



A-level SOCIOLOGY 7192/1

Paper 1 Education with theory and methods

Mark scheme

June 2025

Version: 1.0 Final



Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

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Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 3 with a small amount of level 4 material it would be placed in level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

Qu	Marking guidance	Total marks
01	Outline two ways in which globalisation has affected schools in the UK. Two marks for each of two appropriate ways clearly outlined or one mark for each appropriate way partially outlined. Answers may include: • an increase in multicultural education (1 mark); increased migration may lead to more globally shared ideas, including teaching about other cultures (+1 mark) • changes in the curriculum (1 mark); increasing global convergence as multinational companies are involved in the design of curriculum materials that are used in schools globally (+1 mark) • an increase in marketisation/privatisation of education (1 mark); globalisation has led to greater involvement of private companies in schools such as exam boards and resource providers, for example Pearson (+1 mark) • the school day has been extended in some schools (1 mark); countries that are high in international league tables tend to have a longer school day (+1 mark) • the variety of types of schools has increased (1 mark); globalisation has influenced the introduction of schools in the UK such as free schools (+1 mark) • an increase in the use of digital technology in schools (1 mark); globalisation has led to more use of international learning platforms and online resources in UK classrooms (+1 mark). Other relevant material should be credited. 0 marks for no relevant points.	4

Qu	Marking guidance	Total marks
02	Outline three reasons for social class differences in who goes to university. Two marks for each of three appropriate reasons clearly outlined or one mark for each appropriate reason partially outlined. Answers may include: • achievement trends differ between social classes (1 mark); middle-class pupils are more likely to achieve the grades needed for university entrance (+1 mark) • parental attitudes to university may differ between social classes (1 mark); parents in higher social classes are more likely to encourage their children to go to university (+1 mark) • pupil subcultures within schools may differ between social classes (1 mark); pupils in higher social classes are more likely to be members of pro-school subcultures which value university education (+1 mark) • different amounts of cultural capital between social classes (1 mark); pupils in higher social classes are more likely to have the language skills and cultural knowledge to gain entry to university (+1 mark) • working-class pupils are more likely to face economic barriers (1 mark); they may be unable to meet the costs of university (+1 mark) • pupil attitudes to university may differ between social classes (1 mark); working-class pupils may be reluctant to abandon their working-class habitus and so exclude themselves from university (+1 mark). Other relevant material should be credited. 0 marks for no relevant points.	6

Qu	Marking guidance	Total marks
03	Applying material from Item A , analyse two ways in which relationships and processes within schools may lead to gender differences in educational achievement.	10

Item A

Teachers may have different expectations of some groups of pupils compared to others. Pupils may form subcultures with peers who share similar values.

Relationships and processes within schools may lead to gender differences in achievement.

Marks	Level descriptors
8–10	Answers in this band will show good knowledge and understanding of relevant material on two ways in which that relationships and processes within schools may lead to gender differences in achievement. There will be two developed applications of material from the item, eg teachers are more likely to see girls as the 'ideal pupil' therefore they are likely to work harder and achieve higher grades in comparison to boys; laddish anti-school subcultures may develop, resulting in lower achievement than girls. There will be appropriate analysis/evaluation of two ways, eg the extent to which relationships and processes within schools may lead to gender differences in achievement.
4–7	Answers in this band will show a basic to reasonable knowledge and understanding of one to two ways in which relationships and processes within schools may lead to gender differences in achievement. There will be some successful application of material from the item, eg teacher's expectations may lead to boys being placed in lower sets and streams leading to lower levels of achievement for boys in comparison to girls. There will be some analysis/evaluation.
1–3	Answers in this band will show limited knowledge and understanding of one or two ways that relationships and processes in schools may lead to gender differences in achievement. There will be limited application of material from the item. Some material may be at a tangent to the question, eg a discussion of relationships and processes within schools with no reference to gender differences in achievement. There will be limited or no analysis/evaluation.
0	No relevant points.

Sources may include the following or other relevant ones:

Archer; Connolly; Epstein; Francis; Haase; Jackson; Mac an Ghaill; Mitsos and Browne; Read; Ringrose; Sewell; Willis.

Qu	Marking guidance	Total marks
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04	Applying material from Item B and your knowledge, evaluate sociological explanations of the role and functions of education in society.	30
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Item B

Some sociologists suggest that the role of education is to reinforce value consensus in society. They see schools as having a range of positive functions for both individuals and society. One key function is to allocate pupils to their future occupations.

Other sociologists disagree and claim that the role of education is to reproduce existing inequalities in the next generation.

Marks	Level descriptors
25–30	Answers in this band will show sound, conceptually detailed knowledge of a range of relevant material on sociological explanations of the role and functions of education in society. Sophisticated understanding of the question and of the presented material will be shown. Appropriate material will be applied accurately and with sensitivity to the issues raised by the question. Analysis and evaluation will be explicit and relevant. Evaluation may be developed, for example through a debate between different perspectives (functionalism, New Right, Marxism, feminisms, postmodernism), regarding the issue of the role and functions of the education system or through consideration of the relative importance of different functions. Analysis will show clear explanation. Appropriate conclusions will be drawn.
19–24	Answers in this band will show accurate, broad or deep but incomplete knowledge of sociological explanations of the role and functions of education in society. Understands a number of significant aspects of the question; good understanding of the presented material. Application of material is largely explicitly relevant to the question, though some material may be inadequately focused. Some limited explicit evaluation, for example some criticisms of the functionalist view of role allocation and/or some appropriate analysis, eg clear explanations of some of the presented material.

13–18	Answers in this band will show largely accurate knowledge but limited range and depth, eg a broadly accurate, if basic, account of functionalist views of the role and functions of education in society. Understands some limited but significant aspects of the question; superficial understanding of the presented material. Applying listed material from the general topic area but with limited regard for its relevance to the issues raised by the question, or applying a narrow range of more relevant material. Evaluation will take the form of juxtaposition of competing explanations or one or two isolated stated points. Analysis will be limited, with answers tending towards the descriptive.
7–12	Answers in this band will show limited undeveloped knowledge, eg two or three insubstantial points about the role of education in society. Understands only limited aspects of the question; simplistic understanding of the presented material. Limited application of suitable material, and/or material often at a tangent to the demands of the question, eg drifting into a discussion of functionalism in general without reference to the role and functions of education in society. Very limited or no evaluation. Attempts at analysis, if any, are thin and disjointed.
1–6	Answers in this band will show very limited knowledge, eg one or two very insubstantial points about education in general. Very little/no understanding of the question and of the presented material. Significant errors and/or omissions in application of material. No analysis or evaluation.
0	No relevant points.

Indicative content

Concepts and issues such as the following may appear:

Consensus; conflict; role allocation; correspondence principle; ideology; meritocracy; social solidarity; hidden curriculum; secondary socialisation; universalistic values; core values; cultural reproduction; capitalism; patriarchy; cultural capital; myth of meritocracy; marketisation; globalisation; metanarrative; hybridity; human capital; class; gender; ethnicity.

Sources may include the following or other relevant ones:

Althusser; Becker; Bourdieu; Boudon; Bowles and Gintis; Chubb and Moe; Coard; Cohen; Davis and Moore; Durkheim; Francis; Gillborn and Youdell; Giroux; Jackson; Leonard; Murray; Parsons; Schultz; Usher and Edwards; Willis

Qu	Marking guidance	Total marks
05	Applying material from Item C and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of using structured interviews to investigate the choices pupils make about their post-16 education or training.	20

Item C

Investigating the choices pupils make about post-16 education and training

Pupils in the UK will consider the options available to them in post-16 education or training. They can choose to stay in full-time education, begin an apprenticeship, or complete voluntary work alongside part-time education. A range of providers is available. Pupils may become anxious when deciding but many sources of information and guidance are available to help them through the process.

One way of investigating the choices pupils make about their post-16 education or training is to use structured interviews. In these interviews the questions are decided by the researcher in advance and are often closed. Structured interviews are useful for generating straightforward factual information. However, they are inflexible as researchers cannot change questions during the interview. Structured interviews also do not allow a rapport to develop between the researcher and the participant.

Marks	Level descriptors
17–20	Answers in this band will show accurate, conceptually detailed knowledge and sound understanding of a range of relevant material on structured interviews. Appropriate material will be applied accurately and with sensitivity to the investigation of the specific issue of the choices pupils make about their post-16 education or training. Students will apply knowledge of a range of relevant strengths and limitations of structured interviews. These may include some of the following and/or other relevant concerns, though answers do not need to include all of these, even for full marks: - the research characteristics of potential research subjects, eg pupils, teachers, parents, support staff, careers advisors, peer groups (eg class, ethnic and gender differences) - the research contexts and settings, (eg careers fairs, schools, FE colleges, classrooms, pupils' homes) - the sensitivity of researching the choices pupils make about their post-16 education or training (eg parents and pupils perceiving some choices negatively, asking sensitive questions about grades, material factors and cultural factors). Evaluation of the usefulness of structured interviews will be explicit and relevant. Analysis will show clear explanation. Appropriate conclusions will be drawn.

13–16	Answers in this band will show accurate, broad or deep but incomplete knowledge of the strengths and limitations of structured interviews. Understands a number of significant aspects of the question; good understanding of the presented material. Application of knowledge will be broadly appropriate but will tend to be applied in a more generalised way or a more restricted way; for example: • applying the method to the study of education in general, not to the specifics of the choices pupils make about post-16 education or training • specific but undeveloped application to the choices pupils make about their post-16 education or training • a focus on the research characteristics of pupils choosing post-16 courses with implicit links to some features of structured interviews. There will be some limited explicit evaluation, eg of one or two features of structured interviews as a method, and/or some appropriate analysis, eg clear explanations of some of the features of structured interviews.
9–12	Answers in this band will show largely accurate knowledge but limited range and depth, including a broadly accurate, if basic, account of some of the strengths and/or limitations of structured interviews. Understands some limited but significant aspects of the question; superficial understanding of the presented material. Applying material (possibly in list-like fashion) on structured interviews, but with very limited or non-existent application to either the study of the choices pupils make about their post-16 education or training in particular or of education in general. Evaluation limited to briefly stated points. Analysis will be limited, with answers tending towards the descriptive.
5–8	Answers in this band will show limited undeveloped knowledge, eg two to three insubstantial points about some features of structured interviews. Understands only limited aspects of the question; simplistic understanding of the presented material. Limited application of suitable material, and/or material often at a tangent to the demands of the question, eg perhaps drifting into an unfocused comparison of different methods. Very limited or no evaluation. Attempts at analysis, if any, are thin and disjointed.
1–4	Answers in this band will show very limited knowledge, eg one to two very insubstantial points about methods in general. Very little or no understanding of the question and of the presented material. Significant errors and/or omissions in application of material. Some material ineffectually recycled from the item, or some knowledge applied solely to the substantive issue of the choices pupils make about their post-16 education or training, with very little or no reference to structured interviews. No analysis or evaluation.
0	No relevant points.

Indicative content

Strengths and limitations of structured interviews, as applied to the particular issue in education, may include: time; cost; access; positivism; quantitative data; reliability; interviewer bias; operationalisation of concepts; response rate; objectivity; factual data; sample size; representativeness; generalisability; validity; verstehen; power and status differences; impression management; ethical issues (eg informed consent, confidentiality, sensitivity, anonymity and vulnerability).

Qu	Marking guidance	Total marks
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06	Outline and explain two reasons why interpretivists prefer to use qualitative methods.	10
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Marks	Level descriptors
8–10	Answers in this band will show very good knowledge and understanding of two reasons why interpretivists prefer to use qualitative methods. There will be two applications of relevant material, eg qualitative methods such as participant observation allow researchers to study people in their natural settings which helps them understand meanings and achieve verstehen making the data more valid; qualitative methods such as unstructured interviews are flexible, allowing Interpretivists to change the direction of research if new information emerges during the research process. There will be appropriate analysis, eg of why understanding interpretations and meanings is so important to interpretivist sociologists.
4–7	Answers in this band will show a reasonable to good knowledge and understanding of one or two reasons why interpretivists prefer to use qualitative methods. There will be one or two applications of relevant material, eg small-scale studies like case studies provide detailed insight into individual experiences rather than broad patterns. There will be some basic analysis.
1–3	Answers in this band will show limited knowledge and little or no understanding of the question or the material. There will be limited focus on the question, eg there may be some drift into an account of the disadvantages of qualitative methods. There will be limited or no analysis.
0	No relevant points.

Indicative content

Answers may include the following and/or other relevant points:

- high in validity
- understanding of meanings and interpretations through methods like unstructured interviews
- achieving verstehen by building rapport and exploring peoples lived experiences
- focus on micro scale and in-depth research rather than broad generalisations
- research is flexible and can change direction as new insights emerge during the study
- participants have power to shape the research
- preference for subjectivity in research
- rejection of scientific methods as too detached or simplistic.

Sources may include the following or other relevant ones:

Blumer; Carter and Fuller; Cicourel; Cooley; Garfinkel; Goffman; Griffin; Irvine; Mead; Weber.

Assessment Objectives

	AO1	AO2	AO3	Total
Paper 1				
Education				
Q01	4			4
Q02	3	3		6
Q03	3	4	3	10
Q04	12	9	9	30
Q05 MIC	8	8	4	20
Q06 Theory and Methods	5	3	2	10
Totals	35	27	18	80