

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
GCE Ordinary Level

MARK SCHEME for the October/November 2007 question paper

2251 SOCIOLOGY

2251/02

Paper 2, maximum raw mark 60

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began.

All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes must be read in conjunction with the question papers and the report on the examination.

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Family

- 1 It is claimed that families are just as important as they were in the past. By contrast, in traditional societies, however, families in modern industrial societies perform few functions.

(a) What is meant by the term *functions*? [2]

The term functions refers to the socially prescribed contribution or roles of a social institution. A clear definition along these lines = 2 marks; an incomplete definition showing some understanding = 1 mark.

(b) Describe two functions that families perform in traditional societies. [4]

Relevant functions include, for example: welfare, economic, education, health care, socialisation, care of young children, etc. One mark for an example and one mark for development (2 × 2 marks)

(c) Explain how the functions performed by families have changed as societies have modernised. [6]

0–3 A few simple observations with some relevance to the question may be worth 2 or 3 marks.

4–6 A clear explanation of a few relevant changes would trigger the lower part of the band. Ways in which the functions performed by families have changed include: fewer and more specialised functions; less division of labour in the performance of functions; more sharing of functions with other institutions. A detailed explanation of several relevant changes would secure full marks.

(d) To what extent are families as important today as they were in the past? [8]

0–4 A few simple remarks about the functions of the family today may be worth 2 or 3 marks. To go higher in the band, there needs to be some attempt to contrast family life today with the past, albeit that the answer will remain largely or wholly descriptive at this level.

5–8 Answers at this level will contain a well-informed sociological account of the contribution that families make to society today. Lower in the band the response will be largely descriptive and perhaps confined to a narrow range of points. A broader range of relevant issues will be addressed higher in the band and the assessment will be explicit and sustained.

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- 2 The extended family is associated with a more traditional way of life. Social change and economic development usually lead to the decline of the extended family.

(a) What is meant by the term *extended family*?

An extended family consists of a nuclear family unit plus wider kin members. A clear definition along these lines = 2 marks; an incomplete definition showing some understanding = 1 mark.

(b) Describe two types of family unit apart from the extended family.

[4]

Accept nuclear family, matrifocal family, one-parent family, compound family, and same sex couples living in a family unit. Examples of household units that are not 'families' (e.g. elderly couples, cohabiting couples, etc.) are not acceptable. One mark for an example and one mark for development (2 × 2 marks)

(c) Explain why social change and economic development usually lead to the decline of the extended family.

[6]

0–3 Answers at this level are likely to be confined to one or two basic points that help to explain why social change and economic development often lead to the decline of the extended family.

4–6 The explanation at this level will be more detailed and may cover a wider range of points. Good answers may provide a thorough account of the impact of industrialisation on family life and note the impact of a more mobile society on the extended family.

(d) To what extent does the decline of the extended family help to explain the rising divorce rate in modern industrial societies?

[8]

0–4 An answer based solely or largely on an attempt to explain why the decline of the extended family might be linked to the rise in the divorce rate would be worth 3 or 4 marks. Likewise, a few simple observations about the general reasons for the rising divorce rate may merit a mark at the top of the band.

5–8 Answers at this level will explain why the decline of the extended family may have contributed to the rising divorce rate and they will also note other possible reasons why the divorce rate has risen. At the top of the band the assessment will be explicit and sustained.

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Education

- 3 In a meritocracy each child has the same opportunity to benefit from the education system.

(a) What is meant by the term *meritocracy*? [2]

A meritocracy refers to a system in which there is equality of opportunity and people are rewarded on the basis of achievement and talent. A clear definition along these lines = 2 marks; an incomplete definition showing some understanding = 1 mark.

(b) Describe two ways in which children may be treated equally within the education system. [4]

Relevant examples of equal opportunity in education include: free access for all to schools and colleges; same curriculum for all; minimum standards of educational provision for all; absence of discriminatory practices, such as limits on access to education for groups such as females and ethnic minorities. One mark for an example and one mark for development (2 × 2 marks).

(c) Explain why a child from a poor background may find it difficult to do well at school. [6]

0–3 Answers at this level are likely to be confined to a few isolated points of general relevance to the question. Depth of sociological insight will be absent and the range of points covered will be narrow.

4–6 Lower in the band a good range of relevant sociological points will be made to explain why a child from a poor background may find it difficult to do well at school. To reach the top of the band, there should be consideration of both school and home factors.

(d) To what extent is there equality of opportunity for all children within the education systems of modern industrial societies? [8]

0–4 Answers at this level may focus more on the general issue of equality within education rather than the more specific matter of equality of opportunity. A few simple points about equality within education, with little development and analysis, may be worth 2 or 3 marks. If some relevant sociological material is used to support this type of answer, a mark at the top of the band may be justified.

5–8 At this level at least part of the answer will focus on the topic of equality of opportunity specifically. To reach the top of the band this would need to be the main focus of the answer. This is really a question about whether there exists equality of access for all to education, whether educational provision meets at least minimum standards for all, and how far the same curriculum is followed for all pupils.

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- 4 Schools contribute much to the socialisation of children, not least through the curriculum.

(a) What is meant by the term *hidden curriculum*?

The hidden curriculum refers to the 'unstated agenda' involved in school organisation and teachers' attitudes that develops behaviour and beliefs that are not part of the formal curriculum. A clear definition along these lines = 2 marks; an incomplete definition showing some understanding = 1 mark.

(b) Describe two examples of how schools contribute to the socialisation of young children. [4]

Many possible examples, and each cited should be judged on merit. One mark for an example and one mark for development (2 × 2 marks).

(c) Explain how gender roles are reinforced through the hidden curriculum. [6]

0–3 Answers at this level may be confined to a few general observations about sexual inequality in education with only loose links to the hidden curriculum.

4–6 To reach this level answers must be focused on the way that gender roles may be reinforced through the actions of teachers in responding to boys and girls differently and expecting different forms of behaviour from them. There may also be references to gender issues relating to teaching materials, the curriculum, and subject options. At the top of the band the explanation will demonstrate a good understanding of how the hidden curriculum operates in relation to gender roles.

(d) How far can the underachievement of some ethnic minority groups in the education system be explained in terms of the hidden curriculum? [8]

0–4 A few general points about the links between educational underachievement and ethnicity may be worth 2 or 3 marks. If there is also a very simple attempt to connect this material with the concept of the hidden curriculum, then a mark at the top of the band would be justified.

5–8 Answers at this level will make a clear effort to explain the possible links between the educational underachievement of some ethnic minority groups and aspects of discrimination within the hidden curriculum. At the top of the band there will also be an explicit assessment of the extent to which such underachievement can be explained in terms of the hidden curriculum.

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Crime, Deviance and Social Control

- 5 The term 'moral panic' has been used to explain why the police and the public may have an exaggerated view of the extent of certain types of deviant behaviour.

(a) What is meant by the term *moral panic*? [2]

A moral panic is a wave of public concern about a social activity or group, which becomes seen as a threat to the common values or interests of society as a result of exaggerated, stereotypical and sensationalised coverage by the mass media or politicians. A clear definition along these lines = 2 marks; an incomplete definition showing some understanding = 1 mark.

(b) Describe two examples of deviant behaviour. [4]

Many possible examples and each example cited by the candidates should be judged on merit. One mark for an example and one mark for development (2 × 2 marks).

(c) Explain why a moral panic may lead to an apparent increase in the rate of crime. [6]

0–3 Answers at this level may be confined to discussing only moral panics with no link to how they might lead to an apparent increase in crime. Conversely, the answers may focus on reasons why crime rates increase with little or no connection to moral panics.

4–6 At this level the explanation offered will address the question directly. Lower in the band there will be less detail about how a moral panic may work through politicians, police authorities and other law enforcement agencies to bring about an apparent increase in the crime rate. Higher in the band the answer will be more developed and may include references to actual examples of moral panics.

(d) How far is it true that some social groups commit more crimes than others? [8]

0–4 A simple response stating that it is true that some groups commit more crimes than others, with a few illustrative comments, may be worth 2 or 3 marks. A better answer at this level would at least note that there may be some ambiguity about who commits the most crime, albeit that this key point will remain largely undeveloped within this band.

5–8 Answers at this level will demonstrate a sound understanding of the requirements of the question. While the focus may be on identifying social groups that purportedly commit the most crimes, there will also be recognition that the crime figures are socially constructed and maybe a misleading indicator of the actual distribution and incidence of criminal activity in society. At the top of the band, the socially constructed nature of crime (and the crime figures) will be better illustrated and the assessment required by the question will be explicit and creditable.

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- 6 In some societies young people are often regarded as a separate group. They are said to possess a distinctive youth culture.

(a) What is meant by the term *youth culture*?

Youth culture may be defined as a set of values and behaviour associated with young people as a group. A clear definition along these lines = 2 marks; an incomplete definition showing some understanding = 1 mark.

(b) Describe two social characteristics that may distinguish young people from older age groups. [4]

Many possible characteristics would be relevant, but the most likely references will be to: mode of dress; special language or mode of speech; distinctive interests or concerns; own fashions and music; less well-off than most older age groups. One mark for an example and one mark for development (2 × 2 marks).

(c) Explain why youth cultures have become a feature of modern industrial societies over the last fifty years. [6]

0–3 At this level answers may be confined to a few isolated points that are broadly relevant to the question. Alternatively, the answer may focus very narrowly on a single factor that helps to explain the growth of youth cultures and the lack of range in this type of response would confine it to a mark of no more than 3.

4–6 More than one relevant factor explaining the emergence of youth cultures will be explored at this level. The relevant factors include: the extension of higher education; growing affluence among teenagers in the 1950s and 1960s; growth of the media; increasing pace of change may have created a generation gap between young people and older age groups. Several of these factors well explained would justify a mark at the top of the band.

(d) How far do youth cultures represent a threat to the dominant values of society? [8]

0–4 A few general points about youth cultures with little or no linkage to the question may be worth 1 or 2 marks. Some unsupported points about possible threats to the dominant value system would lift the mark to the top of the band, but no higher.

5–8 A clear, sociologically informed discussion of the significance of youth cultures in relation to the question is a minimum requirement at this level. Lower in the band answers may be confined to a largely descriptive account of ways in which youth cultures may or may not threaten the dominant values of society. Higher in the band this material will be combined with appropriate analysis and assessment.

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Mass Media

7 The mass media distort reality by perpetuating stereotypes and reporting events in a sensationalist manner.

(a) What is meant by the term *stereotype*?

[2]

A stereotype is a fixed, over-simplified image of what an individual or group is like.

A clear definition along these lines = 2 marks; an incomplete definition showing some understanding = 1 mark.

(b) Describe two examples of how the mass media may report events in a sensationalist manner.

[4]

Many possible examples here and each example cited by the candidates should be judged on merit. One mark for an example and one mark for development (2 × 2 marks).

(c) Explain why media reporting often distorts the reality of crime in society.

[6]

0–3 At this level the account of how the media may distort the reality of crime will be limited in range and lack detail. Lower in the band answers may only discuss media reporting in general, failing to make any links with crime.

4–6 A clear explanation using relevant concepts is required to trigger this level. References to sensationalist reporting, moral panics, bias towards official interpretations of events, and so on would be features of a good answer. At the top of the band, the answer will provide a detailed and sustained account of how the reality of crime may be distorted by media reporting.

(d) To what extent do the mass media influence the way people behave today?

[8]

0–4 A few simple assertions about the influence of the media may be worth 2 or 3 marks. If there is a more sociological shape to this type of elementary response, a mark at the top of the band, may be justified.

5–8 Answers at this level will demonstrate sound knowledge of the relevant sociological debates about the influence of the media. Lower in the band the response may be largely descriptive; for example, it may take the form of a summary of the different theories (hypodermic syringe, uses and gratification, interpretation models, etc) of how the media influences human behaviour. Higher in the band the analysis and assessment will be explicit and sustained.

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- 8 It is important for democracy that the press is free from government control and censorship.

(a) What is meant by the term censorship?

Censorship may be defined as reviewing the content of the media with a view to suppressing any parts regarded as socially or politically unacceptable. A clear definition along these lines = 2 marks; an incomplete definition showing some understanding = 1 mark.

(b) Describe two ways in which newspapers may contribute to democracy in a country. [4]

Newspapers may contribute to democracy in a number of ways including, for example, through interviewing politicians, helping to shape opinions and raise issues, providing information about political parties and policies, exposing public scandals and cases of misadministration, etc. One mark for an example and one mark for development (2 × 2 marks).

(c) Explain why it is important for democracy that the press is free of government control. [6]

0–3 At this level answers may be confined to a few disjointed points about democracy and government control of the media. There will be only a partial attempt to address the question as set.

4–6 A free press is important for the dissemination of information and ideas that may help to form political opinion independently of government control. It may also act as a constraint on the exercise of arbitrary or unjust rule. Answers that cover points of this kind would merit a mark within the 4–6 band. At the top of the band the explanations will be clear and well informed.

(d) How far do newspapers reflect the interests and opinions of different groups in society? [8]

0–4 Answers at this level are likely to be confined to a few assertions about the content of newspapers and the interests that it reflects. Lower in the band there will be no evidence of sociological understanding in relation to the question. Some sociological insight will be demonstrated in answers that merit the top of the band, though the detail may be scant.

5–8 Lower in the band there will be a clear attempt to use appropriate sociological sources to discuss whose interests and opinions the media express. Higher in the band this may be formulated through a well informed account of the pluralist and Marxist models of the media. To achieve full marks the answer must also provide an explicit assessment of the pluralist view that the media reflects the interests and opinions of different groups in society.