



GCE A LEVEL MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2019

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

A200U20-1

INTRODUCTION

This marking scheme was used by WJEC for the 2019 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
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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).

Read the following item and answer all of the questions:

Policing gypsies and travellers

Zoe James wanted to study groups who have difficult relationships with the police. One part of James' study was on New Travellers, sometimes known as New Age Travellers. The study was particularly difficult to do, as New Travellers are suspicious of outsiders and particularly researchers. Her study consisted of 17 unstructured interviews and one focus group with travellers living on unauthorized sites throughout the south-west region of England in 2005. Interviewees were gained through the use of snowball sampling via initial contacts made by a 'gatekeeper'. The interviews were not taped as the New Travellers were very wary of having their views directly recorded.

Adapted from A2 Sociology, Moore, S. Aiken, D. and Chapman, S. (2009)

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

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

- Clear definition: A group interview where the discussion is controlled by a moderator. Data arises from interaction between group members rather than from the researcher.
- Helpful for exploratory research
- Can explore controversial issues in a non-threatening manner
- Can save time and money
- Obtain a range of views because it is flexible
- May increase validity through depth of response
- Issues with social desirability and powerful personalities
- The item should be used to demonstrate understanding.
- Any other relevant points.

Band	AO1 elements 2a & 2b	AO2 element 1b
3	<p>3 marks</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>NRSP</p>	<p>0 marks</p> <p>NRSP</p>

- (b) Using material from the item and sociological knowledge, explain one possible reason why the researcher decided to use snowball sampling in this 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

- The group is hard to reach
- The group is very specific
- A way of gaining trust as the group are suspicious of researchers
- To save the researcher time and money
- The item should be used to contextualize the reason offered.

Band	AO1 elements 2a & 2b	AO2 element 1b
3	<p>2 marks</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>NRSP</p>	<p>0 marks</p> <p>NRSP</p>

- (c) With reference to the item and sociological studies, discuss the strengths and weaknesses of using unstructured interviews 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 unstructured interview e.g. an interview without pre-planned questions but is based on a theme and flows like a conversation
- The strengths of unstructured interviews – this should be explained in the context of key methodology concerns such as :
 - Validity = depth, meanings and motives
 - Participant can control the flow of information
 - Participant isn't restricted
 - A rapport is easier to establish
 - Verstehen
 - Interpretivist
- The weaknesses of unstructured interviews – this should be explained in the context of key methodological concerns such as:
 - Lack of reliability
 - Micro scale = hard to generalise
 - Social desirability
 - Researcher influence
 - Hard to analyse
 - Time consuming
 - Skills of the researcher

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	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	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 Reference will be made to the item to show high level ability to select appropriate examples.
3	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	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 Reference will be made to the item to show some ability to select appropriate examples.
2	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	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
1	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	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
	0 marks NRSP	0 marks NRSP

2. As an A Level Sociology student you have been asked to design a research project to collect data on attitudes to education amongst a sample of young boys in your 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