



GCE A LEVEL MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2018

**A LEVEL
SOCIOLOGY - COMPONENT 2
METHODS OF SOCIOLOGICAL ENQUIRY**

A200U20-1

INTRODUCTION

This marking scheme was used by WJEC for the 2018 examination. It was finalised after detailed discussion at examiners' conferences by all the examiners involved in the assessment. The conference was held shortly after the paper was taken so that reference could be made to the full range of candidates' responses, with photocopied scripts forming the basis of discussion. The aim of the conference was to ensure that the marking scheme was interpreted and applied in the same way by all examiners.

It is hoped that this information will be of assistance to centres but it is recognised at the same time that, without the benefit of participation in the examiners' conference, teachers may have different views on certain matters of detail or interpretation.

WJEC regrets that it cannot enter into any discussion or correspondence about this marking scheme.

**EDUQAS A LEVEL SOCIOLOGY - COMPONENT 2
METHODS OF SOCIOLOGICAL ENQUIRY**

SUMMER 2018 MARK SCHEME

Read the following item and answer **all** of the questions:

Gang leader for a day.

Sudhir Venkatesh wanted to find out how it felt to be black and poor, living in a Chicago housing project. The first method he used was a questionnaire. One of his questions was 'How does it feel to be black and poor?'. The local residents did not take too kindly to this question, and as a result, Venkatesh was held hostage overnight. The leader of a gang in the area, known as the Black Kings, told him if he wanted to know what it was really like he needed to 'hang out' with the gang. This gave him the opportunity to develop his research into an ethnographic study. With the gang's permission he spent nearly eight years overtly observing them. He was even allowed to be the gang leader for a day, therefore, putting himself in the gang leader's shoes.

Adapted from Gang Leader for a Day, Venkatesh, S. (2009)

1. (a) Using material from the item and elsewhere, explain what is meant by the term ethnographic study? [5]

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

- Study of people in their natural environment.
- Getting to know participants, or 'walking in their shoes.'
- Reference to ethnographic observations.
- Weber and Verstehen.
- Insight, depth and understanding.
- Qualitative, emotion and meaning.
- Issues of reliability and validity.
- The item should be used to demonstrate understanding.
- Any other relevant points.

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

1. (b) Explain one reason why the researcher used overt observation in his research? [5]

For band 3 AO1 the answer will include one reason which is linked to either key methodological concepts, the characteristics of the method or the focus of the research. For band 3 AO2 there will be a clear explanation of the reason offered and this must be contextualised for full marks.

Indicative content

- To overcome ethical issues, such as deception and lack of informed consent.
- To avoid taking part in illegal activities.
- To be able to record notes.
- To reduce the risk of going native.
- The item should be used to contextualize the reason offered.

Band	AO1 <i>elements 2a & 2b</i>	AO2 <i>element 1b</i>
3	<p>2 marks Answers demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question applied to research methods</p>	<p>3 marks Answers demonstrate accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/concepts/evidence applied to research methods. These are interpreted in the context of the debate/question</p> <p>Reference will be made to the item to show high level ability to select appropriate examples to illustrate the reason offered.</p>
2	<p>1 mark Answers demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question applied to research methods</p>	<p>2 marks Answers demonstrate some accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/concepts/evidence applied to research methods, some of which are interpreted in the context of the debate/question</p> <p>Reference will be made to the item to show some ability to select appropriate examples to explain.</p>
1		<p>1 mark Answers demonstrate a basic ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/concepts/evidence applied to research methods in the context of the debate/question</p> <p>Basic or cursory reference is made to the item.</p>
	<p>0 marks NRSP</p>	<p>0 marks NRSP</p>

1. (c) With reference to the item and sociological studies, discuss the strengths and weaknesses of using questionnaires in sociological research. [20]

Answers should address several strengths and several weakness for band 4 AO1 and include at least two studies. For band 4 AO2, the explanation of the strengths and weaknesses will be linked to at least one key concept at least one example should be drawn from the item.

- Definition of questionnaires e.g. as a set of pre-written questions which can be administered on paper, via the post or the internet or via a structured interview in special cases (though structured interviews are generally seen as a different methodology).
- The strengths of questionnaires – this should be explained in the context of key methodology concerns such as :
 - Depth
 - Reliability
 - Standardisation
 - Response rates
 - Ease of collation
 - Size of samples/representativeness
 - Can be analysed through computer designs
- The weaknesses of questionnaires – this should be explained in the context of key methodological concerns such as:
 - Validity
 - Expense of creating and printing
 - Lacks depth
 - Unintentional bias
 - Design issues
 - Non-response/representativeness

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

Band	AO1 elements 2a & 2b	AO2 element 1b
4	<p>12-14 marks Answers demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question applied to research methods.</p>	<p>6 marks Answers demonstrate accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/concepts/evidence applied to research methods. These are applied interpreted in the context of the debate/question.</p> <p>Reference will be made to the item to show high level ability to select appropriate examples.</p>
3	<p>8-11 marks Answers demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question applied to research methods.</p>	<p>4-5 marks Answers demonstrate some accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/ evidence applied to research methods, some of which are interpreted in the context of the debate/question.</p> <p>Reference will be made to the item to show some ability to select appropriate examples.</p>
2	<p>4-7 marks Answers demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question applied to research methods.</p>	<p>2-3 marks Answers demonstrate a basic ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/concepts/ evidence applied to research methods in the context of the debate/question.</p>
1	<p>1-3 marks Answers demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question applied to research methods.</p>	<p>1 mark Answers demonstrate limited ability to select and/or interpret and/or apply sociological theories/concepts/ evidence applied to research methods in the context of the debate/question.</p>
	<p>0 marks NRSP</p>	<p>0 marks NRSP</p>

2. As an A Level Sociology student, you have been asked to design a research project to collect data on the amount of regular exercise taken amongst a sample of elderly people in your local area. [30]

- (i) Describe each stage of your research design, justifying the reasons for your choices at each stage.
- (ii) Discuss problems that may occur and the impact of these problems on the quality of the data collected.

The research design should be ethical, achievable and appropriate to the theme of the proposed study. Candidates should make their choices, justify their research approach and design in the context of the research problem.

Expect to see the following stages addressed in the proposed design:

- Operationalisation of key terms in the brief
- Sampling:
 - population
 - sampling technique
 - access
- Research method
- Ethical issues
- Practical considerations.

Expect to see the research design justified and potential problems identified in relation to key methodological concepts and other relevant issues such as:

- Ethics
- Validity
- Reliability
- Practical considerations
- Generalisability
- Representativeness
- Operationalisation.

Band	AO1 elements 2a & 2b	AO2 element 1b	AO3 strands 1-3
4	7-8 marks Answers demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question applied to research methods	9-10 marks Answers demonstrate detailed, accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/concepts/ evidence applied to research methods. These are 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 as applied to research methods
3	5-6 marks Answers demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question applied to research methods	6-8 marks Answers demonstrate some accurate and relevant selection of appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence as applied to research methods, some of which are 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 as applied to research methods examined
2	3-4 marks Answers demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question applied to research methods	3-5 marks Answers demonstrate a basic ability to select, apply and interpret appropriate sociological theories/ concepts/evidence as applied to research methods 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 as applied to research methods examined
1	1-2 marks Answers demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding of sociological theories/ concepts/evidence relating to the context of the debate/question applied to research methods	1-2 marks Answers demonstrate limited ability to select and/or interpret and/ or apply sociological theories/ concepts/evidence as applied to research methods 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 as applied to research methods examined
	0 marks NRSP	0 marks NRSP	0 marks NRSP

MARK SCHEME

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 candidate responses. 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 given to responses which demonstrate the qualities needed in AO1, AO2 and, where appropriate, AO3. Where a response is not credit worthy or not attempted it is indicated on the grid as NRSP (no relevant sociological point).