



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
General Certificate of Education
Advanced Level

SOCIOLOGY

9699/03

Paper 3 Social Inequality and Opportunity

For Examination from 2014

SPECIMEN MARK SCHEME

3 hours

MAXIMUM MARK: 75

This document consists of **9** printed pages and **1** blank page.

Section A: Education

1 (a) Explain why the educational performance of girls has improved compared with that of boys in many modern industrial societies in recent years. [9]

0–4 A few general observations about gender inequality in education, with no direct links to the question set, would be worth 2 or 3 marks. A sound account of the reasons why, in the past, the educational performance of girls may have been inferior to that of boys, with no further development in relation to the question, could gain up to a maximum of 4 marks.

5–9 Lower in the band, answers are likely to cover a number of factors that explain the improvement in the educational performance of girls relative to boys but the discussion will lack detail. Relevant factors to consider include: the development of co-educational schools, the impact on girls' aspirations of changes in the position of women in the workplace and wider society, changes in the curriculum that may be more favourable to girls, and the feminisation of the teaching profession in many countries. Also reward candidates who identify appropriate reasons why the performance of boys may have declined relative to girls. Higher in the band, the reasons offered will be explained in reasonable detail and the analysis overall will be coherent and plausible.

(b) Assess the view that the main factor influencing educational achievement is the social class background of the pupil. [16]

0–6 A few simple points about educational achievement, with no direct links to the question, would fit the lower part of the band. An answer that provided some simple arguments in favour of the idea that social class is the main influence on educational achievement, with no wider analysis or consideration of other factors, would merit the upper part of the band.

7–11 A sound sociological account of the ways in which social class background might influence educational achievement would be worth 7 or 8 marks. This might include reference to material and/or cultural factors. To reach the higher part of the band, there must be some attempt to compare the influence of social class with other factors that may influence educational achievement. Other factors include gender, ethnicity, teachers and schools, peer group, sub-culture and region. A basic summary of a range of factors that may influence educational achievement, with little or no attempt to compare and contrast their relative impact, would be sufficient to merit a mark in the top half of the band.

12–16 A reasonably detailed account of the impact of social class and one or more other factors that may influence educational achievement would fit the lower part of the band. To go higher, there must be an explicit assessment of the relative importance of social class as a factor influencing educational achievement. This may take the form of arguing that the importance of social class has been exaggerated and/or is declining. Alternatively, there may be a direct attempt to weigh the importance of class against other factors that may influence educational achievement. Well-reasoned conclusions that provide a coherent response to the question will be a feature of answers that merit the top half of the band.

2 (a) Explain the processes within education through which pupils are encouraged to accept the core values of society. [9]

- 0–4 A few simple points about the functions of the education system in general would be worth 1 or 2 marks. A basic summary of the functionalist view that education promotes the core values of society would fit the higher part of the band. Answers at this level will make few, if any, references to the actual processes through which pupils are encouraged to accept the core values of society.
- 5–9 The processes through which pupils are encouraged to accept the core values of society include various aspects of the hidden curriculum, the exercise of formal social control through the authority of teachers and schools, the importance of school career and school records for access to opportunities in later life outside school, and the processes described in the work of Willis (*Learning to Labour*) and Bowles and Gintis. Lower in the band, answers will refer to one or two of these processes but application of the material to the question may be rather sketchy or left implicit. Better answers will demonstrate a surer handling of the relevant material and use it to make explicit connections to the issues raised by the question. Good answers may also be distinguished by use of relevant links to theoretical perspectives.

(b) Assess the view that the main role of education is to promote social equality. [16]

- 0–6 A few simple points about the nature of inequality in the education system would fit the lower part of the band. A basic explanation of how education may seek to promote social equality would merit a mark in the top half of the band.
- 7–11 A summary of the different roles or functions that have been ascribed to the education system, with no further development, would be worth 7 or 8 marks. A good analysis of the role of education in promoting social equality, without any assessment, would justify a mark in the higher part of the band. This type of response might be developed, for example, through a discussion of the links between education and the idea of meritocracy. Likewise, candidates might discuss evidence showing the impact of various educational policies in helping to reduce social inequality.
- 12–16 Answers at this level will demonstrate a good understanding of the possible links between education and the achievement of social equality. There will also be an assessment of the view on which the question is based. Lower in the band, the assessment may be confined to a few points evaluating the contribution that education makes to achieving social equality. The persistence of different forms of inequality within education may be documented as a counter to the idea that the system is committed to achieving equality in opportunity and/or outcome. Better answers will go beyond this type of response to question in a broader context what purposes or role are served by the education system. For example, different sociological perspectives might be cited in order to discuss the relative importance of the different roles or functions that have been ascribed to education (economic, social, cultural and libertarian functions, for example). High quality answers may also distinguish between different forms of educational provision and the relevance of those distinctions for addressing the issues raised by the question.

Section B: Global Development

3 (a) Explain why not all forms of aid are helpful for development. [9]

0–4 A few basic observations about the nature of aid, with no direct links to the question as set, would fit the lower part of the band. A simple account of ways in which aid may help development would trigger the top half of the band. A simple account of this kind is likely to be based on general knowledge rather than specific sociological evidence and analysis.

5–9 Lower in the band, answers will demonstrate a sound understanding of the relationships between aid and development. There will also be some limited attempt to show why not all forms of aid are helpful for development. Answers that merit the top half of the band will show a more detailed understanding of why not all forms of aid have a positive impact on development. Relevant factors to consider in answering this question include: distinctions between different types of aid organisations and donors; different definitions and perspectives on the nature of development; reflections on the practical difficulties of delivering aid in different circumstances; differences in the aims and perspectives between aid-givers and the intended recipients of aid.

(b) Assess the impact of transnational corporations on global development. [16]

0–6 A few simple observations about the nature of transnational corporations, with no direct links to the question set, would fit the lower part of the band. Some simple observations about the impact of transnational corporations on global development, with little sociological underpinning, would merit a mark in the top half of the band.

7–11 A basic account of the impact of transnational corporations on global development, perhaps one-sided or lacking detail, would trigger the lower part of the band. A better answer would show greater recognition of the complexity of the relationships between transnational corporations and issues of global development. However, there may be little or no attempt at assessment at this level.

12–16 A good account of the impact of transnational corporations on global development, with assessment demonstrated through the juxtaposition of different interpretations and theories, would fit the lower part of the band. To go higher, the assessment must be more explicit and well-reasoned arguments offered to support conclusions about the overall impact of transnational corporations on global development. Reward candidates who also demonstrate sophisticated understanding by recognising, for example, the differences between transnational corporations or by discussing different concepts of development in a way that is relevant to the question. High quality answers may also be distinguished by use of relevant links to theoretical perspectives, such as the Marxist and functionalist viewpoints. Another way of showing sophistication in the analysis would be by recognising changes over time in the nature of transnational corporations and their impact on global development.

4 (a) Explain the problems in defining the concept of 'development'. [9]

0–4 A simple attempt to define the concept of development, with little or no recognition of the debates that surround the issue of formulating an acceptable, single definition, would trigger the lower part of the band. A better answer at this level might focus on just one area within the debates about defining development. For example, problems in defining development in economic terms might be considered.

5–9 Lower in the band, different definitions of development will be discussed, covering dimensions such as the economic, social, cultural and environmental. To go higher, the problems in formulating a single definition of development that would be widely acceptable will be identified explicitly. Good answers may also highlight possible links between particular definitions of development and vested interests. Links to different theories of development might also be a feature of answers that merit the higher part of the band.

(b) Assess the strengths and limitations of the dependency theory of development. [16]

0–6 A few simple points about the factors affecting development, with no direct links to the question, would fit the lower part of the band. A better answer at this level might explain in an elementary way the main features of dependency theory, but without considering the strengths and limitations of the theory.

7–11 Lower in the band, a few strengths and/or limitations of dependency theory will be noted, though the points covered may lack detail and include some inaccuracy. Better answers will cover both strengths and limitations and a wider range of relevant points will be included. However, there may be little or no attempt to assess dependency theory at this level. Candidates who are able to situate dependency theory in the context of the reaction against the more optimistic claims of modernisation theory are likely to merit the higher part of the band.

12–16 Answers that fit this band will provide a good account of the strengths and limitations of dependency theory. There will also be an attempt to assess the value of that theory. Lower in the band, the assessment is likely to be developed through the juxtaposition of dependency theory with other explanations of the factors affecting development. This might include modernisation theory and the world systems perspective. To go higher, the assessment must be explicit and well-reasoned conclusions will be reached about the overall value of dependency theory as an approach to understanding issues affecting growth and development.

Section C: Media

5 (a) Explain the factors that influence the content of the news. [9]

- 0–4 A few observations about the content of the news, which are of broadly sociological relevance without directly linking to the question set, would be worth 1 or 2 marks. A basic account of a single factor that may influence the content of the news would merit the top half of the band. Likewise, a simple list of several factors that influence the news would gain 3 or 4 marks.
- 5–9 A basic account of two or three factors that influence news content would trigger the lower part of the band. Better answers would go into greater depth about the factors covered and/or include references to a broader range of factors. The factors likely to affect the content of the news include: editorial intervention, news values, practical issues of news coverage, journalists, censorship and state regulation, the influence of media owners, advertisers, news recipients and pressure groups. Answers that include appropriate links to different theoretical perspectives on the factors influencing news content are likely to trigger the higher part of the band.

(b) Assess the view that the media reflect the interests and values of all groups in society. [16]

- 0–6 A few assertions about the role or influence of the media, with little sociological bearing, would fit the lower half of the band. A simple statement of one sociological theory or explanation of the interests served by the media would merit the top half of the band.
- 7–11 A sound account of one theory or explanation of the interests that are served by the media would be worth 7 or 8 marks. A better answer would describe two or more relevant explanations. A likely focus is the debate between Marxist and pluralist theories of the media, but other perspectives may also be usefully covered in the answer, such as the feminist and post-modernist contributions.
- 12–16 A good account of two or more theories or explanations of the interests that are served by the media, with assessment of the theories implied through juxtaposition, would trigger the lower part of this band. A better answer will include an explicit assessment of the value of each theory or explanation, and may also include an attempt to draw overall conclusions about the interests and values that are reflected in the media. References to specific groups whose interests/values may be represented, or overlooked, by the media could be another feature of high quality answers that merit the top half of the band. Attempts to distinguish between different types of media as part of the analysis may be a further way in which sophistication can be demonstrated in answering the question.

6 (a) Explain the role of the media in creating moral panics. [9]

0–4 A few observations about the role of the media, which are of broadly sociological relevance without directly linking to the question set, would be worth 1 or 2 marks. An attempt to describe one or more examples of a moral panic may merit a mark in the top half of the band. A sound account of what is meant by a moral panic would also justify 3 or 4 marks.

5–9 Answers at this level must focus on explaining the part played by the media in the creation of moral panics. Lower in the band, the account may lack some detail or subtlety of analysis. For example, it might be confined mainly to a description of a reported moral panic, with conclusions about the role of the media perhaps left somewhat implicit. Higher in the band, the explanation will be more carefully mapped and more detailed. Any references to relevant examples of moral panics will use this material to demonstrate wider points about the role of the media in the stereotyping and deviancy amplification that are characteristics of moral panics generally.

(b) Assess sociological explanations for how television may influence the behaviour of audiences. [16]

0–6 A few assertions about the supposed influence of television on the behaviour of audiences, with little sociological foundation, would fit the lower half of the band. A simple statement of one sociological theory or explanation of the influence of television on audiences would merit the top half of the band.

7–11 A sound account of one theory of how audiences may be influenced by television would be worth 7 or 8 marks. A better answer would describe two or more relevant theories. A likely focus for the answer would be the debates between supporters of the hypodermic syringe and uses and gratification models, but other theories may also be covered, including the two step flow model, the interpretive model, and post-modernist contributions. There may be little or no evidence of assessment at this level.

12–16 A good account of two or more relevant theories, with assessment of the theories implied through juxtaposition, would trigger the lower part of the band. A better answer will include an explicit assessment of the value of each theory, and may also include an attempt to draw overall conclusions about the processes through which audiences may be affected by watching television. References to several relevant theories may be a feature of high quality answers that merit the top half of the band. Good use of contributions from post-modernist writers (Baudrillard, Turkle) may be another distinguishing feature of answers that are worthy of high marks.

Section D: Religion

7 (a) Explain the difficulties in assessing the extent of religious belief in a society. [9]

0–4 A few observations about the nature of religious belief, with no direct links to the question set, would fit the lower half of the band. A simple account of a few of the difficulties in understanding or assessing the beliefs of others would reach the top half of the band.

5–9 A sound account of a few of the difficulties in assessing the extent of religious belief in a society would trigger the lower part of the band. To go higher, the account must be more detailed or wider-ranging in the difficulties covered. Difficulties in assessing the extent of religious belief include: problems of definition, lack of reliability of comparative statistics from earlier periods, different criteria are used to record membership of religious organisations, church attendance is not necessarily an indication of religiosity, people may conceal the truth about their religious practice and sentiments, and difficulty in operationalising the concept of religious belief for the purposes of sociological investigation.

(b) Assess the view that the influence of religion is declining in modern industrial societies. [16]

0–6 A few observations about the nature or role of religion, without direct links to the question, would fit the lower part of the band. An account of what is meant by secularisation, with no further development, would merit a mark in the top half of the band.

7–11 A basic account of the secularisation thesis, perhaps with some inaccuracy and lack of detail, would trigger the lower part of the band. To go higher, there would need to be a more detailed treatment of the secularisation debate, with different indicators of secularisation perhaps documented, including references to, for instance, church attendance figures, church membership, public influence of established religious organisations, and studies of religious belief. However, the discussion at this level may be one-sided and lacking an assessment of the idea that religious influence is in decline in modern industrial societies.

12–16 Answers at this level will demonstrate a good understanding of the secularisation thesis. There must also be an assessment of that thesis. Lower in the band, the assessment may consist of simply describing the different arguments for and against the secularisation thesis. Better answers will engage more directly with the debates and develop well-reasoned arguments for supporting a particular view about the influence of religion in society today. High quality answers may also show other elements of sophistication, such as distinguishing between different types of secularisation (Casanova), or drawing international comparisons about the degree of secularisation in different countries (Martin, Davie, Bruce), or discussing the notion of religious revival (Kepel).

8 (a) Explain why some feminist theorists believe that religion is an instrument through which women are dominated and oppressed. [9]

0–4 A few simple points about feminist views of gender inequality in general, with no direct links to the question, would fit the lower part of the band. Some examples of how women may be treated within a particular religion or religions, with no wider discussion of explanations or theories, would trigger the top half of the band.

5–9 A basic general account of feminist ideas about religion and the treatment of women would merit a mark in the lower half of the band, up to 7 marks. To go higher, the answer must refer to some specific feminist contributions to the debate about religion and the oppression of women. This might include, for example, references to Armstrong and female marginality in organised religion, de Beauvoir on religion and patriarchy, El Saadawi on the manipulation of religion by men, Wilson on veiling, Badawi on women in Islam.

(b) Assess sociological explanations for the growth of new religious movements. [16]

0–6 A few points about how sociologists might explain the existence of religion, or its role in society, would fit the lower part of the band. A descriptive account of the nature of new religious movements (perhaps through reference to Wallis' typology), with no direct attempt to explain their existence, would merit the higher part of the band.

7–11 An answer that is tilted more towards explaining the growth of religious sects and cults in general, with perhaps the focus on issues of marginality and relative deprivation, could gain up to 9 marks. To go higher, the answer must concentrate on the growth of so-called new religious movements specifically. The ideas of thinkers such as Wallis and Bruce are likely to feature in answers at this level and higher.

12–16 Answers at this level will include a sound account of two or more explanations for the growth of new religious movements. There will also be an attempt to assess these explanations. Lower in the band, the assessment may be through the simple juxtaposition of two or more contrasting explanations. Higher in the band, though, the assessment must be explicit and clear conclusions will be reached about the relative merits of the explanations discussed. Good use of post-modernist contributions to the debate about religion and social change, with particular reference to new religious movements, may be a feature of answers that merit the top part of the band. Candidates may also draw distinctions between different types of new religious movement, as a contribution to analysing the issues raised by the question.

