researching weekly household expenditure in the contemporary UK. There is likely to be inaccuracy or very brief answers.

0 marks

No relevant sociological points.

- (d) **Using your wider sociological knowledge, outline the evidence to show that the contemporary UK remains an unequal society. (22 marks)**

Indicative content (other valid points may be offered).

Knowledge may be drawn from any part of the specification in order to illustrate the evidence that the contemporary UK remains an unequal society. Answers in the top band need to consider at least one aspect of change over time, focusing on inequalities that have remained static or worsened over time. Concepts are likely to appear, such as; social mobility, income, wealth, relative poverty, absolute poverty, cycle of poverty, feminization of poverty, inverse care law, selective policing, labelling, patriarchy, ethnic penalty, racism, dependency, social exclusion, social closure, glass ceiling, life chances, marginalisation, relative deprivation, situational constraints. Empirical evidence may come from organisations such as the IPPR, Low Pay Unit, Department for Work and Pensions, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation or the CPAG. Theoretical evidence is likely to draw on Marxism and feminism. Evidence should be used from across the options they have studied

AO1: Knowledge and Understanding

18-22 marks

Responses will show a wide ranging and detailed knowledge and understanding of evidence related to the contemporary UK remaining an unequal society. Answers in this band will contain a range of sociological concepts, evidence and/or theories covered in detail. There will be a clear emphasis on contemporary material at the top of this band and some focus on the issue of change over time. The candidate will present material in a logical and coherent manner, and in a way which directly addresses the question. There will be few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

12-17 marks

Responses will show a wide ranging or detailed knowledge and understanding of concepts, evidence and/or theories related to the contemporary UK remaining an unequal society. Answers in this band will be more partial than in the band above and will either have either depth or breadth to them, dealing with a limited range of evidence in depth or a broad range of ideas and evidence with a lack of depth. The candidate will present material in a logical and coherent manner, and in a way which addresses the question. There will be occasional errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

6-11 marks

Responses will show a basic range of knowledge and understanding of concepts, evidence and/or theories related to the contemporary UK remaining an unequal society. Answers in this band are likely to generalised accounts of inequality. Answers will contain some knowledge of relevant sociological evidence although some of this will be imprecise and lacking in quality and/or quantity. The candidate will present material which has some elements of balance, coherence and/or logic and in a way which partially addresses the question. There will be some errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

1-5 marks

Responses will show limited knowledge and understanding of at least one aspect of relevant concepts, evidence or theories relating to inequality in the contemporary UK. Material used will be sparse and vague or of marginal relevance to the question. Errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar may be noticeable and intrusive.

0 marks

No relevant sociological knowledge or understanding.

- (e) **Outline and evaluate sociological explanations for the changing nature of the middle class in the contemporary UK. (44 marks)**

AO1: Knowledge and Understanding

(20 marks)

Indicative content (other valid points may be offered).

Expect to see references to a range of different sociological theories and concepts covered in some depth/breadth in the top band. The main emphasis of top band answers should be on the range of sociological explanations offered; the changing nature of the middle class/es, going beyond a description of the middle class/es. Explanations such as occupational change, capitalism, post fordism or embourgeoisement may be offered. Concepts such as; fragmentation, post-fordism, meritocracy, cultural, social and economic capital embourgeoisement, life chances, market situation, status, non manual work, service sector, white collar workers, professionals, blurring, class consciousness, class identity may appear. Theories such as Marxism, Neo-Marxism, Weberianism and post modern views may appear. Expect to see writers such as Savage, Giddens and Roberts.

16-20 marks

Responses will show a wide ranging and detailed knowledge and understanding of evidence related to sociological explanations for the changing nature of the middle class in the contemporary UK. Answers in this band will contain a range of sociological concepts, evidence and theories covered in detail. There will be a discussion of different theories in this band and the responses will focus on the explanations offered for the changing middle classes. The candidate will present material in a logical and coherent manner, and in a way which directly addresses the question. There will be few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

11-15 marks

Responses will show a wide ranging or detailed knowledge and understanding of concepts, evidence and/or theories related to sociological explanations for the changing nature of the middle class in the contemporary UK. Answers in this band will contain an awareness of the range of explanations/concepts but will not cover these in depth. Answers will have either depth or breadth to them, dealing with a narrow range of points in some depth, such as the boundary problems, or with a broader range of ideas without clear evidence. The candidate will present material in a logical and coherent manner, and in a way which addresses the question. There will be occasional, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

6-10 marks

Responses will show a basic range of knowledge and understanding of concepts, evidence and/or theories related to sociological explanations for the changing nature of the middle class in the contemporary UK. Answers in this band are likely to be generalised accounts or descriptions of the middle class/e with little focus on the sociological explanations. Answers will contain some knowledge although some of this will be imprecise and lacking in quality and/or quantity. The candidate will present material which has some elements of balance, coherence and/or logic and in a way which partially addresses the question. There will be some, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

1-5 marks

Responses will show limited knowledge and understanding of at least one aspect of relevant concepts, evidence or theories relating to sociological explanations for the changing nature of the middle class in the contemporary UK. Material used will be sparse and vague or of marginal relevance to the question. Errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar may be noticeable and intrusive.

0 marks

No relevant sociological knowledge or understanding.

Assessment Objective 2 (b): Evaluation**(24 marks)**

NB. We are rewarding evaluation of this sociological view but also evaluative style. The following points of evaluation may be developed, but candidates may reach top band by developing other points through a sustained evaluative approach.

Some points of possible evaluation.

Sociologists disagree in their explanations for the changing nature of the middle class and this is likely to provide the opportunity for clear evaluative skills. There is a clear argument between the Marxists and the Weberian approaches focusing on the size and economic and social position of the middle classes. The debate between the Marxist economic arguments and status arguments of the Weberian approach is likely to feature in top band responses, as are references to Neo-Marxism. There is also scope for candidates to discuss the ways in which class is defined and measured in the UK, this may elicit evaluative skills. Juxtaposed answers are likely to offer the Marxist, Weberian, Functionalist and Post Modern views, although they will fail to develop the points of disagreement.

18-24 marks

Responses show the ability to make balanced evaluation of specific sociological concepts, theories and evidence focussed on sociological explanations for the changing nature of the middle class in the contemporary UK. Answers in this band will show reasoned and coherent arguments sustaining relevance and engaging with the question throughout. Answers in this band are will focus on theoretical debate to some extent. To be placed at the top of this band precise evaluative points should be developed in relation to theoretical and/or conceptual and/or empirical disagreement.

12-17 marks

Responses show a balanced evaluation of some of the concepts, theories and/or evidence focussed on sociological explanations for the changing nature of the middle class in the contemporary UK. Answers in this band may list evaluative points, which means sustained evaluation is missing, doing this well to be placed at the top of this band. Other responses in this band may be unbalanced where a couple of evaluative points are developed but others neglected. Answers in this band will show an awareness of theoretical debate, but will fail to develop this much beyond juxtaposition.

6-11 marks

Responses show a basic evaluation of some of the concepts, theories and/or evidence focussed on sociological explanations for the changing nature of the middle class in the contemporary UK. Answers in this band may be characterised by juxtaposition. Other responses may raise critical points but leave them unexplained, eg the problems associated with defining the middle class. Answers at the bottom of this band will show a more than a simple understanding of evaluative points.

1-5 marks

Responses will show a simple and limited appreciation of at least one point of evaluation focussed on sociological explanations for the changing nature of the middle class in the contemporary UK. This may be based on common-sense or anecdotal assertion.

0 marks

No relevant evaluative points.

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