

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

GCE Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced Level

MARK SCHEME for the June 2005 question paper

9699 SOCIOLOGY

9699/01

**Paper 1 (Principles and Methods 1),
maximum raw mark 50**

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. This shows the basis on which Examiners were initially instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began. Any substantial changes to the mark scheme that arose from these discussions will be recorded in the published *Report on the Examination*.

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 discussion or correspondence in connection with these mark schemes.

CIE is publishing the mark schemes for the June 2005 question papers for most IGCSE and GCE Advanced Level and Advanced Subsidiary Level syllabuses and some Ordinary Level syllabuses.



Grade thresholds for Syllabus 9699 (Sociology) in the June 2005 examination.

	maximum mark available	minimum mark required for grade:		
		A	B	E
Component 1	50	38	34	26

The thresholds (minimum marks) for Grades C and D are normally set by dividing the mark range between the B and the E thresholds into three. For example, if the difference between the B and the E threshold is 24 marks, the C threshold is set 8 marks below the B threshold and the D threshold is set another 8 marks down. If dividing the interval by three results in a fraction of a mark, then the threshold is normally rounded down.

June 2005

GCE AS/A LEVEL

MARK SCHEME

MAXIMUM MARK: 50

SYLLABUS/COMPONENT: 9699/01

SOCIOLOGY

Principles and Methods 1



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Section A

- 1** 0-6 At this level we should expect just a few simple points demonstrating some awareness of Marxist theory, but probably without any attempt to address the analytical part of the question.
- 7-12 A basic account of the main features of Marxist theory will feature in this band. At the higher end, this may be supplemented by, for example, references to other theoretical perspectives and/or basic recognition that there are different strands to Marxist theory. The overall response at this level will be distinguished by being descriptive rather than analytical.
- 13-18 A sound account of Marxist theory will be provided and there will be a basic attempt to assess its relevance for understanding modern societies. The assessment may be developed in various ways including, for example, through consideration of relevant empirical studies and/or references to contrasting theories such as those associated with Weberian, feminist and post-modernist thinkers. Contrasts with functionalist theory may have some value, but this approach is likely to be rather uninspiring in relation to the question. At the higher end of the band, look for developments such as consideration of different strands of Marxist theory and/or some nascent recognition of the complexity of the issues addressed.
- 19-25 Answers at this level will demonstrate a good understanding of Marxist theory and make a concerted and well-informed attempt to assess its relevance for understanding modern societies. Within reason, we should not be too prescriptive about how 'modern societies' is defined by the candidate, and the analysis need not be confined to Western industrial societies. At the lower end of the band, the assessment may rely heavily on identifying general weaknesses and/or strengths with Marxist theory. Higher in the band the focus will be on specific points about the relevance of that theory for understanding modern societies, albeit that this may be conveyed through theoretical debates rather than by reference to relevant empirical material.
- 2** 0-6 A few limited points broadly demonstrating an understanding of the positivist position will feature here. There will be no attempt to address the analytical issues raised by the question and any relevant descriptive points made will lack development.
- 7-12 Answers will demonstrate a basic understanding of the methods of the natural sciences and the position advanced by the positivists in the debate about sociological method. Higher in the band there may be some attempt to contrast the positivist position with the interpretivist perspective, though this will be at a rather elementary level. Answers that focus on a critique of the methods used in natural science, without relating the discussion to sociological enquiry specifically, are unlikely to merit more than 12 marks.
- 13-18 Answers at this level will demonstrate a sound understanding of both the positivist and anti-positivist positions. Lower in the band the response will still largely be descriptive and few, if any, clear conclusions will emerge. Higher in the band the assessment will, to some extent, be explicit and basic arguments for and/or against the proposition in the question will be advanced.
- 19-25 The answer will be based on a good understanding of the positivist and anti-positivist positions, and the assessment will be explicit and well developed. Lower in the band the range of analytical points may be confined to the conventional positivist versus interpretivist debate. Higher in the band, a wider range of points may feature, including possibly references to one or more of the following: the post-modernist perspective, the feminist critique of positivism, and debates about the role of values in sociology.

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Section B

- 3** 0-6 At this level we may anticipate a few basic points about participant observation studies with little or no reference to the question as set.
- 7-12 A sound account of participant observation as a research method, with little or no attempt to address the specific issues raised by the question, would merit the lower part of the band. Higher in the band, there will be an attempt, albeit limited, to explain the references to 'validity' and 'ethical and practical problems' in the question.
- 13-18 Answers will demonstrate a good understanding of participant observation and there will be a sound explanation of the claim made in the stem about being high in validity, but giving rise to ethical and practical problems. Lower in the band the response will be descriptive primarily, though there will be some attempt to add an assessment. Higher in the band there will be a concerted attempt to assess the statement in the stem, though it may lack some sharpness and sophistication.
- 19-25 Building on a good understanding of participant observation, the statement in the stem will be explained accurately with ample illustration. There will also be a well-focused assessment of the issues raised by the question. This may occur within the context of a general assessment of participant observation studies, though links with the key terms in the question should be made explicitly. At the top of the band, some extra sophistication will be demonstrated by, for example, demonstrating the relevance of the distinction between covert and overt participant observation for the question, and/or illustrating the complexity in applying the concept of validity in practice.
- 4** 0-6 A few disparate points about official statistics is what we might expect at this level. There will be no assessment as such, and any links to the usefulness of official statistics *in sociological research* are likely to be rudimentary at best.
- 7-12 At this level the response is likely to be descriptive, possibly focused on an account of Durkheim's use of official statistics in his study of suicide. A few advantages and limitations will be covered in passing, but there will be little or nothing in the way of assessment. Higher in the band, a wider range of relevant points will be offered and/or better use made of examples to illustrate the different uses of official statistics in sociological research.
- 13-18 A range of advantages and limitations will be identified, though not necessarily with equal treatment. Lower in the band the assessment may lack theoretical sophistication and perhaps focus mainly on practical advantages and limitations. Higher in the band there will be some theoretical input, whether through discussing concepts such as reliability and validity, and/or by linking the question to the wider debates between positivists and interpretivists.
- 19-25 Answers will demonstrate a good understanding of the advantages and limitations of using official statistics in sociological research. A range of practical and theoretical points will be covered, possibly supported with well-chosen references to relevant studies. Lower in the band the assessment may lack some sharpness and detail, and these deficiencies will be less evident higher in the band. Highly rewarded answers should also feature balanced, well-reasoned conclusions about the overall merit or otherwise of using official statistics in sociological research.

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Section C

- 5** 0-6 An answer based on a few commonsense observations with little or no sociological backing may feature here.
- 7-12 Answers at this level will be mostly descriptive, perhaps identifying some of the changes that may have led to a reduction in the inequality women face in society and/or describing evidence of continuing inequality. Higher in the band, the range of evidence and points covered will be greater, though still with little or no assessment offered.
- 13-18 A sound account of the arguments and evidence for and/or against the view expressed in the stem will be a feature of answers at this level. There will also be some assessment, though this may be by simple juxtaposition of evidence and arguments at the lower end of the band especially. While a theoretical discussion of the issues is not essential, it would add a valuable dimension to the answer, especially if based on a sound understanding of different strands of feminist theory. Post-modernist ideas could also be used very well in answering the question.
- 19-25 Answers will demonstrate a good understanding of the issues raised by the question. A range of evidence and arguments will be used accurately to assess the view expressed in the stem. While a strong case for or against the view, if well supported by appropriate sociological material, could trigger this band, it is more likely that answers at this level will offer a balanced assessment that recognises the limitations in drawing any definitive conclusions about the state of gender relations in modern societies today. Features of answers that might merit the top of the band include, for example, analysis of relevant differences in the social position of different groups of women, good use of theory alongside empirical evidence, and/or engagement with the post-modernist critique of feminist theory.
- 6** 0-6 At this level we may anticipate a few basic points about racial discrimination with little or no reference to appropriate sociological explanations.
- 7-12 A basic descriptive account of one or more relevant explanations of racial discrimination will feature here. Explanations may cover, for example, cultural/historical factors, the structure of the labour market, Marxist analysis, the impact of nationalism, and the various debates about the existence of an underclass. Candidates who can describe two or more of these explanations reasonably well should be placed at the top of the band.
- 13-18 Two or more relevant explanations will be described accurately and there will also be an attempt to assess their usefulness in explaining racial discrimination. Lower in the band the range of explanations will be more limited and/or the assessment will be mainly by juxtaposition. Higher in the band, the assessment will be explicit to some extent, though perhaps lacking depth and sharpness.
- 19-25 Answers will demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of a range of explanations. This may be supported by references to relevant studies and/or analysis of what is meant by racial discrimination. Simple conclusions will be avoided and the assessment will be detailed and sustained, especially at the top of the band. Candidates who use post-modernist contributions to highlight the limitations in earlier sociological accounts of racial discrimination are likely to feature high in the band.