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Examiners' report

SOCIOLOGY

H180

For first teaching in 2015

H180/01 Summer 2022 series

Contents

Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

Advance Information for Summer 2022 assessments

To support student revision, advance information was published about the focus of exams for Summer 2022 assessments. Advance information was available for most GCSE, AS and A Level subjects, Core Maths, FSMQ, and Cambridge Nationals Information Technologies. You can find more information on our [website](#).

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Paper 1 series overview

There was a range of responses, suggesting that the paper differentiated adequately. Most candidates attempted to answer all questions and managed to time their responses reasonably well. There were very few rubric errors and candidates seemed reasonably well prepared knowing the assessment objectives of each question.

Some candidates attempted the higher mark questions first instead of tackling the questions in order. This strategy is perfectly acceptable and for those candidates that may struggle with time keeping, this is a good technique. On occasion, some candidates did leave whole questions out perhaps indicating a lack of practice in working under timed conditions. In addition, some candidates are not matching the demands of the question – for example, some candidates did not refer to the Source for both answers to Question 2 and instead only gave one response relating to the source and another from their own knowledge. Candidates need to be reminded of the importance of reading the command words of every question and understanding what the question is asking them to do. This can be also seen in Question 7/11/15 where some candidates provide a paragraph of evaluation when there are no Evaluation and Analysis marks available thus losing valuable time that could have been spent on another question.

In Section A, there were clear differences between candidates in the use of sources; some candidates made no reference to the source and so lost AO2 marks for application or referred to the wrong source (both Question 2 and Question 3 state in bold that they are referring to a specific source). For this paper Source A needed to be referred to twice in Question 2 and Source B referred to at least once in Question 3 to gain full marks. Using the source is a skill that can be practised and candidates should make sure that they are developing and applying their knowledge from the source instead of copying what they see (paying 'lip service' to the source).

> **Using the Sources**
>
> When using the Source, candidates must refer to the Source twice in Question 2 and at least once in Question 3 to gain full marks. It is good practice to explicitly make reference in your response to signpost you are using the Source, e.g. 'In Source A we can see a family playing together in the garden that indicates child-centredness…'

In Section B, the family still remains the most popular topic, followed by youth culture. Very few candidates chose the media option. With every question, to achieve marks in the highest mark band, candidates need to include a range of sociological evidence and to discuss these with some depth. Many responses, particularly for the 12 and 20 mark questions in Section A and Section B did not include the required range and depth of sociological evidence. "Evidence" can include studies, theories, concepts and contemporary examples, although it should be noted that responses which rely heavily on contemporary examples will not score very highly as, on their own, contemporary examples are not good sociology and would only achieve Level 2.

There was a clear difference between the high and low achieving candidates. At the top end, there was a range of sociological evidence contained in responses to all the questions. Such responses included relevant and detailed explanations including sociological studies, concepts and theories where appropriate. The less successful responses did not provide sociological knowledge and understanding and responses became very anecdotal suggesting they were relying on common sense. Candidates must be encouraged to back up their responses with sociological evidence; be it concepts, studies, relevant contemporary examples or theory. For example, in responses to Question 3, candidates who discussed how the media socialises individuals through Mulvey's concept of the male scored more highly than other candidates who just recycled the source and explained what a selfie was.

Appropriate sociological evidence

Candidates need to always prioritise sociological evidence over contemporary examples. While contemporary examples can illustrate a point very effectively, it is a study, concept or theory that will elevate the response.

In terms of assessment objectives, Knowledge and Understanding (AO1) remains the strongest area; good candidates were able to offer a whole range of sociological knowledge, mainly in the form of concepts and studies, but sometimes making relevant use of contemporary examples and theory. AO2 (application) still needs to improve with some candidates only referring to the source once for Question 2 when it should be twice. AO3 skills of Analysis and Evaluation were moderately successful. It is worth noting that only Question 4 and Questions 8/12/16 require evaluation. Evaluation can take the form of direct criticism against a previous point of knowledge or could be in the form of a counterpoint to the question. It is a good technique to use the words of the question to show how an evaluative paragraph fits into a response otherwise if the candidate just lists an alternative viewpoint, there is a danger that it will be marked as juxtaposition as it is not fully addressing the question.

Appropriate sociological evidence

Candidates need to be prepared to evaluate on Question 4 and Question 8/12/16. Evaluation can take the form of a counter-view, going 'against' the question or direct criticism to a previous point. To attain full marks for evaluation, candidates should aim to make two detailed points in Question 4 and four detailed points of evaluation for Question 8/12/16.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:
- gave full core meaning and development for Question 1 - used the Sources appropriately for Questions 2 and 3 - used sociological knowledge, studies, theory or concepts to back up their points.	- wrote the bare minimum and did not back up their points - did not refer to the Sources when asked - did not evaluate on Questions 4 and Question 8/12/16 - only use examples and common sense for sociological knowledge.

Section A overview

This section comprised of four compulsory questions which all candidates needed to answer. Two questions needed the source to be used and referenced.

Question 1

Source A

A middle class family in front of their home playing in their front garden

Source B

Teenage girls taking a selfie to upload to social media

1   Define the concept of sexual identity.   **[4]**

This answer required a full core meaning and full development to gain the maximum marks. Most candidates answered this question reasonably well, referring to an individuals' sexuality or sexual preferences but on occasion some candidates didn't link the issue to identity. On occasion, some candidates confused sexual identity with gender identity and were not rewarded. Typically, candidates would develop the response with reference to different sexualities or changes in the law promoting equal rights for all sexual orientations. A few candidates supported their responses with studies such as Weeks, but this was not necessary to gain full marks.

Question 2

2 With reference to **Source A**, identify and briefly explain **two** cultural characteristics of middle class identity. **[6]**

Candidates were required to use Source A to identify and explain two examples of middle class identity. Candidates for the most part completed the question well identifying characteristics such as affluence, home ownership, family orientated or being child centred. Some candidates only used the source once and took their second point from their own knowledge. So, they would have lost out on application marks. A small minority referred to the wrong source and some were confused and picked characteristics associated with the working class.

Exemplar 1

> 2. The middle class is. Middle class individuals are those between the working/lower class and the upper class/bourgiose.
>
> In source A, a middle class family can be seen play in front of their home garden. This is an example of middle class culture as typically lower classes cannot afford large houses with gardens and the upper class engage in more upper class exclusive culture. Another example of a cultural characteristic of the middle class is picnics/brunches. These are common activities which are partaken by middle class individuals groups.

In this example we can see the issue where the source is only referred to once. The candidate correctly identifies that the middle class are more likely to be able to afford a large house with a garden to play in and they have referred to the source. The second characteristic is the idea that the middle class enjoy picnics or brunches. This is not related to the source therefore the response gains 2 marks for knowledge and understanding but only 2 marks for application.

Question 3

3 Using **Source B** and your wider sociological knowledge, explain how the media socialises individuals. **[8]**

This question was not answered very well with a significant proportion of candidates struggling to achieve full marks. Many gave common sense responses such as 'taking a selfie' and were unable to support their responses with sociological evidence. Some candidates also confused the term 'socialises' and took it to mean getting together and having fun instead of the sociological meaning as part of secondary socialisation. Those that did answer well often used Mulvey, McRobbie or Gauntlett to support their answer. It should also be noted that to attain full marks, candidates must refer to Source B at least once and their wider knowledge at least once also.

Exemplar 2

3		The media socialises individuals into influencing their gender identity / sexual identity. Laura Mulvey spoke about the term 'male gaze' to explain the way in media women are objectified and sexualised that enforces stereotype. This influence stereo gender identity as girls are influenced to be

		desired by men and sexual objects and men are influenced to view women like this but also into hegemonic masculinity and heterosexuality associated with it. ✱In source B it shows 3 teenage girls dressed up and posing to upload to social media and is typical male gaze.

In this example we can see how a candidate has used sociological studies and concepts to reinforce their point. Here they have identified a sociologist (Mulvey) and accurately described a concept (male gaze) before linking it back to the Source.

Question 4

4 Outline and briefly evaluate the view that old age can be viewed as a positive identity. **[12]**

Candidates seemed well prepared for this question and used relevant evidence to support and challenge the view. Most common was the idea of 'active ageing' by Clarke and Warren and the notion of positive changing representations by Featherstone and Hepworth. Some less successful responses spoke about stereotypes of old age such as being kind, but were not able to support it with sociological evidence. Evaluation, where present, was done extremely well with Hockey and James or Corner being the main sociological reference points. However, it was noticeable that some candidates did not attempt to evaluate and lost out on AO3 marks.

Exemplar 3

It can be criticised that old age is viewed as a negative identity because of the idea that they are viewed as a burden within society due to their dependency of the youth. Evidence is through Ginn & Arber who argued the discrimination of old may be due to the rise in pension and dependency on benefits & welfare state. This suggest that old people may be stigmatised as a weakness in which may lead to full exclusion within society in which acts as a barrier in creating a positive identity.

In this response we can see an effective example of evaluation. Here the candidate correctly makes a point and backs it up with sociological evidence.

Section B overview

Candidates had the option to select further questions on the Families and relationships, Youth subcultures or the Media. A significant majority of candidates opted for the Families and relationships. Some candidates were also employing a strategy in answering higher mark questions first in order to give them the appropriate amount of time and not leave higher mark questions to the end.

Option 1 overview

Families and relationships is the most popular option and it was clear that candidates were reasonably well prepared. Several candidates on Question 7 were not able to provide specific sociological evidence to back up their response.

Question 5

OPTION 1
Families and relationships

5   Define and briefly explain the concept of the lone parent family.   **[5]**

Most candidates were able to score relatively high on this question. Almost all were able to give the core meaning of a parent with at least one dependent child living with them but the level of development for the extra marks seemed to vary. The most successful responses discussed reasons why these types of families had developed or would state how they were often female led. However, other responses did not offer any further development points and missed out on attaining the higher marks.

Question 6*

6*   Identify and briefly explain **two** reasons why individuals choose to remain single.   **[8]**

Candidates had very different ways of approaching this question, but many were able to use sociological evidence, including feminist ideas about increasing numbers of women choosing to delay or even shun marriage, including Sharpe and Wilkinson. The most successful responses used sociological concepts such as 'creative singlehood' or 'the cult of the individual'. Most candidates were able to identify two clear points and signposted each reason as a separate paragraph. Less successful responses were either common sense, such as individuals not wanting to be part of relationships because of bad experiences or were confused, such as stating that people preferred to cohabit (this was inaccurate and not credited).

Question 7*

7* Explain how parenting has changed in contemporary society. **[12]**

There was a mixed response to this question and also a wide range of valid approaches taken. The best responses looked at how different family types had impacted parenting, the new child centred approach or how changes in roles, particularly in terms of fatherhood had altered the parental experience. Studies by Hattie, Dunne and Liberal Feminists were the most common. However, some candidates were only able to offer unsupported evidence on how parents were less strict or how there was more perceived danger for parents.

Question 8*

8* Evaluate postmodern views of the nuclear family in contemporary society. **[20]**

This question was answered reasonably well with most candidates able to state at least one aspect of the postmodern view. The best responses used studies by Giddens, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim and Stacey to make convincing arguments about the postmodern view on the nuclear family. Evaluation, where present, was generally provided through alternative theories on the nuclear family but were often not focused and tended to be more generalised such as the Functionalist or the Marxist view. Very few candidates opted to specifically critique the postmodern perspective. Less successful responses were either extremely generalised or did not provide any evaluation or analysis. A few candidates ran out of time and were not able to answer the question.

Option 2 overview

Of the candidates that did answer the Youth subcultures section, it was generally done well with good use of theory and studies. The most troublesome question was Question 10, with some candidates not able to identify a new subculture and instead resorting to some of the original subcultures that were identified by the CCCS.

Question 9

OPTION 2
Youth subcultures

9   Define and briefly explain the concept of a folk devil.   **[5]**

There was a mixed response to this question with a number of candidates unable to identity what a folk devil was. Those that did were able to explain it well and discuss how they were groups or individuals who were labelled by the media as a perceived threat to society. This was often reinforced with sociological evidence such as Cohen's study of mods and rockers or Fawbert's study of hoodies. Less successful responses tried to make the connection with folk music which was not rewarded.

Question 10*

10*   Identify and briefly explain **two** new subcultures in contemporary society.   **[8]**

For the mark scheme for this question, 'new subcultures' referred to anything post-1960s/1970s when the original identification of subcultures began. Unfortunately, several candidates provided studies or example of teddy boys, skinheads or punks, all of which were not rewarded. Those candidates that did answer the question well were able to provide two new subcultures such as neo-tribes, club cultures, white wannabees, emos or roadmen and were able to provide the corresponding sociological studies.

Question 11*

11*   Explain how subcultures are related to ethnicity.   **[12]**

This question was generally answered well and most candidates able to provide some supporting evidence. The best responses used specific studies on ethnicity and subcultures to support their responses, including Nightingale, Bourgois, Alexander and also studies of anti-school subcultures such as Mac an Ghaiill. Some also used a different approach and outlined subcultures that had traditionally had racist views such as skinheads – this was also credited. Less successful responses were unable to provide specific sociological studies but were able to discuss examples such as Brasians or rastafarians which were creditable if explained in relation to the question.

Question 12*

12* Evaluate the view that young people participate in deviant subcultures because they are negatively labelled. **[20]**

This question was generally answered very well, with most candidates able to use sociologists such as Becker, Cicourel and Stan Cohen to support the view and able to explain labelling effectively. Evaluation was then presented using alternative explanations including functionalist and neo-Marxist ideas. Less successful responses had elements of confusion attributing the wrong study to the wrong person or simply ran out of time and were therefore only able to offer a paragraph.

Option 3 overview

Only a handful of candidates answered questions on the media but of those, there was a wide range of knowledge on display. On Question 14, candidates found it difficult to apply appropriate concepts and studies to the question.

Question 13

OPTION 3
Media

13   Define and briefly explain direct effect theories of how the media affects the audience.   **[5]**

This question was often only partially answered with candidates rarely stating a core meaning for what direct effect theories are and instead just listing examples such as the hypodermic syringe model or Bandura, Ross and Ross and the bobo doll experiment. This was often at length but could only get the three marks for development and missed out on the two marks available for the core meaning in stating a definition.

Question 14*

14*   Identify and briefly explain **two** ways the media represents the middle class.   **[8]**

This question was generally not answered well, appearing to show little knowledge on this topic with responses often being vague and over-reliant on contemporary examples with little research to back up any points made. Overall, two points were given but were just descriptions of perceived middles class people in television dramas or soap operas.

Question 15*

15*   Explain how the media has caused moral panics for certain social groups.   **[12]**

This question was usually answered quite well, though the supporting evidence varied. The best candidates were able to use sociological evidence by Cohen or Fawbert and link it back to the question. Other candidates just used contemporary examples, such as terrorists or the HIV/AIDS epidemic and discussed how those situations had developed into a moral panic.

Question 16*

16* Evaluate postmodern views of representations in the media. **[20]**

This question was generally not well answered. Most candidates were able to produce vague ideas about choice or pick and mix, but few were able to go beyond this. More successful responses also used concepts such as hyperreality or media saturation and were able to draw on research by Strinati, McLuhan and Baudrillard. Evaluation was often alternative perspectives on the media such as the neo-marxist or feminist positions. Some candidates did not evaluate owing to time constraints.

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