



GCE AS MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2025

**AS
SOCIOLOGY – UNIT 2
2200U20-1**

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.

Notes for examiners

The mark scheme for each question is in two parts. Part 1 is advice on the specific question outlining indicative content which can be used to assess the quality of the candidate's response. The content is not prescriptive nor are candidates expected to cover all the material mentioned.

Part 2 is an assessment grid advising bands and associated marks that should be allocated to responses which demonstrate the qualities need in AO1, AO2 and, where appropriate, AO3. Where a response is not creditworthy or not attempted it is indicated on the grid as NRSP (No relevant sociological point).

Reference to examples and evidence drawn from the study of Welsh culture and society will be credited.

WJEC GCE AS SOCIOLOGY

UNIT 2 – UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY AND METHODS OF SOCIOLOGICAL ENQUIRY

SUMMER 2025 MARK SCHEME

Section A

*Read the following item and answer **each** part of the following question.*

Compulsory question

Gang Membership and Youth Offending.

Smith and Bradshaw (2005) carried out a longitudinal study to explore gang membership and youth offending. They studied 4,300 young people who were transferring to secondary school in the City of Edinburgh. To ensure their sample was **representative** they included males and females from different social class backgrounds. They pointed out Edinburgh contains a cross section of people that reflects cities in Britain generally. The study used a wide range of research methods including self-complete questionnaires with young people, conducted annually to identify changes and patterns. The researchers carried out semi-structured interviews with a smaller group of young people for additional depth and detail. At the same time, a sample of teachers and parents completed questionnaires. Smith and Bradshaw concluded that rates of gang membership were higher in more deprived areas.

*Adapted from David J. Smith Paul Bradshaw: Centre for Law and Society, University of Edinburgh.
2005*

Answer each part of the following question.

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

Answers should include accurate knowledge points for band 3 AO1. Points should be supported with examples and/or evidence. For band 3 AO2 a clear explanation of the examples/evidence should be present.

Indicative content

- A definition of the term; representativeness depends on how carefully those selected for study are typical of those in the target population (those being studied).
- Researchers aim for those in the sample to be a good cross-section of the population under study in terms of social class, gender, (Item) age, ethnicity etc.
- This is easier when adopting a quantitative approach and conducting a large-scale survey, as this is more likely to be representative, due to a larger sample size.
- Unless the sample is representative, the sociologist cannot generalise.
- Reference to random sampling methods
- Any other relevant point.

Band	AO1 elements 2a & 2b	AO2 element 1b
3	3 marks Answers demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of sociological concepts relating to the context of the debate/question as applied to research methods.	2 marks Answers demonstrate accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological 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 concepts 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 concepts/evidence/research methods in the context of the debate/question.
1	1 mark Answers demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of sociological concepts relating to the context of the debate/question as applied to research methods.	
	0 marks No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.

- (b) Using material from the item and sociological knowledge, explain **two** possible reasons why sociologists use interviews to collect qualitative data. [10]

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

Indicative content

- Understanding of the concept interviews.
- The interviews can take place in the interviewees' natural environment where they may feel more at ease and more likely to discuss topics in detail.
- If necessary, the interviewer is on hand to explain the questions and they can probe for further insights, for example in semi-structured interviews (The Item).
- More flexible than questionnaires as the interviewer may be less restricted with set questions.
- The data collected can provide insights into the views of the people being studied as in the item.
- Those being studied to 'speak for themselves', enhancing validity.
- The interviewer can develop empathy and verstehen with those being researched.
- Data more valid than quantitative methods.
- If the interview is face to face, non-verbal-communication can be analysed.
- There may be time to allow the researcher to explore meanings.
- Sensitive issues can be discussed as may be time for trust/rapport is built up.
- Reference to interpretivist approach.
- Can be exploratory / investigative.
- Reference will be made to the item.
- Any other relevant point.

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 No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.

- (c) With reference to the item and sociological studies, discuss the strengths and weaknesses of using questionnaires to gather information. [20]

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

- All methods have strengths and weaknesses.
- Comparability: the data collection is standardised.
- Collects quantitative data.
- Less time consuming than qualitative methods, especially self-complete questionnaires.
- The data is easier to analyse than qualitative data.
- Preferred by Positivists - scientific rigour; Popper.
- People are free to complete them in their own time.
- They can be replicated.
- Patterns and trends can be identified from the data and comparisons can be made (Item).
- Often given to a large sample - more likely to be representative and therefore generalisations can be made (Item).
- There should be reference to studies such as:
 - Eileen Barker used questionnaires in her study: 'The Making of a Moonie'. She used a computer programme to reveal frequencies and cross tabulation.
 - The Welsh Language Use Survey April 2013 to March 2015, collected data that could be compared to previous Welsh Language Use Surveys of 2004-2006.
 - The Crime Survey for England and Wales Questionnaire (April 2018), data is published by the ONS (Office of National Statistics).

Disadvantages of questionnaire research.

- Researcher has less opportunity to explore meanings people being studied give to actions and processes.
- Interpretivists often prefer in-depth interviews.
- Data less valid than data from methods such as semi-structured and unstructured interviews and participant observation.
- Respondents might not feel confident about disclosing sensitive or controversial issues.
- Researcher unable to develop empathy/verstehen with those being researched, Weber.
- Questions may be misleading producing biased data.
- Cannot be 100% sure who filled in the questionnaire.
- If response rate very low – difficult to generalise.
- There should be reference to studies used to illustrate the points made.
- Reference will be made to the item.
- Any other relevant point.

Band	AO1 elements 1a & 1b	AO2 element 1a	AO3 strands 1-3
4	8-9 marks Answers demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	5 marks Answers demonstrate accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence. These are applied and interpreted in the context of the debate/question.	6 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/ evidence examined.
3	5-7 marks Answers demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	3-4 marks Answers demonstrate some accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence. Some of which are applied and interpreted in the context of the debate/question.	4-5 marks Answers demonstrate some, well organised and logical arguments. Judgements and conclusions offered will show some evaluation of the relevant theories/ concepts/evidence examined.
2	2-4 marks Answers demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	2 marks Answers demonstrate a basic ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/concepts/ evidence in the context of the debate/question.	2-3 marks Answers demonstrate basic arguments. Judgements and conclusions offered will show basic evaluation of the theories/concepts/ evidence examined.
1	1 mark Answers demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	1 mark Answers demonstrate limited ability to select and/or interpret and/ or apply sociological theories/concepts/ evidence in the context of the debate/question.	1mark Answers demonstrate limited argument. Any judgements and conclusions offered will show limited evaluation of any theories/concepts/ evidence examined.
	0 marks No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.

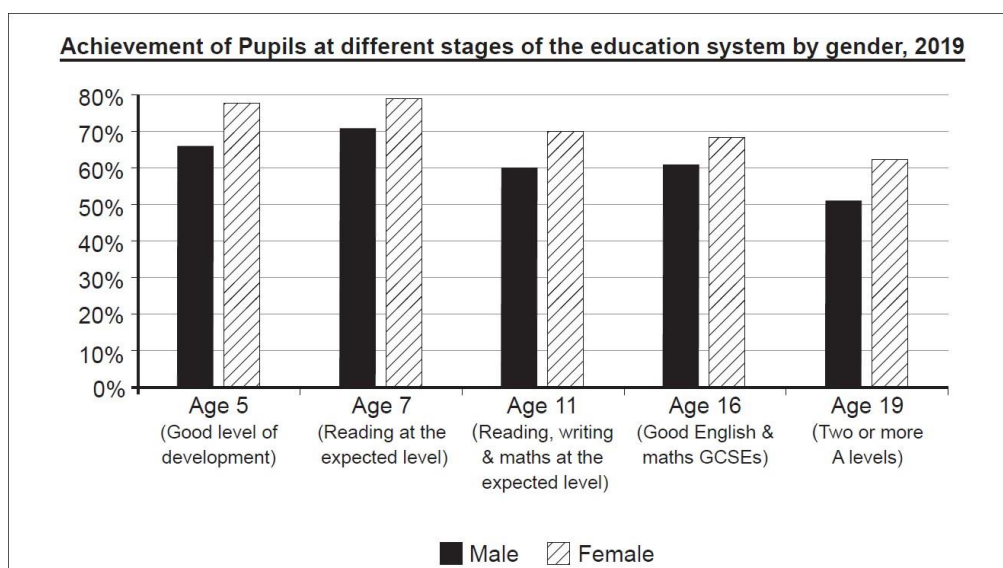
Section B

Answer **one** of the following options

Option 1 Education

Compulsory question

2. (a) Study the following item and answer both parts of question 2(a).



Source: Adapted from Christine Farquharson et al study funded by © Institute for Fiscal Studies study August 2022

- (i) Summarise the content of the graph showing the relationship between gender and achievement at different stages of the education system. [10]

Answers should include accurate points for band 3 AO1 which should be supported with data from the chart. For band 3 AO2 a clear interpretation of the data should be present.

Indicative content

Expect to see reference to a range of points relating to the relationship between gender and achievement at different stages of the education system.

- Points made should be supported by accurate statistics drawn from the data.
- The data reveals attainment gaps at all of the different stages of the education system by gender, 2019.
- Overall females are outperforming males in terms of both grades and educational attainment.
- At the start of primary school, girls are more likely than boys to be classified as having a good level of development, and when they are assessed at age 7, almost 80% of girls reach at least the expected standard in reading compared with 71% of boys. This is a 9-percentage point difference.

- By age 11, a lower percentage of boys reach the expected level in reading, writing and maths, 60% of the boys, while 70% of girls meet the threshold. This is a 10%-point difference.
- There is also a clear gender gap at GCSE (age 16); the percentage of girls achieving a good grade in both English and maths GCSEs is 7 percentage points higher than the boys.
- A higher percentage of females achieve two or more A levels by age 19 than males, 51% of males achieve two or more A levels by the age of 19, 63% of young women do so. This is a 12-percentage point difference.
- Any other relevant point.

Band	AO1 elements 1a & 1b	AO2 element 1a
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 No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.

- (ii) There is a relationship between gender and educational achievement. Explain two sociological reasons for this. [15]

There should be two sociological reasons for educational achievement with effective use of sociological language (AO1 band 4). Both reasons will be supported by sociological evidence (AO2 band 4). Two reasons for the same pattern/trend are acceptable.

Indicative content

There should be two different reasons (which may be linked to the data in the graph) and candidates may focus on males and females, just males, or just females; such as:

- Feminisation of the job market; increased opportunities for females, loss of basic industries and manufacturing jobs, leading to crisis of masculinity and underachievement for some boys, especially working class; Mac an Ghaill.
- Sutton Trust – bright boys from disadvantaged backgrounds are not being encouraged to reach their potential in school.
- Differences in socialisation, boys do not possess the equivalent of the bedroom culture experienced by girls; McRobbie, Hannan.
- Emphasis on coursework hinders boys, but advantages girls; Mitsos and Browne.
- Feminisation of education, fewer role models for boys; Mitsos and Browne.
- Labelling and stereotypes of ideal pupil, including 'halo effect', and middle-class girls; Hargreaves.
- Lad culture hinders boys', especially working-class boys' achievement; Willis, Mac an Ghaill, Jackson.
- Aspirations of boys less likely to embrace an educational route than girls leading to underachievement; Francis.
- Aspirations of girls have raised. Leading to improved achievement; Sharpe.
- Reference should be made to appropriate empirical evidence and/or examples.
- Any other relevant point.

Band	AO1 elements 1a & 1b	AO2 element 1a
4	9-10 marks Answers demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	5 marks Answers demonstrate a detailed ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence in the context of the debate/question.
3	6-8 marks Answers demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	3-4 marks Answers demonstrate some ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence in the context of the debate/question.
2	3-5 marks Answers demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	2 marks Answers demonstrate a basic ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence in the context of the debate/question.
1	1-2 marks Answers demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	1 mark Answers demonstrate limited ability to select and/or interpret and/ or apply sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence in the context of the debate/question.
	0 marks No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.

2. (b) Discuss sociological explanations for the influence of inside school factors on ethnicity and educational achievement. [30]

Answers will make judgements on the worth of concepts, theory, or sociological debate. The answer will focus on the debate in the question. Credit will be given to the effective use of supporting sociological evidence/theories and concepts. 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 assessment, judgement and evaluation may achieve band 4 for AO1 but lower bands for AO2 and AO3.

Indicative content

- There should be a clear understanding of achievement and ethnicity ; relevant statistical data may be considered.
- In school explanations may refer to labelling and/or self-fulfilling prophecy; Wright, Connolly, Mac an Ghaill, Gillborn and Youdell.
- Teacher 'racialised expectations' : Gillborn and Youdell; Mirza; Davidson & Alexis;
- Educational triage; Gillborn and Youdell;
- Pupil subcultures in school; Mac an Ghaill.
- Institutional racism; the ethnocentric curriculum; The Swann Report 1985 and the Runnymede Trust Report 2015; Gillborn and Youdell.
- Introduction of Ebacc benchmark discriminatory for traveller and Gypsy/Roma; Gillborn.
- Lack of role models in teachers and school leaders; Sewell.

Evaluation: Ideas should be compared and evaluated with reference to supporting evidence.

- Differences in educational achievement amongst different ethnic groups may be caused by factors outside the school.
- Stereotypes of subcultures; Gaine & George; Sewell; Stormzy.
- Parental aspirations of different ethnic groups can affect achievement e.g. Chinese parents often aspirational, Chinese children are the highest achieving group in Britain; Archer and Francis; Chua.
- Family cultural capital – Indian and African Asian groups; Modood.
- The focus on minority ethnic groups ignores the largest group of children who underachieve, white working-class boys; Sutton Trust.
- Language issues for EAL students; language, restricted and elaborated codes; Bernstein; Labov
- Ethnicity cannot be examined in a vacuum as class, gender and ethnicity variables interplay; Vincent; Mac an Ghaill.
- Poverty may influence the educational achievement of Pakistani, Bangladeshi and black African groups, Platt; Palmer.
- The education system is meritocratic: functionalism.
- Ideas should be compared and evaluated with reference to supporting evidence.
- Any other relevant point.

Band	AO1 elements 1a & 1b	AO2 element 1a	AO3 strands 1-3
4	11-13 marks Answers demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	5 marks Answers demonstrate accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence. These are applied and interpreted in the context of the debate/question.	10-12 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/ evidence examined.
3	7-10 marks Answers demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	3-4 marks Answers demonstrate some accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence. Some of which are applied and interpreted in the context of the debate/question.	7-9 marks Answers demonstrate some, well organised and logical arguments. Judgements and conclusions offered will show some evaluation of the relevant theories/ concepts/evidence examined.
2	4-6 marks Answers demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	2 marks Answers demonstrate a basic ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence in the context of the debate/question.	4-6 marks Answers demonstrate basic arguments. Judgements and conclusions offered will show basic evaluation of the theories/concepts/ evidence examined.
1	1-3 marks Answers demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	1 mark Answers demonstrate limited ability to select and/or interpret and/or apply sociological theories/ concepts/evidence in the context of the debate/question.	1-3 marks Answers demonstrate limited argument. Any judgements and conclusions offered will show limited evaluation of any theories/concepts/ evidence examined.
	0 marks No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.

2. (c) Assess the view that the role of education is to prepare young people for the workplace [30]

Answers will make judgements on the worth of concepts, theory, or sociological debate. The answer will focus on the debate in the question. Credit will be given to the effective use of supporting sociological evidence/theories and concepts. 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 assessment, judgement and evaluation may achieve band 4 for AO1 but lower bands for AO2 and AO3.

Indicative content

- Candidates may focus on schools and/or colleges.
- They may examine a variety of theories.
- Functionalist explanations of the role of schools in preparing young people for work, skills such as literacy and numeracy, meritocracy, role allocation, sifting and sorting; Durkheim, Parsons, Davis and Moore.
- The bridge between school and work; Parsons.
- Equality of opportunity: Functionalism and New Right.
- Transferable skills and a meritocracy; Davis and Moore, Parsons, New Right.
- Role of the formal and the informal curriculum: Durkheim.
- Marxists: correspondence principle; Bowles and Gintis.
- Feminists: the role of education is to prepare children for a patriarchal workplace through patriarchal messages in the curriculum; Francis, Archer.
- New Right: vocationalism specifically a preparation for workplace, ideas echo functionalist ideas; Murray, Chubb and Moe.
- Educational policy for 14–19-year-olds since 1988 designed to prepare young people for the workplace, for example vocational GCSEs, in Wales since September 2015; Welsh Baccalaureate - includes skills transferable to the workplace.
- New Labour' social democratic views on educational initiatives aimed at preparing young people for the workplace: the expansion of higher education.
- 1997-2010 based on the idea that the UK could only compete in a global economy if it had a highly skilled workforce; Holland.

Evaluation

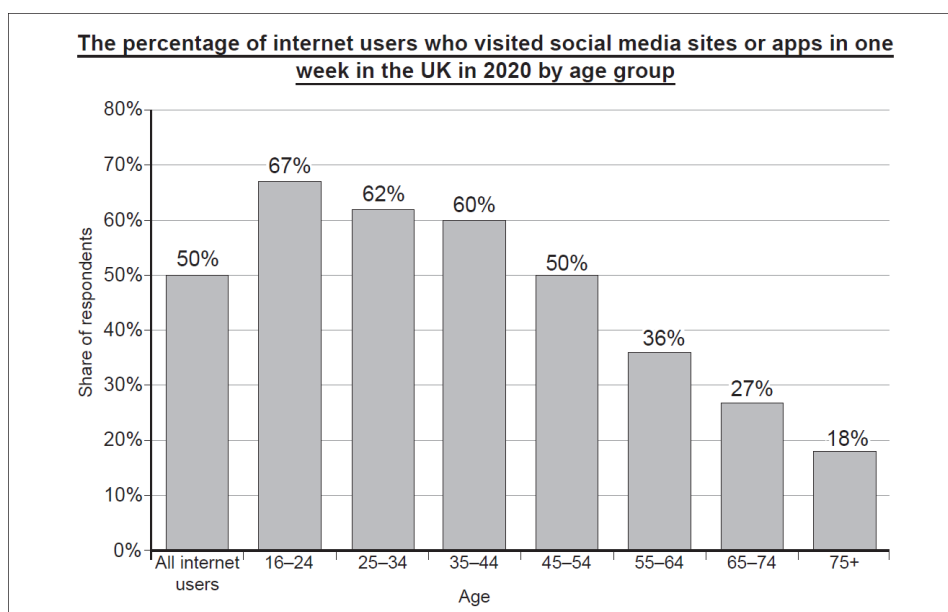
- Candidates may discuss the view that education does not prepare young people for the workplace.
- Schools fail to prepare working class boys for the workplace, Willis.
- Weaknesses of functionalist theories and concepts.
- Critique notion of effective role allocation; Bowles and Gintis.
- Problematic nature of the concept 'meritocracy'; Gorard, Gerwitz.
- Marxist critiques of functionalism may refer to cultural capital, and inequality of opportunity, Bowles and Gintis, Bourdieu, Gillies.
- Marxist criticism of policies designed to prepare young people for work, Finn.
- No clear correlation between extra qualifications and economic competitiveness; Wolf.
- Feminist's views disregard the progress girls have made which has translated into increasing numbers in the workplace: Genderquake: Wilkinson
- The alternative notion of de-schooling society; Illich.
- Postmodern views that the workplace has changed; e.g. hybrid working; Usher
- Individualised learning, e.g. lifelong learning, homeschooling, learning to fit the economy; Usher
- Ideas should be compared and evaluated with reference to supporting evidence.
- Any other relevant point.

Band	AO1 elements 1a & 1b	AO2 element 1a	AO3 strands 1-3
4	11-13 marks Answers demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	5 marks Answers demonstrate accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence. These are applied and interpreted in the context of the debate/question.	10-12 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/ evidence examined.
3	7-10 marks Answers demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	3-4 marks Answers demonstrate some accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence. Some of which are applied and interpreted in the context of the debate/question.	7-9 marks Answers demonstrate some, well organised and logical arguments. Judgements and conclusions offered will show some evaluation of the relevant theories/ concepts/evidence examined.
2	4-6 marks Answers demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	2 marks Answers demonstrate a basic ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence in the context of the debate/question.	4-6 marks Answers demonstrate basic arguments. Judgements and conclusions offered will show basic evaluation of the theories/concepts/ evidence examined.
1	1-3 marks Answers demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	1 mark Answers demonstrate limited ability to select and/or interpret and/or apply sociological theories/ concepts/evidence in the context of the debate/question.	1-3 marks Answers demonstrate limited argument. Any judgements and conclusions offered will show limited evaluation of any theories/concepts/ evidence examined.
	0 marks No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.

Option 2 Media

Compulsory question

3. (a) Study the following item and answer both parts of question 3 (a).



- (i) Summarise the content of the graph on internet users who visited social media sites or apps in one week in the UK in 2020 by age group. [10]

Answers should include accurate points for band 3 AO1 which should be supported with data from the graph. For band 3 AO2 a clear interpretation of the data should be present.

Indicative content

Expect to see reference to a range of points relating to:

- Points made should be supported by accurate statistics drawn from the data.
- The Ofcom survey reveals, in 2020, overall, the use of social media sites and apps was highest among young adults, decreasing steadily within the older age groups.
- 16 to 24-year-olds made up the group with the highest percentage of respondents who had used social media sites or apps in the previous week at 67% and this was followed by 25 to 34-year-olds where 62% of the group had used social media sites. This was a 5-percentage point difference.
- There was a similar percentage of 25–34-year-olds and 35–44-year-olds using social media, 62%, compared to 60%, a percentage point difference of just 2.
- The greatest difference was between the 16–24-year-olds and the 75+ group: 67% compared to 18%. This was a 49-percentage point difference.
- Any other relevant point.

Band	AO1 elements 1a & 1b	AO2 element 1a
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 No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.

3. (a) (ii) There is a relationship between age and the use of social media sites and apps. Explain two sociological reasons for this. [15]

There should be two sociological reasons with effective use of sociological language (AO1 band 4). Both ways will be supported by sociological evidence (AO2 band 4).

Indicative content

There should be two different reasons considered (which may be linked to the data in the graph) such as:

- Culture; older age groups may have less familiarity with the internet as part of everyday life or less confidence.
- New social media use has increased for the youngest age group reflecting cultural change.
- Younger groups are more influenced by peer pressure to join in with social media chats; Boyle.
- Access to technology, younger generations more access than many pensioners.
- Lack of skills for older users; Berry, 2011.
- Early socialisation for many children includes experience of operating smart phones or tablets, Ofcom (2014) suggests as a result, the younger generation are shaping digital communication, developing different communication habits to older generations.
- Idea of a 'digital generation divide' between the old, who are less likely to use digital communication and the young, who are proficient and reliant on it; Boyle.
- Young people more receptive to learning new skills; Boyle.
- Young people keener to explore ways of exploring their identities and social media is a conduit; Boyle.
- Social movements, single-issue politics rely on social media sites and apps and young people may prefer this engagement.
- Any other relevant point.

Band	AO1 elements 1a & 1b	AO2 element 1a
4	9-10 marks Answers demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	5 marks Answers demonstrate a detailed ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence in the context of the debate/question.
3	6-8 marks Answers demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	3-4 marks Answers demonstrate some ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence in the context of the debate/question.
2	3-5 marks Answers demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	2 marks Answers demonstrate a basic ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence in the context of the debate/question.
1	1-2 marks Answers demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	1 mark Answers demonstrate limited ability to select and/or interpret and/ or apply sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence in the context of the debate/question.
	0 marks No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.

3. (b) Discuss sociological models of media effects on the audience. [30]

Answers will make judgements on the worth of concepts, theory, or sociological debate. The answer will focus on the debate in the question. Credit will be given to the effective use of supporting sociological evidence/theories and concepts. 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 assessment, judgement and evaluation may achieve band 4 for AO1 but lower bands for AO2 and AO3.

Indicative content

Candidates will focus on:

- Direct effect: hypodermic syringe model, also known as 'magic bullet theory' - media's influence seen as immediate and powerful, audience seen as passive and homogenous. Focus is on imitation or 'copycat' violence; Packard, Marcuse, Morgan, Bandura.
- Desensitizing effect of media violence on children; Elizabeth Newson.
- In support of the hypodermic and desensitisation models, Anderson studied the effects of violent song lyrics on attitudes and emotions of 500 college students and found there was a clear pattern of increased aggressive thoughts and feelings of hostility after listening to violent song lyrics.
- Hall et al found similar findings of direct effects of sexualised song lyrics on young audiences.
- Hardcastle found a link between exposure of young people to alcohol in song lyrics and behaviour.
- Freshbach and Singer – watching violence on television can provide a safe means of release of aggression, known as catharsis.
- Indirect effect models: Two-step flow model, media audiences not directly influenced by the media – involves negotiation and discussion with an opinion leader. Audience not passive, but active. Personal relationships and conversations with significant others result in people modifying or rejecting media messages. Media messages go through two steps: (i) opinion leader exposed to the media content, (ii) those who respect the opinion leader internalise their interpretation of that content; Katz and Lazarsfeld.
- The Marxist cultural effects model -the media seen as a powerful ideological influence, mainly concerned with transmitting capitalist values and norms. Media content contains strong ideological messages reflecting values of those who own, control and produce the media. Marxists argue long-term effect of such media content is that the values of the rich and powerful come to be unconsciously shared by most people; GUMG.
- Postmodernist model: media today are the main influence on people's identity; Strinati.
- Any other relevant point.

To evaluate :

- Hypodermic syringe model over generalises as the audience are seen as homogenous.
- The worries generated about 'copycat' violence remain unsubstantiated and unproven.
- Laboratory experiments such as Bandura's do not reflect real-life situations, field experiments tend to find a weaker effect.
- Difficult to measure effects because of the problem of isolating all other influences.
- The research is limited, only measures short-term effects.
- Media are scapegoated while the real causes of social problems might be social inequality; Gauntlett.
- People read media messages in complicated and sometimes unpredictable ways, not acknowledge by the direct effect theorists; Gamson.
- Indirect models criticised as it is difficult to isolate the effect the media has on the norms, values and attitudes of the audience, difficult therefore to measure.
- Those most at risk of media influence might be socially isolated.
- Indirect models focus on the complex ways the media affects the audience, rather than the more recent focus – how the audience receives media messages.
- Alternative active audience approaches: Uses and gratifications model perceives media audiences as active. Suggests people use the media to satisfy their social needs such as diversion, personal relationships, personal identity and surveillance; Blumler and McQuail (1968) and Lull (1995)
- Reception analysis model suggests audiences do not passively accept media content as truth. Audiences are viewed as active in their reading of media content and do not automatically accept the media's perspective on a range of issues; Morley.
- Selective filter model: for a media message to have any effect, it must pass through three filters. Selective exposure – audience must choose to view, read or listen to the content of specific media and this depends upon their interests, education, work commitments etc. Selective perception – audience may not accept the message. Selective retention – the messages have to 'stick' in the mind of those who have accessed the media content and most people tend to remember the things they broadly agree with; Klapper.
- Neo-Marxist Hall, media messages are coded by media professionals and support power structures in society, but audiences can decode the messages; the dominant reading (passive acceptance), negotiated reading (meaning slightly altered), oppositional reading (the audience constructs their own meaning).
- Ideas should be compared and assessed with reference to supporting evidence.
- Any other relevant point.

Band	AO1 elements 1a & 1b	AO2 element 1a	AO3 strands 1-3
4	11-13 marks Answers demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	5 marks Answers demonstrate accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence. These are applied and interpreted in the context of the debate/question.	10-12 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/ evidence examined.
3	7-10 marks Answers demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	3-4 marks Answers demonstrate some accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence. Some of which are applied and interpreted in the context of the debate/question.	7-9 marks Answers demonstrate some, well organised and logical arguments. Judgements and conclusions offered will show some evaluation of the relevant theories/ concepts/evidence examined.
2	4-6 marks Answers demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	2 marks Answers demonstrate a basic ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence in the context of the debate/question.	4-6 marks Answers demonstrate basic arguments. Judgements and conclusions offered will show basic evaluation of the theories/concepts/ evidence examined.
1	1-3 marks Answers demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	1 mark Answers demonstrate limited ability to select and/or interpret and/or apply sociological theories/ concepts/evidence in the context of the debate/question.	1-3 marks Answers demonstrate limited argument. Any judgements and conclusions offered will show limited evaluation of any theories/concepts/ evidence examined.
	0 marks No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.

3. (c) Assess the view that media representations of social class are based on stereotypes. [30]

Answers will make judgements on the worth of concepts, theory, or sociological debate. The answer will focus on the debate in the question. Credit will be given to the effective use of supporting sociological evidence/theories and concepts. 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 assessment, judgement and evaluation may achieve band 4 for AO1 but lower bands for AO2 and AO3.

Indicative content

- Candidates will focus on view that the media representation of social class is based on stereotypes.
- Candidates will draw upon empirical research and/or contemporary examples to support the view and to evaluate the view.
- Representations of specific social classes may be considered e.g. upper class, for example the monarchy, middle class, working class, 'underclass'.
- Representations may be considered across different media products.
- Theoretical perspectives such as neo-Marxism and postmodernism may be discussed, examining issues such as hegemony; GUMG, Philo and Beattie, Giddens.
- Neo-Marxists maintain media depictions of social classes focus on hierarchy and celebrate wealth.
- Representations of the monarchy generally positive, seen as a soap opera reflecting British values; Nairn.
- Representations of the aristocracy are often nostalgic or eccentric, e.g., Downton Abbey.
- Celebrity culture is depicted as 'fascinating' and potentially 'achievable' in our meritocratic society; Reiner.
- Middle class life depicted as the 'norm' and middle-class issues given the most time; Newman.
- Middle class overrepresented in television dramas and newspapers are aimed predominantly at a middle-class audience; possibly because traditional media personnel are often middle class; Curran.
- The BBC's Creative Diversity Report 2020 has revealed, "often those from lower socio-economic backgrounds are often depicted negatively, fuelled by stereotypes and seen as the object of ridicule". Examples might include - The Jeremy Kyle Show, Little Britain, The Only way is Essex.
- Alternatively, soap operas such as Coronation Street and East Enders portray working class people nostalgically, Dodd and Dodd.
- The everyday lives of working-class people are ignored; Newman.
- Representations of the 'happy' and 'deserving poor' and the 'underserving' poor on benefits; Devereux.
- News organisations often represent the working classes as "social problems"; working-class youths and associated subcultures are the subjects of frequent moral panic; Newman.
- Media portrayal of working-class workers striking for better wages and working conditions as 'unreasonable'; GUMG.
- Media focused on working-class audiences, e.g., newspapers, often assume working-class people lack interest in political discourses or

analyses of the social institutions of British society and present dramatised and simplistic coverage, e.g. focusing on clashes between political personalities; Curran and Seaton.

- Content of news outlets like *The Sun*, and *The Daily Star* - assume that the working-class audience is primarily interested in reading about the lifestyle of celebrities, human interest stories, sports; Curran and Seaton.
- More recently representation of the working class has moved from 'the salt of the earth' to 'the scum of the earth'; Owen Jones, 2012.
- People on benefits assumed to be responsible for poverty; Swale.
- Media coverage focuses on individual poverty instead of structural contributors and individuals are often scapegoated for societal issues; Newman, McKendrick et al.
- Ruth Patrick examined media representations of those on welfare benefits on the TV reality shows "Benefits Street" and "Benefits Britain: Life on the Dole". The shows claim to reflect an honest and realistic impression, but she found they were melodramatic, displaying stereotypical representations of the lives of benefit claimants and those in poverty; Patrick (2017).
- Media discourse of undeserving poor, especially demonization of 'feckless youth'/scroungers/chavs legitimises inequality; Shildrick and Macdonald, Owen Jones; Golding and Middleton.
- Poverty porn' e.g. Benefit Street feed and legitimise ideological hegemony: focus on benefit fraud rather than tax avoidance of higher classes; Gramsci, Price, 2014.
- Any other relevant point.

To evaluate

- Development of new technologies and media products - audiences from all social classes active participants in creating the product, e.g. social media platforms. For example, the rise of 'influencers' on social media who have more control over how they are represented.
- Pluralists: the media has exposed middle class wrong-doing, for example MPs not following Covid-19 rules, tax avoidance.
- Evidence of some movement away from stereotypical representations, for example popular sitcom *The Royle Family* was praised for realistic representation of working-class life and the inclusion of actor Ricky Tomlinson with a background in trade union politics.
- Evidence of negative (realistic) representations of monarchy today; King Charles, Prince Andrew, Prince Harry has all received criticism by the media; resulting in a more balanced portrayal of the royal family.
- Pluralist views: the media reflects reality.
- Widening participation of members of working class in the media – more opportunities to challenge stereotypical representations.
- Popular television programme *Goggle Box* gives people from a range of social classes the opportunity to comment on programmes.
- Deterministic nature of some Marxist views which do not recognise progress.
- Postmodern views – increasing diversity, choice and globalisation, changing representations; Giddens.
- Ideas should be compared and assessed with reference to supporting evidence.
- Any other relevant point.

Band	AO1 elements 1a & 1b	AO2 element 1a	AO3 strands 1-3
4	11-13 marks Answers demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	5 marks Answers demonstrate accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence. These are applied and interpreted in the context of the debate/question.	10-12 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/ evidence examined.
3	7-10 marks Answers demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	3-4 marks Answers demonstrate some accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence. Some of which are applied and interpreted in the context of the debate/question.	7-9 marks Answers demonstrate some, well organised and logical arguments. Judgements and conclusions offered will show some evaluation of the relevant theories/ concepts/evidence examined.
2	4-6 marks Answers demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	2 marks Answers demonstrate a basic ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence in the context of the debate/question.	4-6 marks Answers demonstrate basic arguments. Judgements and conclusions offered will show basic evaluation of the theories/concepts/ evidence examined.
1	1-3 marks Answers demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	1 mark Answers demonstrate limited ability to select and/or interpret and/or apply sociological theories/ concepts/evidence in the context of the debate/question.	1-3 marks Answers demonstrate limited argument. Any judgements and conclusions offered will show limited evaluation of any theories/concepts/ evidence examined.
	0 marks No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.

Option 4 Religion

Compulsory question

4. (a) Read the following item and answer both parts of question 4 (a).
- (i) Summarise the content of the chart showing the religious identities of people who chose the category 'other religions' in the England and Wales Census of 2011 and the Census of 2021. [10]

Answers should include accurate points for band 3 AO1 which should be supported with data from the graph. For band 3 AO2 a clear interpretation of the data should be present.

Indicative content

Expect to see a range of points relating to respondents' religious identities in the 2021 and 2011 Censuses of England and Wales.

- Points made should be supported by accurate statistics drawn from the data.
- Overall, more people identified as Pagan in 2021 than in 2011. In 2021 74,000 people identified as Pagan compared to 57,000 people in 2011. This is a difference of 17,000 people.
- The same number of people identified as Zoroastrian in 2021 and 2011 at 4,000.
- An increasing number of people are identifying as Jain, up from 20,000 in 2011 to 25,000 in 2021, an increase of 5,000.
- Fewer people identified as Rastafarian in 2021 than 2011; 6,000 compared to 8,000; a decrease of 2,000 people.
- A similar number of people identified as Wicca in 2021 as in 2011, 13,000 compared to 12,000. This is an increase of 1,000 people.
- Any other relevant point.

Band	AO1 elements 1a & 1b	AO2 element 1a
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 No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.

- (ii) Explain **two** sociological reasons for people identifying with smaller, new religious movements in the contemporary UK. [15]

There should be two reasons explained with effective use of sociological language (AO1 band 4). Both reasons will be supported by sociological evidence (AO2 band 4).

Indicative content

During last 30 years, the USA and Europe witnessed rapid growth in NRM's alongside the decline in established churches. 'New religious movements' (NRMs) is a broad term for collection of groups and cults concerned with spirituality which emerged in the West since the 1960s counterculture: Giddens.

There should be two different reasons considered (which may be linked to the data in the chart) such as:

- An attempt to revive traditions and beliefs which they have lost in society; Wallis.
- Alienation at work, the failure of political reform and the rejection of consumerist values; Wallis.
- Sects arise in groups that are on the margins of society and feel disprivileged – offer a 'theodicy of disprivilege'; provides a religious explanation and justification for their suffering and disadvantage; Weber.
- Marxists – joining religious groups are a response to economic and other forms of deprivation. People more likely to turn to religious solutions when real cause of deprivation is not recognised and cannot be easily eliminated through mainstream, often state informed religions.
- World-rejecting NRM or NAM offer 'compensators' to disaffected groups; Stark and Bainbridge.
- The middle classes and upper classes may join smaller movements to compensate for relative deprivation, particularly spiritual deprivation, a search for meaning and a sense of community felt to be missing in the individualisation of contemporary society; Stark and Bainbridge.
- World rejecting NRMs for women, the religion acts as a compensator for women's exploitation; Glock and Stark.
- Postmodern writers regard the growth of smaller religious groups reflect people's disillusionment with science and rational thinking and they search for meaning in an increasingly unstable and unpredictable world; the old religious organisations are becoming less significant; Bauman, Drane.
- Any other relevant point.

Band	AO1 elements 1a & 1b	AO2 element 1a
4	9-10 marks Answers demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	5 marks Answers demonstrate a detailed ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence in the context of the debate/question.
3	6-8 marks Answers demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	3-4 marks Answers demonstrate some ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence in the context of the debate/question.
2	3-5 marks Answers demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	2 marks Answers demonstrate a basic ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence in the context of the debate/question.
1	1-2 marks Answers demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	1 mark Answers demonstrate limited ability to select and/or interpret and/ or apply sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence in the context of the debate/question.
	0 marks No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.

4. (b) 'Religion plays a positive role in society.'
Evaluate functionalist ideas on the role of religion in society [30]

Answers will make judgements of the worth of concepts, theory, or sociological debate. The answer will focus on the debate in the question. Credit will be given to the effective use of supporting sociological evidence/theories and concepts. 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 assessment, judgement and evaluation may achieve band 4 for AO1 but lower bands for AO2 and AO3.

Indicative content

- Functionalists view religion positively in terms of its contribution to social stability in society and value consensus; Durkheim, Parsons, Malinowski.
- Durkheim argued religion helps build social solidarity. It teaches a distinction between the sacred and profane, particular objects such as the totem come to hold a sacred symbolic significance, a religious and social symbol, reflecting the norms and values necessary for the functioning of society. Religion would bind people together as a 'social glue'.
- In support of founding father Durkheim, the functions of religion in modern society can be seen in the values taught in socialisation, the role of religions in terms of social integration, solidarity and the collective conscience.
- Religion helps prevent anomie in modern industrial society, through religious and civil ceremonies; Durkheim.
- Malinowski's ideas parallel Durkheim, - all religion is based on beliefs and practices of early societies.
- Religion helps people come to terms with life changing events, e.g. religious rites of passage e.g. when a close family member dies, help minimise social disruption; Malinowski. In support, similar rituals occur today.
- Also, religion helped those in dangerous occupations, the rituals intended to offer protection from risk. Today the words of the hymn Eternal Father, Strong to Save, remains significant for the families of seafarers in addition to being the official Royal Navy hymn.
- Contemporary example of 'civil religion', sacred qualities attached to aspects of society, e.g. in USA - 'In God we trust', 'God bless America'; Bellah.
- Parsons – the social norms that guide people's behaviour are integrated into systems of values by religious teachings. For example, many of the Christian Ten Commandments are reflected in British law. He agrees with Malinowski's views on the role of religious rituals in challenging and difficult life events.
- Any other relevant point.

To evaluate

- Functionalist view of role of religion as an agent of socialisation less clear during secularisation.
- Lack of empirical evidence to support Durkheim's views on totemism and behaviour of aboriginal tribes.
- There can be a clash between society's values and the values of religion.
- Religion can play a dysfunctional role in society. Malinowski over generalises from the experience of a specific religious culture, the Trobriand Islanders.
- Parsons underemphasises religion which may have a divisive and non-integrative role in social life and that religious personnel may clash in outlook quite significantly.
- Functionalist over emphasis on one religion in society, ignores diversity and multifaith societies.
- Over-emphasis on religion as a collective, rather than individual act.
- Evidence of religious movements that have helped bring about radical change; Latin America; Otto Maduro.
- Traditional Functionalists do not address the decline of religion and secularisation.
- Marxists disagree and view of religion as a form of social control in terms of oppression, part of an ideological apparatus, reflecting ruling class ideas and interests; Marx, Bruce, Halvey, Leach, Hook.
- Role of religion as the 'opium of the people', helping disguise true nature of exploitation and keeping the working-class passive and resigned to their fate; Marx.
- Marxists point to role of religion in legitimating social inequality: 'All things Bright and Beautiful' hymn.
- Neo-Marxist point to revolutionary potential in religion; O'Toole, Gramsci, Maduro.
- Weberians in comparison to functionalist see religion as a force for change, such as the role of Protestantism in the industrial revolution.
- Feminists: the role of religion is to serve the interests of our patriarchal society.
- Ideas should be compared and assessed with reference to supporting evidence.
- Any other relevant point.

Band	AO1 elements 1a & 1b	AO2 element 1a	AO3 strands 1-3
4	11-13 marks Answers demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	5 marks Answers demonstrate accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence. These are applied and interpreted in the context of the debate/question.	10-12 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/ evidence examined.
3	7-10 marks Answers demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	3-4 marks Answers demonstrate some accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence. Some of which are applied and interpreted in the context of the debate/question.	7-9 marks Answers demonstrate some, well organised and logical arguments. Judgements and conclusions offered will show some evaluation of the relevant theories/ concepts/evidence examined.
2	4-6 marks Answers demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	2 marks Answers demonstrate a basic ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence in the context of the debate/question.	4-6 marks Answers demonstrate basic arguments. Judgements and conclusions offered will show basic evaluation of the theories/concepts/ evidence examined.
1	1-3 marks Answers demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	1 mark Answers demonstrate limited ability to select and/or interpret and/or apply sociological theories/ concepts/evidence in the context of the debate/question.	1-3 marks Answers demonstrate limited argument. Any judgements and conclusions offered will show limited evaluation of any theories/concepts/ evidence examined.
	0 marks No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.

4. (c) Discuss the view that the UK is no longer a religious society [30]

Answers will make judgements of the value of concepts, theory, or sociological debate. The answer will focus on the debate in the question. Credit will be given to the effective use of supporting sociological evidence/theories and concepts. 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 assessment, judgement and evaluation may achieve band 4 for AO1 but lower bands for AO2 and AO3.

Indicative content

There are differing perceptions of what constitutes 'religious' and this impacts sociologists' views on whether the UK is no longer a religious society.

In support of the view candidates may consider:

- Whether evidence suggests the UK is becoming a secular society; 'the process by which religious thinking, practices and institutions lose social significance'; Wilson.
- 2021 Census data 2021 from England and Wales, where less than half of the population (46.2%, 27.5 million people) described themselves as "Christian", a 13.1 percentage point decrease from 59.3% (33.3 million) in 2011; "No religion" was the second most common response, increasing by 12.0 percentage points to 37.2% (22.2 million) from 25.2% (14.1 million) in 2011.
- Northern Ireland Census data also confirmed a significant rise in those who indicated that they have 'no religion', from 10 percent in 2011 to 17 percent in 2021.
- 2021 Census data - attendance and membership declining.
- Candidates may also consider studies: an increasing percentage of congregations belong to older age groups; Brierley.
- Reduced moral influence and rise of individualism; Davies, Sanderson.
- Lower status of clergy and as a result of falling membership, fewer clergy given responsibility for just one church; Bruce.
- Desacralisation i.e. 'disenchantment of the world' (Weber) and rationalisation is increasing; Wilson, Bruce, Wallis.
- Protestantism – focus on this life, work and the pursuit of prosperity, rather than on the domain of God and the afterlife, has backfired; Berger.
- Separation of the church from wider society, religious faith and morality less significant in culture and institutions today; Bruce.
- Churches have become more secularised and compromised ideas, e.g. Church of England and notion of the virgin birth; Hamilton.
- Religious pluralism alongside industrialisation led to religion no longer acting as unifying force in society as social life more fragmented; Bruce.
- Competition between religions seen to undermine credibility as they compete for 'spiritual shoppers'; evidence of secularisation; Bruce.
- Any other relevant point.

To evaluate

- The UK remains a religious society.
- In the 2021 Census, in Northern Ireland - nearly 80 percent of the population identified as Christians in the Census: 42 percent as Catholic and 37 percent as Protestant or other Christian denominations.
- While less than half of the population of England and Wales described themselves as “Christian”, despite this, “Christian” remained the most common response to the religion question.
- Candidates may consider evidence that religion remains important but that the way in which it is expressed is changing.
- Religious belief does not necessitate worshipping in a specific building, ‘believing without belonging’; Davie.
- Most people continue to engage with religion at a vicarious level – the majority approves of the rituals and practices performed by the minority on behalf of all. Also, people turn to religion during difficult times such as tragedies, Davie. For example, when the country mourned the death of the late Queen Elizabeth in 2022, the role of religion as described by Durkheim and Malinowski was clearly apparent.
- British Social Attitudes surveys reveal few people are prepared to say they do not believe in God at all.
- Atheism contracts when people face extreme danger, it is common for RNLI crews to have a designated Chaplain.
- While institutional religion is in decline, individuation: the idea of religion as ‘finding oneself’ through individual search for meaning has not declined; Bellah.
- People prefer ‘religious’ explanations for random events such as the early death of a family member (‘taken by the Angels’).
- Religious leaders are asked to contribute to national debates about the age of homosexual consent, abortion etc.
- Disengagement is functional as the churches can focus more effectively on their central role of providing moral goals for society to achieve, Parsons.
- Growth of New Religious Movements (NRMs) indicate society is undergoing a religious revival, Greeley, Nelson.
- Postmodern view: people wish to personalise religion and seek credible ways of expressing faith outside of conventional churches; Lyon.
- Religious belief and spirituality are becoming more important in the postmodern world; Bauman, Giddens.
- Secularisation depends on other social factors, such as class, gender, age and ethnicity.
- Ideas should be compared and evaluated with reference to supporting evidence.
- Any other relevant point.

Band	AO1 elements 1a & 1b	AO2 element 1a	AO3 strands 1-3
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3	7-10 marks Answers demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	3-4 marks Answers demonstrate some accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence. Some of which are applied and interpreted in the context of the debate/question.	7-9 marks Answers demonstrate some, well organised and logical arguments. Judgements and conclusions offered will show some evaluation of the relevant theories/ concepts/evidence examined.
2	4-6 marks Answers demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	2 marks Answers demonstrate a basic ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence in the context of the debate/question.	4-6 marks Answers demonstrate basic arguments. Judgements and conclusions offered will show basic evaluation of the theories/concepts/ evidence examined.
1	1-3 marks Answers demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question.	1 mark Answers demonstrate limited ability to select and/or interpret and/or apply sociological theories/ concepts/evidence in the context of the debate/question.	1-3 marks Answers demonstrate limited argument. Any judgements and conclusions offered will show limited evaluation of any theories/concepts/ evidence examined.
	0 marks No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.	0 marks No relevant sociological point.