



GCE AS MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2024

**AS
SOCIOLOGY- COMPONENT 2
METHODS OF SOCIOLOGICAL ENQUIRY
B200U20-1**

About this marking scheme

The purpose of this marking scheme is to provide teachers, learners, and other interested parties, with an understanding of the assessment criteria used to assess this specific assessment.

This marking scheme reflects the criteria by which this assessment was marked in a live series and was finalised following detailed discussion at an examiners' conference. A team of qualified examiners were trained specifically in the application of this marking scheme. The aim of the conference was to ensure that the marking scheme was interpreted and applied in the same way by all examiners. It may not be possible, or appropriate, to capture every variation that a candidate may present in their responses within this marking scheme. However, during the training conference, examiners were guided in using their professional judgement to credit alternative valid responses as instructed by the document, and through reviewing exemplar responses.

Without the benefit of participation in the examiners' conference, teachers, learners and other users, may have different views on certain matters of detail or interpretation. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that this marking scheme is used alongside other guidance, such as published exemplar materials or Guidance for Teaching. This marking scheme is final and will not be changed, unless in the event that a clear error is identified, as it reflects the criteria used to assess candidate responses during the live series.

EDUQAS GCE AS SOCIOLOGY
COMPONENT 2 - METHODS OF SOCIOLOGICAL ENQUIRY
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Experiences of stop and search

The Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities (CRED) was established in July 2020, with the aim of examining inequalities across the UK. The commission was appointed to collect qualitative data and therefore conducted a combination of online **focus groups** and unstructured interviews. This included interviews and focus groups with:

- Black and South Asian young men (aged 18-30) who had been stopped and searched by the police.
- police officers.

To ensure the research was ethical, the focus groups aimed to create a safe space in which participants could discuss their views and experiences. As discussions often covered potentially distressing topics, such as experiences of racism, the research team provided relevant support information at the end of each focus group.

Adapted from [research](#) published on the National Centre for Social Research website.

*Answer **each** part of the following question.*

1. (a) Using material from the item and sociological knowledge, explain the meaning of the term **focus group**. [5]

Indicative content:

- A definition of the term focus group e.g. a group interview involving a small number of demographically similar people or participants who have other common traits/experiences.
- Reference to practicality e.g. time and cost saving.
- Reference to group rapport.
- Issues with social desirability.
- The item should be used to demonstrate understanding.

Any other reasonable response.

Band	AO1 elements 2a & 2b	AO2 element 1b
3	3 marks Answers demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question as applied to research methods	2 marks Answers demonstrate accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/concepts/evidence/research methods. These are applied and interpreted in the context of the debate/question. Reference will be made to the item to show the ability to select appropriate examples.
2	2 marks Answers demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question as applied to research methods	1 mark Answers demonstrate some ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/concepts/evidence/research methods in the context of the debate/question.
1	1 mark Answers demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question as applied to research methods	
	0 marks NRSP	0 marks NRSP

- (b) Using material from the item and sociological knowledge, explain **two** possible ethical issues in this research. [10]

There should be two issues for AO1 band 3. These issues can be theoretical, practical or methodological and must contain technical language. For AO2 band 3 the issues must be contextualised and explained with reference to methodological issues and contextualised.

Indicative content:

- Issues of sensitivity.
- Issues of consent.
- The use of debriefing.
- Issues with anonymity
- Use of third-party support.
- Links to impact on validity.
- The item should be used to contextualise the issues offered.

Any other reasonable response.

Band	AO1 elements 2a & 2b	AO2 element 1b
3	5-6 marks Answers demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	4 marks Answers demonstrate a detailed ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/concepts/evidence in the context of the debate/question. There will be appropriate use made of the item to demonstrate understanding.
2	3-4 marks Answers demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	2-3 marks Answers demonstrate some ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/concepts/evidence in the context of the debate/question. Some reference will be made to the item.
1	1-2 marks Answers demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	1 mark Answers demonstrate a basic ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/concepts/evidence in the context of the debate/question.
	0 marks NRSP	0 marks NRSP

- (c) Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of using qualitative data in this research. [10]

There should be one strength and one weakness identified for AO1 band 3. These will contain technical language and will be focused on a methodological strength and weakness. For AO2 band 3 the weaknesses must be explained with reference to methodological issues and the impact on the research.

Indicative content:

Strengths

- High in validity.
- Easy to establish a rapport.
- Participants aren't restricted.

Weaknesses

- Practical issues such as time and cost.
- Problems with reliability.
- Problems with validity e.g. social desirability.
- Harder to analyse.
- Researcher needs to be more skilled.

The item should be used to contextualise the strength and weakness offered. Any other reasonable response.

Band	AO1 elements 2a & 2b	AO2 element 1b
3	5-6 marks Answers demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence relating to the context of the debate/ question.	4 marks Answers demonstrate a detailed ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence in the context of the debate/ question. There will be appropriate use made of the item to demonstrate understanding.
2	3-4 marks Answers demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence relating to the context of the debate/ question.	2-3 marks Answers demonstrate some ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence in the context of the debate/ question. Some reference will be made to the item.
1	1-2 marks Answers demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence relating to the context of the debate/ question.	1 mark Answers demonstrate a basic ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence in the context of the debate/ question.
	0 marks NRSP	0 marks NRSP

- (d) With reference to sociological studies, discuss the strengths and weaknesses of using multiple methods in sociological research. [25]

Answers should demonstrate the ability to make sense of sociological debates, offer sociological examples and explain sociological concepts. Answers need to use key terminology. Credit will be given to effective discussion where there is evidence of detailed and wide-ranging knowledge. Where answers demonstrate all abilities to the highest standard, then they will be consistent with Band 4. However, answers demonstrating knowledge but fewer skills of interpretation and discussion may achieve band 4 for AO1 but lower bands for AO2 and AO3.

Indicative content:

Candidates may refer to some, but not necessarily all, of the following:

- Definition of methodological pluralism and/or triangulation.
- There should be reference to appropriate sociological examples such as Barker, Humphreys, Willis and Hey.

Strengths

- Obtain a holistic view.
- Strengths of one method can compensate for the weaknesses of another.
- Both qualitative and quantitative data can be obtained.
- Realist approach.
- The ability to cross-check results.

Weaknesses

- Time consuming.
- Expensive.
- Harder to analyse.
- Researcher needs to be more skilled.
- When arguing for or against this should be in the context of key methodological issues such as: validity, reliability, practicality, generalisability and representativeness.

All relevant examples and explanations will be credited. Direct reference to relevant studies is necessary for answers to gain access to the top mark band.

Responses other than those listed above may be valid and credit worthy if sociological evidence analysis is present.

Band	AO1 elements 2a & 2b	AO2 element 1b	AO3 strands 1-3
4	9-10 marks Answers demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence relating to the context of the debate/ question as applied to research methods.	5 marks Answers demonstrate accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence/ research methods. These are applied and interpreted in the context of the debate/ question.	9-10 marks Answers demonstrate detailed, well organised and logical arguments. Logical judgements and conclusions will be offered based on explicit evaluation of the relevant theories/ concepts/ research methods/ evidence examined.
3	6-8 marks Answers demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence relating to the context of the debate/ question as applied to research methods.	4 marks Answers demonstrate some accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence/ research methods. Some of which are applied and interpreted in the context of the debate/ question.	6-8 marks Answers demonstrate some, well organised and logical arguments. Judgements and conclusions offered will show some evaluation of the relevant theories/ concepts/ evidence/ research methods examined.
2	3-5 marks Answers demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence relating to the context of the debate/ question as applied to research methods.	3 marks Answers demonstrate a basic ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence/ research methods in the context of the debate/ question.	3-5 marks Answers demonstrate basic arguments. Judgements and conclusions offered will show basic evaluation of the theories/ concepts/ evidence examined.
1	1-2 marks Answers demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence relating to the context of the debate/ question as applied to research methods.	1-2 marks Answers demonstrate limited ability to select and/or interpret and/ or apply sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence in the context of the debate/ question.	1-2 marks Answers demonstrate limited argument. Any judgements and conclusions offered will show limited evaluation of any theories/ concepts/ evidence/ research methods examined.
	0 marks NRSP	0 marks NRSP	0 marks NRSP