

MARK SCHEME for the May/June 2007 question paper

9699 SOCIOLOGY

9699/02

Paper 2 (Data Response), maximum raw mark 50

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.

- CIE will not enter into discussions or correspondence in connection with these mark schemes.

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Page 2	Mark Scheme	Syllabus	Paper
	GCE A/AS LEVEL – May/June 2007	9699	02

1 A conventional assumption is that children often behave differently to adults because of natural differences between the two age groups. Thus it may be assumed that playing with toys and seeking the attention of adults are forms of behaviour that infants are naturally predisposed towards. The process of growing out of childhood and maturing into an adult is also often seen as something that happens automatically to people once they reach a certain age. Yet these commonsense assumptions run up against the problem that there is considerable cultural diversity in the behaviour patterns of infants. Similarly, the age at which people are considered adults varies between societies. These cultural differences suggest that, far from being natural, the identities associated with the roles ‘child’ and ‘adult’ are socially constructed.

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

The term socially constructed refers to the idea that social reality is created through the interpretations of individuals and groups interacting with each other. Two marks for a clear and accurate definition, one mark for a partial definition.

(b) Describe **two** examples of cultural differences in the behaviour patterns of infants. [4]

Examples are likely to be based on cross-cultural comparisons. One mark for the example plus one mark for development (2 x 2 marks).

(c) Explain how a person develops a social self during infancy. [8]

0-4 A few commonsense observations of relevance to the question would merit a mark in the low half of the band. An answer that merely describes the agencies through which socialisation occurs could achieve 3 or 4 marks if reasonably well articulated.

5-8 To merit this band, the answer must include some reference to relevant sociological accounts of how children develop a sense of self through interaction with others. This is most likely to be achieved through describing G.H. Mead’s contribution to the subject. Well-chosen references to psychological theories of cognitive development, such as the work of Piaget, may also feature in competent answers to the question.

Page 3	Mark Scheme	Syllabus	Paper
	GCE A/AS LEVEL – May/June 2007	9699	02

(d) Assess the claim that sociologists have exaggerated the role of socialisation in shaping human behaviour. [11]

- 0-4 Answers at this level are likely to show only limited appreciation of the issues raised by the question. A few isolated comments about the concept of socialisation with no development may be worth 3 or 4 marks.
- 5-8 Lower in the band we may find answers that are limited solely or mainly to a sound account of the functionalist theory of socialisation. Higher in the band other theories of socialisation may feature alongside, or in place of, the functionalist theory. Answers may tend to assume that socialisation is a key factor in shaping human behaviour rather than attempting to demonstrate this point explicitly and/or challenging it in some way. If there is any explicit assessment, it may be carried through a simple account of the cases of so-called feral children.
- 9-11 Answers will demonstrate a good understanding of the concept of socialisation and will also attempt to assess its importance in shaping human behaviour. Lower in the band the assessment may be confined to a few arguments and/or some evidence supporting the idea that socialisation is a major factor shaping human behaviour. Feral children may figure in this, as may examples of cross-cultural and/or historical diversity in forms of human behaviour. Durkheim's theory of suicide may also be used, as Durkheim intended it, to demonstrate the importance of social forces in shaping human behaviour. At the top of the band, the assessment may also reveal an understanding of the grounds on which it may be said that some sociologists exaggerated the importance of socialisation. This may take the form of a critique of structural theories with their tendency to be over-deterministic; or another angle would be to consider non-sociological accounts of human behaviour, such as those derived from biology and psychology. A post-modernist critique of the concept of socialisation may also figure and would certainly be very relevant.

Page 4	Mark Scheme	Syllabus	Paper
	GCE A/AS LEVEL – May/June 2007	9699	02

2 The research methods most often adopted in sociological investigations are questionnaires, interviews and observation. Less widely used methods of sociological research include experiments, case studies, life histories, and content analysis. Experiments are favoured by those in the positivist tradition who suggest that sociology should aim to be as 'scientific' as possible. Case studies and life histories are used most by sociologists adopting an interpretive approach. Content analysis is widely used to investigate the nature of representations constructed by the mass media. In the case of content analysis the media provides a source of secondary data for sociological investigation. Other sources of secondary data that sociologists have used in their studies include: official statistics, diaries, letters, historical documents and sound recordings. However, special care needs to be taken when using secondary data in sociological research as it may be distorted and lack objectivity.

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

A case study is a research design that takes as its subject a single case or a few selected examples of a social entity – such as families, communities, work groups, or even an individual – and investigates the subject in depth. Two marks for a clear and accurate definition, one mark for a partial definition.

(b) Describe **two** research topics that might be suitable for sociological investigation using content analysis. [4]

Suitable research topics might include, for example, the portrayal of gender roles, moral panics, cases of bias and distortion in news reporting, media influences on youth culture, etc. One mark for the example plus one mark for development (2 x 2 marks).

(c) Explain why experiments are favoured by those in the positivist tradition. [8]

0-4 One or two reasons why experiments are most favoured by those in the positivist tradition, simply stated, may be worth 3 or 4 marks. Lower in the band answers may contain a few assertions about the use of experiments in sociological research, but with little or no reference to the positivist tradition.

5-8 A number of appropriate reasons will be clearly identified at this level. Positivists may favour the use of experiments for reasons such as: ease of controlling and manipulating variables; ability to identify causation; reliability; scientific status of the research method. At the top of the band, the reasons given will be well developed and show good understanding of positivism.

Page 5	Mark Scheme	Syllabus	Paper
	GCE A/AS LEVEL – May/June 2007	9699	02

(d) Assess the strengths and limitations of using official statistics in sociological research. [11]

- 0-4 A few simple points about official statistics are all we might expect at this level. The more the points are linked to the value of official statistics as a resource in sociological research, the higher in the band the answer should be placed.
- 5-8 An answer that covers only strengths or only limitations, if done well, would merit 5 or 6 marks. To go higher, both sides of the questions need to be addressed, though not necessarily with equal attention. Answers may be rather list-like at this level, particularly lower in the band. Relevant theoretical issues may be addressed, particularly higher in the band, though the discussion will be rather basic at this level.
- 9-11 A clear and accurate account of the strengths and limitations of using official statistics in sociological research will be provided at this level. Both practical and theoretical issues will be addressed and there may be an attempt to link the use of official statistics to the positivist tradition. The assessment will be explicit and, at the top of the band, plausible conclusions will be offered about the overall value of using official statistics in sociological research.

Page 6	Mark Scheme	Syllabus	Paper
	GCE A/AS LEVEL – May/June 2007	9699	02

3 The sexual division of labour has changed dramatically in recent times. The traditional distinction between male breadwinners and female housewives no longer fits reality. Family life today is characterised by a diverse and complex range of social relations. Moreover, women have increasingly entered paid employment over the last fifty years and they now form almost half of the workforce in most modern industrial societies. These changes have led some commentators to suggest that women are gaining equality at last and that a shift in power from men to women is taking place. Such claims are contradicted by feminist research. The evidence collected by feminist sociologists shows that despite significant changes in the patterns of female and male employment women are still disadvantaged in paid employment compared to their male counterparts. These persistent inequalities are linked to the different types of work that women and men perform. Women and men are largely segregated into different occupations and into different levels within the same occupation. Most household tasks also continue to be performed by women and this adds to the difficulties that women face in achieving equality with men in paid employment.

(a) What is meant by the term *sexual division of labour*? [2]

The term refers to the specialised gender roles of male breadwinner and female housewife. Two marks for a clear and accurate definition, one mark for a partial definition.

(b) Describe **two** ways in which women are still disadvantaged in paid employment compared to their male counterparts. [4]

Women are still disadvantaged in paid employment in areas such as opportunities for promotion, remuneration, pension provision, job conditions, and types of job available. One mark for the example plus one mark for development (2 x 2 marks).

(c) Explain the links between sexual inequality in the home and the difficulties that women may face in achieving equality with men in paid employment. [8]

0-4 A few disjointed points about sexual inequality, with little or no direct link to the question, may be worth 1 or 2 marks. To go higher, there needs to be an attempt to link sexual inequality in the home to the inequality women face in paid employment, albeit that the answer will lack detail and development at this level.

5-8 A basic explanation of the links between sexual inequality in the home and the inequality women face in paid employment, possibly lacking some detail and/or range, would merit 5 or 6 marks. To go higher, the explanation needs to be detailed and well informed. At the top of the band, answers may include references to relevant theoretical perspectives (different strands of feminist theory, for example) and/or studies.

Page 7	Mark Scheme	Syllabus	Paper
	GCE A/AS LEVEL – May/June 2007	9699	02

(d) Assess the Marxist feminist approach to explaining sexual inequality in paid employment. [11]

- 0-4 A few vague references to sexual inequality without any direct links to the question might be worth 1 or 2 marks. A very limited response that nevertheless demonstrates some basic knowledge about the Marxist feminist perspective would be worth 3 or 4 marks.
- 5-8 A basic account of the Marxist feminist approach to explaining sexual inequality in paid employment would merit 5 or 6 marks. A more developed, though still largely descriptive account would trigger the top half of the band.
- 9-11 As for the top of the previous band, though to reach this level there must be an attempt to assess the Marxist feminist approach. Lower in the band the assessment will be rather basic; the analysis will be better informed and more sustained at the top of the band.