

INTERNATIONAL AS **SOCIOLOGY**

SCL1

Unit 1 Introducing Sociology

Mark scheme

Specimen

Version: 1.0 Final

Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from oxfordaqaexams.org.uk

Copyright information

OxfordAQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered schools/colleges for OxfordAQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: OxfordAQA cannot give permission to schools/colleges to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Copyright © 2025 OxfordAQA International Examinations and its licensors. All rights reserved.

Section A
Families

Question	Marking guidance	Total marks
1	Define what is meant by ‘nuclear family’. 2 marks: Accurate and precise definition of a nuclear family, including a clear characteristic, e.g. a family consisting of two parents and their dependent children, living in the same household. 1 mark: Partial or underdeveloped definition, showing some understanding but lacking clarity or detail, e.g. a family with parents and children. 0 marks: No relevant points. Note: this indicative content is not exhaustive. Other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.	2 AO1 = 2

Question	Marking guidance	Total marks
2	Outline one reason for an increase in beanpole families. 2 marks: Clear and accurate outline of a valid reason, including a key detail. 1 mark: Partial or underdeveloped outline, showing some understanding but lacking clarity of detail. 0 marks: No relevant points. Possible answers include: • ageing population (1 mark); people are living longer and so more generations are alive at the same time (+1 mark) • lower birth rates (1 mark); families have fewer children and makes family trees longer and thinner (+1 mark) • improved healthcare (1 mark); better medical treatment means grandparents and great-grandparents live longer (+1 mark) • later childbirth (1 mark); people have children at older ages and so may be fewer siblings but more generations alive (+1 mark) • increased contact through technology (1 mark); families maintain intergenerational ties more easily and may encourage vertical family links (+1 mark) • cultural traditions (1 mark); close ties across multiple generations are valued and maintained in some cultures (+1 mark). Note: this indicative content is not exhaustive. Other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.	2 AO1 = 2

Question	Marking guidance	Total marks
3	Identify and briefly explain two ways in which changes in gender roles may influence family life. 1 mark for each of two ways identified. +1 mark for each way that is briefly explained. Possible answers include: • women are more likely to work full-time (1 mark); this has led to the increase in dual earner families where both parents contribute to household income (+ 1 mark) • decline in the traditional housewife role (1 mark); men are more likely to take on domestic responsibilities which lead to more symmetrical families (+ 1 mark) • rise of feminism and changing gender expectations (1 mark); more egalitarian relationships with decision making becoming more shared (+ 1 mark) • delaying childbirth and prioritising of careers (1 mark); family sizes are often smaller and couples may choose to cohabit longer before marriage (+ 1 mark) • more stay at home fathers (1 mark); some men take on the primary caregiving role which shifts traditional gender expectations (+1 mark). 0 marks: No relevant points. Note: this indicative content is not exhaustive. Other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.	4 AO1 = 2 AO3 = 2

Question	Marking guidance	Total marks
4	Identify and briefly explain two ways in which migration may affect family structures. 1 marks for each of two ways identified. +1 mark for each way that is briefly explained. Possible answers include: • growth in transnational families (1 mark); family members may live in different countries but maintain close ties (+1 mark) • increase in extended families (1 mark); migrants may live with relatives for financial or practical support (+1 mark) • cultural diversity in family forms (1 mark); migration introduces different cultural traditions and family arrangements (+1 mark) • changes in gender roles (1 mark); migration may alter traditional roles within families due to different employment opportunities (+ 1 mark) • remittance-supported households (1 mark); one or more members may migrate for work while others remain behind (+ 1 mark) • temporary separation of families (1 mark); one or more members may migrate for work while others remain behind (+1 mark). 0 marks: No relevant points. Note: this indicative content is not exhaustive. Other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.	4 AO1 = 2 AO3 = 2

Question	Marking guidance	Total marks																		
5	Explain the Marxist view on the role of the family in contemporary society. <table border="1" data-bbox="284 443 1193 1440"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="292 454 387 499">Level</th><th data-bbox="387 454 507 499">Marks</th><th data-bbox="507 454 1185 499">Level descriptors</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="292 499 387 712">4</td><td data-bbox="387 499 507 712">7-8</td><td data-bbox="507 499 1185 712">Comprehensive and detailed knowledge of the issue in the question, showing clear understanding of key concepts (AO1). Well-developed analysis which is supported and directed to the issue in the question (AO3).</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="292 712 387 958">3</td><td data-bbox="387 712 507 958">5-6</td><td data-bbox="507 712 1185 958">Reasonable knowledge of the issue in the question, showing some understanding of key concepts but lacking clarity of detail or depth in places (AO1). Relevant analysis, but not fully developed or lacking depth in places (AO3).</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="292 958 387 1171">2</td><td data-bbox="387 958 507 1171">3-4</td><td data-bbox="507 958 1185 1171">Some knowledge of the issue in the question, showing limited depth. May state or identify key concepts with little development (AO1). Some attempt at analysis, but it may be vague or generalised (AO3).</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="292 1171 387 1350">1</td><td data-bbox="387 1171 507 1350">1-2</td><td data-bbox="507 1171 1185 1350">Limited knowledge, with minimal reference to the issue in the question or understanding of key concepts (AO1). Little or no analysis (AO3).</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="292 1350 387 1440"></td><td data-bbox="387 1350 507 1440">0</td><td data-bbox="507 1350 1185 1440">No relevant knowledge, understanding or analysis.</td></tr> </tbody> </table> Possible answers include: - the family serves the needs of capitalism by socialising children into ruling class ideology; e.g. teaching respect for authority and acceptance of inequality through parental discipline - inheritance of property ensures wealth remains within the bourgeoisie, reproducing class inequality; e.g. housing wealth being passed down to children, keeping property ownership concentrated in wealthier families - the family acts as a unit of consumption, encouraged in consumerism to benefit capitalist profits; e.g. parents buying the latest smartphones, games, or branded clothing for their children due to peer power - the family provides emotional support for workers, helping them cope with the exploitation of capitalism (Zaretsky); e.g. home as a 'haven' after a stressful day in low paid or insecure work - reproduction of labour power ensures the next generation of workers is maintained for the capitalist system; e.g., through parents caring for and educating children to prepare them for the workforce	Level	Marks	Level descriptors	4	7-8	Comprehensive and detailed knowledge of the issue in the question, showing clear understanding of key concepts (AO1). Well-developed analysis which is supported and directed to the issue in the question (AO3).	3	5-6	Reasonable knowledge of the issue in the question, showing some understanding of key concepts but lacking clarity of detail or depth in places (AO1). Relevant analysis, but not fully developed or lacking depth in places (AO3).	2	3-4	Some knowledge of the issue in the question, showing limited depth. May state or identify key concepts with little development (AO1). Some attempt at analysis, but it may be vague or generalised (AO3).	1	1-2	Limited knowledge, with minimal reference to the issue in the question or understanding of key concepts (AO1). Little or no analysis (AO3).		0	No relevant knowledge, understanding or analysis.	8 AO1 = 4 AO3 = 4
Level	Marks	Level descriptors																		
4	7-8	Comprehensive and detailed knowledge of the issue in the question, showing clear understanding of key concepts (AO1). Well-developed analysis which is supported and directed to the issue in the question (AO3).																		
3	5-6	Reasonable knowledge of the issue in the question, showing some understanding of key concepts but lacking clarity of detail or depth in places (AO1). Relevant analysis, but not fully developed or lacking depth in places (AO3).																		
2	3-4	Some knowledge of the issue in the question, showing limited depth. May state or identify key concepts with little development (AO1). Some attempt at analysis, but it may be vague or generalised (AO3).																		
1	1-2	Limited knowledge, with minimal reference to the issue in the question or understanding of key concepts (AO1). Little or no analysis (AO3).																		
	0	No relevant knowledge, understanding or analysis.																		

	the family reinforces patriarchal structures benefiting capitalism through unpaid domestic labour (Engels, Marxist feminists); e.g. women taking on the bulk of housework and childcare, allowing men to work longer hours in paid employment. Note: this indicative content is not exhaustive. Other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.	
--	---	--

Question	Marking guidance			Total marks
6	Evaluate the impact of family diversity on society. In your answer, use examples drawn from your society or any society you know about.			20 AO1 = 6 AO2 = 7 AO3 = 7
	Level	Marks	Marking criteria	
	4	16-20	Comprehensive and detailed knowledge and understanding of sociological theories, studies, concepts and/or perspectives (AO1). Well-developed application and interpretation of societal examples. Clear and consistent links are made to the question and supported (AO2). Critical and sustained evaluation with strong analysis of perspectives and effective comparison of arguments, leading to well-reasoned and justified judgements (AO3).	
	3	11-15	Reasonable knowledge and understanding of sociological theories, studies, concepts and/or perspectives, covering most key ideas in good depth (AO1). Relevant application and interpretation with good use of societal examples, though some points may lack depth, precision or direct links to the question (AO2). Mostly developed evaluation and analysis, considering multiple viewpoints. Evaluation may show less depth or support in places, leading to judgements that may show imbalance (AO3).	
	2	6-10	Some knowledge and understanding of sociological theories, studies, concepts and/or perspectives, showing some depth (AO1). Some relevant application and interpretation, with some use of societal examples to support points which may be brief or only partially developed (AO2). Evaluation and analysis are attempted but lack depth, balance, or a strong argument (AO3).	
	1	1-5	Limited knowledge and understanding of sociological theories, studies, concepts and/or perspectives (AO1). Limited application and interpretation. Little to no use of relevant societal examples to support points which may be vague or generalised (AO2). Little to no evaluation and/or analysis. Mostly descriptive, with little critical assessment or exploration of alternative perspectives (AO3).	
	0	0	Nothing worthy of credit	

	Possible answers include: • greater equality in households; e.g. in some countries, same-sex couples or dual-earner households share domestic work more equally; however, traditional gender roles often persist, limiting equality • more choice and personal freedom; e.g. individuals may choose to cohabit, marry later, or remain child-free; critics suggest too much choice can weaken shared norms and traditions • economic challenges for some family types; e.g. lone-parent households in many countries may rely on extended family or government assistance; functionalist views might see this as creating strain on societal resources • increased cultural variety in family life; e.g. migration and globalisation have introduced multi-generational households and diverse marriage practices; this can enrich cultural life but also cause intergenerational or cultural tensions • changes in child socialisation; e.g. children in blended families may adjust to step-siblings and new parenting styles; some argue this can cause instability, while others see it as building adaptability and wider social skills • stronger intergenerational support networks; e.g. grandparents providing childcare or adult children caring for ageing parents; this can strengthen family bonds but may place pressure on older generations. Note: this indicative content is not exhaustive. Other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.	
--	---	--

Section B

Research methods

Question	Marking guidance	Total marks
7	Define what is meant by ‘official statistics’. 2 marks: Accurate and precise definition of official statistics, including a clear characteristic, e.g. numerical data collected and published by government or official agencies, such as crime rates or census data. 1 mark: Partial or underdeveloped definition, showing some understanding but lacking clarity or detail; e.g. information collected by the government. 0 marks: No relevant points. Note: this indicative content is not exhaustive. Other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.	2 AO1 = 2

Question	Marking guidance	Total marks
8	Define what is meant by ‘sampling population’ in sociological research. 2 marks: Accurate and precise definition of sampling population, including a clear characteristic, e.g. the complete group of people relevant to a sociological study, such as all students in a school being studied. 1 mark: Partial or underdeveloped definition, showing some understanding but lacking clarity or detail; e.g. people being studied. 0 marks: No relevant points. Note: this indicative content is not exhaustive. Other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.	2 AO1 = 2

Question	Marking guidance	Total marks
9	Identify and briefly explain two reasons why sociologists use samples in their research. 2 marks for each of two reasons identified. +1 mark for each reason that is briefly explained. Possible answers include: - researchers lack the funds to contact all members of a research population (1 mark); therefore they often have to contact a much smaller group (+1 mark) - researchers lack to time to contact all members of a research population (1 mark); this restricts the number of members of a sample they can contact (+1 mark) - positivists prefer to use samples (1 mark); they seek the representativeness provided by a sample (+1 mark) - a representative sample allows researchers to make generalisations (1 mark); this allows them to create cause and effect claims (+1 mark). Note: this indicative content is not exhaustive. Other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.	4 AO1 = 2 AO3 = 2

Question	Marking guidance	Total marks
10	Identify and briefly explain two disadvantages of mailing questionnaires to potential research subjects. 2 marks for each of two disadvantages identified. +1 mark for each disadvantage that is briefly explained. Possible answers include: - the researcher does not know who actually completed the questionnaire (1 mark); this may distort the returned sample (+1 mark) - not all potential respondents have a permanent land address (1 mark); excludes some groups e.g. homeless from the sample (+1 mark) - can have a very low responses rate (1 mark); respondents may view the questionnaire as junk mail (+1 mark) - lack of personal interaction (1 mark); limits feedback (+1 mark) - no researcher control over who returns the questionnaire (1 mark); leads to self-selection bias (+ 1 mark). Note: this indicative content is not exhaustive. Other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.	4 AO1 = 2 AO3 = 2

Question	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
11	1	Describe one pattern or trend shown in Item 1. 2 marks: Accurate and precise description of one clear pattern or trend in the data, including a supporting detail, e.g. the average daily hours spent using mobile devices in the USA has increased substantially between 2008 and 2018, rising from less than 1 hour per day to over 3.5 hours per day. 1 mark: Partial or undeveloped description, showing some understanding but lacking clarity of detail; e.g. mobile phone use has increased. 0 marks: No relevant points. Note: this indicative content is not exhaustive. Other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.	2 AO2 = 2

Question	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
11	2	Suggest one reason for the pattern or trend you have identified. 2 marks: Appropriate and precise reason for the identified pattern or trend, including a clear supporting detail, e.g. mobile phones have become cheaper and more widely available, making them accessible to a larger proportion of the population. 1 mark: Partial or undeveloped reason, showing some understanding but lacking clarity or detail; e.g. more people can afford mobile phones. 0 marks: No relevant points. Note: this indicative content is not exhaustive. Other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.	2 AO2 = 2

Question	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
11	3	Identify one limitation of the data in Item 1. 2 marks: Accurate and precise identification of one limitation of the data, including a clear example or detail, e.g. the data only shows patterns for the USA, so it cannot be generalised to other countries with different technology access or usage habits. 1 mark: Partial or undeveloped identification, showing some understanding but lacking clarity or detail; e.g. it is only about the USA. 0 marks: No relevant points. Note: this indicative content is not exhaustive. Other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.	2 AO2 = 2

Question	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
11	4	Suggest one reason for this limitation. 2 marks: Accurate and precise identification of one reason for the identified limitation, including a clear supporting detail, e.g. the USA may have higher levels of income and infrastructure than many other countries, so companies collect and report detailed national data that may not be available elsewhere. 1 mark: Partial or undeveloped explanation, showing some understanding but lacking clarity or detail; e.g. the USA is richer than other countries. 0 marks: No relevant points. Note: this indicative content is not exhaustive. Other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.	2 AO2 = 2