



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
General Certificate of Education
Advanced Subsidiary Level and Advanced Level

SOCIOLOGY

9699/02

Paper 2 Theory and Methods

For Examination from 2014

SPECIMEN MARK SCHEME

1 hour 30 minutes

MAXIMUM MARK: 50

This document consists of **4** printed pages.



Section A

- 1 (a) What is meant by the term *feral children*? [2]

Feral children have been denied human contact in the period of primary socialisation, having been confined and isolated and in some cases possibly 'raised' by animals. An accurate definition along these lines would achieve full marks. A simple, partial definition – such as 'children brought up by animals' – may be awarded one mark.

- (b) Describe how any two norms may be linked to social values in a society. [4]

One mark for each social norm that is correctly identified (1 × 2) and one mark for satisfactorily linking it to an appropriate social value (1 × 2). Values might include those such as fair play (queuing), privacy (knocking on doors), human life (drink-driving rules, various health and safety norms), material acquisition (hard work/long hours/work punctuality), according respect to the elderly (giving up seats on public transport) etc. Reward should be given for any reasonable example.

- (c) Explain why individuals and groups generally conform to accepted standards of behaviour. [8]

0–4 Answers at this level are likely to make only limited use of relevant sociological concepts and theories. A few common-sense observations about why people are likely to accept social norms and values would be worth 2 or 3 marks. Some attempt to explain the power of socialising agents to promote conformity might be worth 4 marks.

5–8 One way to trigger this band would be to analyse the reasons for conformist social behaviour through a discussion of formal and informal sanctions. Lower in the band, the response may be somewhat descriptive. Higher in the band, the reasons why some people may generally conform to accepted patterns of behaviour will be made explicit.

- (d) 'The role played by socialisation in shaping human behaviour has been overstated.' Assess this claim. [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, answers may be 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, or perhaps by reference to the impact of other socialising agencies.

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. 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 have

overstated the role played by socialisation. This may take the form of a critique of structural theories with their tendency to be over-deterministic. Some reference to secondary agents and their relative importance in the overall socialisation process should feature at this level. Another possible angle to take 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.

Section B

2 'Sociological theories that focus on the structure of society reveal far more than those that emphasise the role played by individual actors.' Explain and assess this claim. [25]

0–6 Answers that are limited to a few simple points about sociological theory would fit the bottom of the band. A marginally better answer at this level would contain a few broadly accurate references to a specific theory or theories, though without sufficient development in the context of the question. Theory in the context of the question refers to the main sociological perspectives, e.g. functionalist, Marxist, feminist, interactionist, post-modernist, etc.

7–12 A descriptive account of a single sociological theory would merit a mark in the lower part of the band. A similar account of more than one theory could reach the top of the band. At this level, there may be little or no attempt to address the specific issue of the relevance of sociological theories for understanding modern industrial societies. An answer that focuses on the positivist versus interpretivist debate, with little or no reference to specific sociological theories, should reach no further than the top of this band.

13–18 At the bottom of the band, answers are likely to be descriptive accounts of two or more sociological theories. However, there must be some attempt to assess the comparative merits of structural and broadly interpretive theories for understanding modern industrial societies in order to justify a mark in this band. The assessment is likely to be very basic at the lower end of the band. At the top of the band, the assessment will be a little more developed, though still limited in range and/or depth.

19–25 At this level, a number of sociological theories will be discussed and an explicit attempt will be made to assess their comparative merits for understanding modern industrial societies. At the bottom of the band, the assessment may be confined to the standard accounts of the strengths and limitations of each theory. Higher in the band, the answer should focus directly on the issue of what each broad approach 'reveals' about modern industrial societies and this may be achieved through, for example, focusing on particular features of modern industrial society and/or by referring to specific sociological studies.

3 Explain and assess the view that the strengths of quantitative research methods outweigh their limitations. [25]

0–6 The distinction between quantitative and qualitative methods may be confused in answers that merit this band. Alternatively, a few simple observations about questionnaires might be worth 5 or 6 marks.

7–12 A descriptive account of the characteristics of one particular quantitative method would trigger the lower part of the band. A descriptive account of two or more methods would reach the upper part of the band. At this level, any assessment of the strengths and/or limitations of quantitative methods will be very limited. Candidates who focus on the

positivist perspective and do not discuss the methods should not reach the top of the band.

- 13–18 A detailed account of the strengths and limitations of one or more quantitative methods would merit a mark in the lower-to-middle part of the band. To go higher, the answer needs to consider the usefulness of the quantitative approach overall and not just focus on the benefits and drawbacks of specific methods. One way of achieving this would be to link the choice of quantitative methods to the positivist perspective and then to consider the merits or otherwise of the scientific approach in sociology. However, the assessment at this level may lack some balance and depth.
- 19–25 Specific quantitative methods will be discussed in detail and conclusions drawn about the value of each method for the sociological researcher. The analysis will be sustained and include an overall view regarding the proposition that strengths outweigh limitations. Sophistication will be demonstrated by good use of relevant concepts, such as reliability and validity, in assessing the merits of quantitative research. Examples from relevant studies may also be used to support key points at the top of the band. Good links will be made to theory and the relevance of the positivist versus interpretivist debate for understanding the reasons why sociologists choose particular research methods.