



National
Qualifications
2025

2025 Sociology

National 5

Question Paper Finalised Marking Instructions

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General marking principles for National 5 Sociology

This information is provided to help you understand the general principles you must apply when marking candidate responses to questions in this paper. These principles must be read in conjunction with the specific marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidate responses.

- (a) Marks for each candidate response must **always** be assigned in line with these general marking principles and the specific marking instructions for this assessment.
- (b) Marking should always be positive. This means that, for each candidate response, marks are accumulated for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding: they are not deducted from a maximum on the basis of errors or omissions.
- (c) If a candidate response does not seem to be covered by either the principles or specific marking instructions, and you are uncertain how to assess it, you must seek guidance from your team leader.
- (d) The term 'or any other acceptable answer' allows for the possible variation in candidate responses. Credit should be given according to the accuracy and relevance of candidates' answers. The skill of using appropriate sociological terminology and relevant use of research evidence is reflected in exemplar responses. However, at this level candidates may be awarded marks where the answer is accurate but expressed in their own words.
- (e) Questions that ask, 'does this . . .?', or ask the candidate to 'name', 'define' or 'give examples' are straightforward questions requiring candidates to recall key points of knowledge or to give examples. The number of marks available for these questions reflects the number of points the candidate needs to make. For example, if one mark is available the candidate needs to give one correct point. If three marks are available, the candidate needs to make three correct key points.
- (f) Questions that ask the candidate to 'describe' require the candidate to apply their sociological knowledge and understanding to make a point and then develop this point by giving further information. For example, if two marks are available you should award a mark for making the main point and a further mark for developing the point by giving additional or related information.
- (g) Questions that ask the candidate to 'use' or 'explain' require the candidate to apply their sociological knowledge and understanding to give more information about the meaning of something, to give reasons or show connections. This may include using appropriate examples, concepts or theories to explain an aspect of sociology. For example, if three marks are available for an 'explain' question, you should award one mark for making a key point of explanation and a further mark for each additional correct key point of explanation. Where a greater number of smaller points are made, you should use your professional judgement about whether or not these add up to the required 'use' or 'application'.
- (h) For credit to be given, points must relate to the question asked. However, within a structured question of, say, two or three parts a candidate may give more information in the first part than is required and inadvertently have given the answer to the second part. In this case you should give credit for any correct information given, whether given in the correct part or not

Marking instructions for each question

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
1.	(a)	This question has a simple describe command. The candidate is required to make a relevant point then expand on this. The candidate has to do this twice .	4	<p>There are up to 2 marks available for each description.</p> <p>Example: One feature of the common-sense approach is that common-sense can be individualistic; this means that it is based on personal experience. (2 marks)</p> <p>Another feature is that common-sense beliefs can be naturalistic. This means that people believe there is a 'natural order' to society. (2 marks)</p> <p>Any other appropriate response.</p>
	(b)	This question has a simple describe command. The candidate is required to make a relevant point then expand on this. The candidate has to do this twice .	4	<p>There are up to 2 marks available for each description.</p> <p>Example: One feature of questionnaires is that they tend to produce quantitative data whereby a researcher poses some set of predetermined questions to an entire group, or sample, of individuals. (2 marks)</p> <p>Another feature of questionnaires is that they can be conducted through mail or through email. (1 mark) This provides a researcher an opportunity to collect data from a large number of participants. (1 mark)</p> <p>Any other appropriate response.</p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
	(c)	This question has a simple describe command. The candidate is required to make a relevant point then expand on this. The candidate has to do this twice .	4	<p>There are up to 2 marks for each description.</p> <p>Example: One advantage of an unstructured interview is that it is respondent led. This should allow respondents to express themselves and explain their views more fully than with structured interviews. (2 marks)</p> <p>Another advantage of unstructured interviews is that the researcher can check the participant's understanding. This means that if an interviewee doesn't understand a question, the interviewer is free to rephrase it, or to ask follow up questions to clarify. (2 marks)</p> <p>Any other appropriate response.</p>
	(d)	Questions that ask candidates to 'explain' require the candidate to give more information about the meaning of something, to give reasons or show connections.	6	<p>There are 3 marks available for each explanation.</p> <p>Participant observation can be overt or covert. Any answer where the candidate gives an advantage or disadvantage which only applies to one or the other, without stating they are referring to overt/covert, cannot be awarded full marks.</p> <p>Example: One advantage of covert participant observation is that it will provide researchers with an intimate look into the conversations, behaviours, and habits of those they are studying. (1 mark) Since researchers study the participants without their knowledge, the observer effect does not interfere with results, improving the chances of receiving accurate and valid data. (2 marks)</p> <p>One disadvantage of using participant observation is that it is very time consuming. The researcher must watch everything the research subjects are doing without knowing if it will be useful to the research topic. The researcher cannot influence the subjects and so must observe what is happening regardless of what that is. (3 marks)</p> <p>Any other appropriate response.</p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
	(e)	This question has a simple describe command. The candidate is required to make a relevant point then expand on this. The candidate has to do this three times.	6	<p>Candidates may refer to specific theories in their answer. There are 2 marks available for each description.</p> <p>Example: One feature of the structural perspective is that it emphasizes the power of society over the individual and believes that human behaviour is largely controlled by society. (2 marks)</p> <p>Another feature of the structural perspective is that norms and values are gained through socialisation, which acts as a form of social control. (1 mark) This models the individual's thoughts and guides their actions. (1 mark)</p> <p>Another feature of the structural perspective is that consensus theories such as functionalism believe that the cooperation between different social institutions forms the basis of social life. (1 mark) This cooperation is formed due to a general agreement on the norms and values of society. (1 mark)</p> <p>Any other appropriate response.</p>
	(f)	Questions that ask candidates to 'explain' require the candidate to give more information about the meaning of something, to give reasons or show connections.	6	<p>Candidates may refer to specific theories in their answer. Marks can be awarded in a number of ways.</p> <p>Example: Action theories focus on individual behaviour in everyday social situations. (1 mark) This is a bottom-up approach, looking at meanings and interpretations of actions. (1 mark) People are driven by their beliefs, meaning and emotions given to their situation. (1 mark) According to action theories, individuals have free will, and form their own identities. This means that society, social structures and institutions are socially constructed. (2 marks) For example, Symbolic interactionism focuses on how we create the world through our interactions. (1 mark)</p> <p>Any other appropriate response.</p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
2.	(a)	Questions that ask candidates to 'explain' require the candidate to give more information about the meaning of something, to give reasons or show connections.	8	<p>Candidates may be awarded up to 3 marks for an explanation.</p> <p>Example: One way norms are passed on is during primary socialisation when parents teach children how to eat 'properly'. (1 mark) If the cultural norm is to eat with a knife and fork, then parents will show children how to do this and tell them when they are getting it 'wrong'. (1 mark) In the UK, this will be using a knife and fork together throughout a meal, whereas in North America the norm is to cut everything up first and then eat with just the fork. (1 mark)</p> <p>A way that socialisation can help to pass on rules is through education during secondary socialisation. In schools, there are lots of rules which have to be learned and obeyed, with negative sanctions if broken. (2 marks) For example, being on time and respect for authority teaches children about rules in wider society. (1 mark)</p> <p>During primary socialisation families pass on their values, such as sharing and fairness. During secondary socialisation the media can promote values such as freedom of speech. (2 marks)</p> <p>Any other appropriate response.</p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
	(b)	<p>This question has a simple describe command. The candidate is required to make a relevant point then expand on this.</p> <p>The candidate has to do this three times.</p>	6	<p>There are up to 2 marks available for each description.</p> <p>Example: One feature of the Amish subculture we studied was their clothing. The boys and men wear black suits and broad brimmed hats while the girls and women wear dresses with aprons. (2 marks)</p> <p>Another feature of the Amish subculture is that they do not use cars. They move around in horse-drawn carts. (2 marks)</p> <p>Another feature of the Amish subculture is that they believe in hard work and discipline. (1 mark) They do not agree with anything that might take them away from this, such as drinking and smoking. (1 mark)</p> <p>Any other appropriate response.</p>
	(c)	<p>Questions that ask candidates to 'explain' require the candidate to give more information about the meaning of something, to give reasons or show connections.</p>	6	<p>Marks may be awarded in a number of ways.</p> <p>Example: Diversity is the co-existence of different cultures and subcultures within one society. (1 mark) This means that there is an acceptance of each other's respective traditions (1 mark). Societies which are diverse will be tolerant. (1 mark)</p> <p>Multiculturalism is present in societies which have diversity. (1 mark) This is the notion that a society can accept people from different backgrounds who will both take on some of the dominant culture's norms and values but also retain many of their own traditions. (2 marks)</p> <p>Any other appropriate response.</p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
3.	(a)	This question asks the candidate to explain. It requires the candidate to give more information about the meaning of something, to give reasons or show connection.	4	<p>Marks can be awarded in a number of ways.</p> <p>Candidates are not required to provide examples of research, but these can be credited.</p> <p>Example: Sociological research challenges common-sense assumptions about human behaviour and a range of social issues. (1 mark) In order to do this, sociologists must carry out valid and reliable research to gain a better understanding of human behaviour. (1 mark) The data gathered may be quantitative (numerical/statistical data), it may be qualitative (in-depth, descriptive data), or it may be a combination of both for a more holistic understanding. (2 marks)</p> <p>Any other appropriate response.</p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
	(b)	This question asks the candidate to explain. It requires the candidate to give more information about the meaning of something, to give reasons or show connection.	8	<p>If no structural theory is used, candidates should be awarded a maximum of 5 marks.</p> <p>Example: Feminists argue that, as an agent of secondary socialisation, the education system is used to maintain and support our male dominated (patriarchal) society. (1 mark) Despite the different strands of feminism, they all agree that women are at a disadvantage in the education system. (1 mark) Liberal feminists acknowledge the progress made by females in the education system (the fact that girls are now outperforming boys in exams) but this is not reflected within the workplace. (2 marks)</p> <p>Radical feminists, on the other hand, state that the dominance and violence shown towards girls by boys, in the classroom and playground, is typical of our patriarchal society and until this ceases, equality can never be achieved. (2 marks)</p> <p>Many recent studies show that STEM subjects are still male dominated. Feminists argue that this may be due to the lack of positive female role models in these subjects (teachers delivering the subjects and/or researchers' works studied in class). (2 marks)</p> <p>Any other appropriate response.</p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
	(c) (i)	This question asks the candidate to explain. It requires the candidate to give more information about the meaning of something, to give reasons or show connection.	4	<p>Although candidates are not required to apply sociological theory, this should be accredited appropriately if they do so.</p> <p>Example: Unemployment rates for people with a disability are twice that of a person who does not have a disability. (1 mark) 14 and a half million people had a registered disability in the UK in 2021. This is an increase of 3% in a decade; rising from 19% of the population in 2010 to 22% of the population in 2021. (2 marks) Labelling theorists would argue that disabilities are seen as undesirable characteristics and those with a disability are labelled during the recruitment process. (1 mark)</p> <p>Any other appropriate response.</p>
	(ii)	Describe questions require candidates to make factual points or state characteristics and/or features.	4	<p>Up to 2 marks can be awarded for each description.</p> <p>Example:</p> <p>The Learning and Work Institute found:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • during the COVID 19 pandemic, individuals with a disability have been disproportionately affected by redundancies, with them being one a half times more likely than non-disabled people to leave employment in 2020 (2 marks) • young disabled people (aged 16–24) were the most likely group to suffer from job losses in 2020. This is in line with non-disabled people within this age group, during the pandemic. (2 marks) <p>Any other appropriate response.</p>

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]