

Commentary on candidate evidence

The candidate evidence has achieved the following marks for each question of this course assessment component.

Candidate 1

Social issues essay

Introduction

Introduction and/or definition of sociological concepts/conclusions can be awarded up to 4 marks. These marks can appear anywhere in the candidate's response.

The candidate was awarded **0 marks** because no introductory remarks are made by the candidate. This would be recorded as 'No Response'

Study

7 marks can be awarded for analysis of social mobility based on findings or evaluation of a relevant study of social mobility.

The candidate was awarded **5 marks** as follows:

Line 1-3 has one finding: 'One finding of this study is that rates of social mobility were much lower in the UK than in other comparable countries such as the USA or Germany. **(1 mark)**

Line 4-5 has one finding: 'A second finding...is that intergenerational social mobility has fallen over time in Britain'. **(1 mark)**

Line 8-9 has one finding: 'A third finding...is that the link between association to parental background was much stronger during the second cohort in the 1980s than the first cohort in the 1970s. **(1 mark)**

Line 9-12 has a further developed point about this finding: 'This shows there has been an increase in social inequality and child poverty coinciding with a decrease in social mobility, so now people are more likely to achieve a similar income to their parents income'. **(1 mark)**

No marks awarded for the strength given (lines 13-15) and weaknesses given (lines 16-19 and lines 20-23) as these are too generic and are not accurate evaluations of the study. **(0 marks)**

One study evaluation mark was awarded for the correct weakness given, line 24-27 'comparisons between countries may be invalid...as the research was conducted at a different time in a different way, meaning comparisons are not valid'. **(1 mark)**

Theory 1 – Marxism

Candidates can be awarded up to 14 marks for comparing **two theories**. Up to 7 marks for each theory. Points should relate to the theories approach to social mobility.

The candidate was awarded **7 marks** for first theory, Marxism as follows:

Line 29-34 'One feature of Marxism linked to social mobility.... very hard for Proletariat students'. **(1 mark)**

Line 37-41 'people who are born into a wealthy family ...work experience making social mobility near impossible'. **(1 mark)**

Line 44-46 'Proletariat workers would get sick of being exploited... creating a classless society where social mobility is highly possible'. **(1 mark)**

Line 47-50 'One strength of Marxism linked to social mobility is that social class does seem to be ascribed and fixed.... wealthy people are born into wealth and did not have to earn it'. **(1 mark)**

Line 51-56 'One weakness of Marxism linked to social mobility is a Weber criticism...class is achieved not ascribed... people can achieve social mobility....to improve their social class...it is possible to improve your status and party'. **(1 mark)**

Line 57-59 'Another weakness... is a Feminist criticism... social mobility is harder for women than men due to the glass ceiling'. **(1 mark)**

Line 61-68 'Another weakness of Marxism linked to social mobility is that class revolution did not happen....people did not try to overthrow the government in order to promote a classless society where social mobility was easily achievable, this highlights that....in countries such as Poland have reverted from Communist governments to Capitalist based governments meaning Marxist values clearly do not work and social class inequality may not be a bad thing'. **(1 mark)**

The candidate could have been awarded additional marks for this first theory, exceeding requirements for full 7/7 marks for a single theory.

The following points could have earned additional marks but were not because a candidate cannot be credited more than 7 marks for a single theory, even if the candidate does not meet requirements for full marks for the second theory discussed in this question. Additional marks from extended response exceeding requirements for full marks for one theory cannot be 'allocated' as marks for a lower scoring second theory.

Line 33-34 'bourgeoisie students can afford tutors... boosting their educational success over proletariat pupils, making social mobility very hard for proletariat students'.

Line 41-42 'likewise, proletariat children are unable to adjust their social class...restricted to a similar job as their proletariat parents'.

Line 59-60 'the highest paid jobs even in female dominated institutions (industries) are still controlled by men'.

Candidate therefore exceeds requirements for maximum marks for a single theory.

Theory 2 – Functionalism

The candidate was awarded **5 marks** for second theory, Functionalism as follows:

Line 70-73 'One feature of Functionalism linked to social mobility is you can achieve social mobility through meritocracy. This means...improving your pay and achieving social mobility to a higher social class as a result'. **(1 mark)**

Line 75-78 '...functionalists believe there is a general agreement ...about what is worth achieving, meaning people can influence their social class by conforming to this consensus and achieving higher, therefore leading to upwards social mobility'. **(1 mark)**

Line 80-84 '...in order for society to function we need people to do the low paid jobs in our world as well as the highly paid and highly skilled jobs, this means that upwards social mobility is not always needed or a good thing as vitally required jobs such as cleaners....need people with a low social class to operate them for the smooth running of our society'. **(1 mark)**

Line 86-89 'One weakness of Functionalism...is a feminist criticism...social mobility is harder for women than men despite meritocracy and working harder...women will always be disadvantaged to men no matter how much they work'. **(1 mark)**

Line 91-94 'Another weakness of Functionalism...not everybody agrees on what is worth achieving in society, as people will want different levels of income'. **(1 mark)**

Overall a total of 17 marks were awarded.

Candidate 2

Culture and identity essay

Introduction

Introduction and/or definition of sociological concepts/conclusions can be awarded up to 4 marks. These marks can appear anywhere in the candidate's response.

The candidate was awarded **4 marks** as follows:

Line 4-7 'One way primary socialisation can influence gender identity is through differing bed times. This means parents will give older children latter bed times than younger students in-order to reinforce there older age identity.' **(1 mark)**

Line 7-9 'One way secondary socialisation influences gender identity is through the advertising of toys. This means the media advertises toys such as kitchens or building sets to a specific gender to try to influence there future identity' **(1 mark)**

Further 'intro' marks are awarded in the concluding remarks at the end of the response:

Line 122-126 '...age identity is also affected as the media emphasises the importance of young / youth and the unacceptable old/ elderly – this puts pressure on women to buy products to look younger to fit this 'accepted' younger identity. Older actresses often find a lack of work once they get older.' **(1 mark)**

Line 126-128 'Research which shows continuing unacceptable treatment of women such as sexual assaults, domestic violence, rape and female genital mutilation, happen as a result of society influencing negative female gender identity stereotypes.' **(1 mark)**

Study

Up to **7 marks** can be awarded for analysis of identity based on findings or evaluation of a relevant study.

The candidate was awarded **7 marks** as follows:

Lines 13-16 'One finding of this study is that there were 1300 incidents of sexism in newspapers analysed, over a 2 week period. This shows the extent to which negative sexist gender stereotypes through the media will influence female identity as women are misrepresented in the media.' **(1 mark)**

Lines 17-19 'A further finding of this study is that tabloids objectified women in an extreme way. The media used images of women that focused on women's appearance and comments were about how women did or did not conform to 'feminine' behaviour.' **(1 mark)**

Lines 19-22 contains a further analytical point related to the impact of above finding 'This shows the media could negatively impact on girls' and women's gender identity through restricting their career choices and aspirations if they feel they must conform to outdated gender stereotypes in job choices.' **(1 mark)**

Lines 23-26 'Another finding of the just the women study is that photographs and coverage of women focused on there looks and their femininity. Objectification of women presented women as sex object in the newspapers, but this would not be permitted in the workplace due to equality laws, or even on broadcast TV media'. **(1 mark)**

Lines 26-30 contains a further analytical point related to the impact of above finding. This shows that female identity is negatively influenced by the media in society. This also shows that the newspapers see a women's identity as her attractiveness, appearance, her appeal to men instead of any of her other achievements and intelligence, and the media tries to influence female identity to focus more on their appearance. **(1 mark)**

Lines 31-32 'A final finding of this study was that the newspapers often covered stories about sexual assaults or rapes against women in a glamorous erotic way.'

(1 mark)

Lines 32-35 contains a further analytical point related to the impact of above finding 'The impact of this on female gender identity is that sexual violence against women is acceptable and normalised, and this could affect decisions by members of the jury in rape trials if they think these crimes are acceptable.' **(1 mark)**

Lines 36-39 contains an explained strength of the study. 'One strength of the just the women study is that it used multiple newspapers. This is more accurate as it provides an overall picture of the representation of the extent of gender stereotypes impacting on female identity across multiple different newspapers so more valid conclusions can be drawn about how media influences gender identity.' **(1 mark)**

Line 40-45 contains a further explained strength of the study 'One strength of the just the women study is that it used multiple newspapers. This is more accurate as it provides an overall picture of the representation of the extent of gender stereotypes impacting on female identity across multiple different newspapers so more valid conclusions can be drawn about how media influences gender identity.' **(1 mark)**

Line 51-54 contains an explained criticism/weakness of the study 'A weakness of the study is that the content analysis only covered newspapers. Much sexist content and negative gender stereotypes appears online, through influencers such as Andrew Tate. The study unfortunately did not look at how much sexist online media content there was and how this might influence female gender identity.' **(1 mark)**

Candidate exceeds requirements for maximum study marks. Note: additional marks for a 'study' section of a response cannot be 're-allocated' as theory marks, though could be considered 'introductory' marks, depending on the content. In this case, the candidate has already been awarded 4 introduction marks.

Candidates can be awarded up to 14 marks for comparing two theories. Up to 7 marks for each theory. Points should relate to the theories approach to the formation of identity.

Theory 1 – Symbolic interactionism/labelling

The candidate was awarded **7 marks** as follows:

Lines 56-61 'One theory used to explain the formation of identity is Symbolic Interactionism theory. One key feature of symbolic interactionism is significant others. This means we can change our behaviour based on others' reactions to our actions. For example, if a woman acts in a masculine way and this is met with disapproving comments from men and women, she might change her behaviour and act more feminine to 'fit in' with social expectation of her female identity' **(1 mark)**

Lines 61-62 links the theory to the study used, so is awarded a further mark.

'The Just The Women study supports this theory claim, as the media criticised women who were not acting 'feminine' enough like Angela Merkel.' **(1 mark)**

Lines 63-68 'Another key feature of Symbolic Interactionism is dramaturgical model. A woman might have a front stage where she acts all feminine and wears feminine clothes to be given approval in public but also has a back stage where she really is a tomboy and wants to act and dress masculine, but does not do this openly in public to avoid negative comments. We can therefore be seen to be able to adjust our behaviour and gender identity, in response to others' reactions.' **(1 mark)**

Line 69-73 'A further key feature of Symbolic Interactionism is Labelling. This explanation suggests that people label others' behaviour and this label is internalised and acted up to in order to fulfil the label prophecy. However, with women being 'labelled' by the media as sex objects, as in the JTW study, this label is rejected by many women who wish to show they are important for their achievements not just for their beauty'. **(1 mark)**

Lines 73-76 contains exemplification and analysis, is awarded a further 'developed point' mark. 'So the 'Never mind Brexit, here's Legsit' media story talking about Sturgeon and May's legs not their Political decisions, will encourage women to reject this 'beauty' label and be determined to show female gender identity should be more about achievements of women.' **(1 mark)**

Lines 77-81 'Another disadvantage of symbolic interaction explanations of gender identity is that it does not acknowledge the patriarchy. This means it fails to consider the effects of having male run institutions such as the media that males benefit from such as men newspaper owners deciding to display women in sexualised ways which badly influences attitudes towards women and on the formation of female gender identity.' **(1 mark)**

Lines 82-86 'Another weakness of symbolic interactionism explanations of gender identity, is from Marxism. This theory would highlight that the media is used to promote ideas about beauty and attractive female identity to women, so that women are encouraged through advertising to buy products to look more attractive, to make profit for owners of the beauty products. This is not discussed in symbolic interactionism theory at all.' **(1 mark)**

Theory 2 – Feminism

The candidate was awarded 7 marks as follows:

Lines 88-92 'A structural theory which explains how society influences female gender identity is Feminist theories. This theory argues that Patriarchal institutions reinforce negative gender stereotypes and disadvantage women by restricting their career aspirations. This helps men to get promoted and discourages women from trying to be successful through achievements and rather to focus on their appearance.' **(1 mark)**

Lines 93-96 'The Just the Women study supports Feminist theory as it highlights how a male dominated media institution eroticises sexual attacks on women. This negatively impacts on female identity by promoting rape culture and this affects how both men and women view rape victims.' **(1 mark)**

A further 'developed point' mark is awarded for analysis/exemplification of the above theory point in lines 96-97 'Feminism as a political movement through #MeToo has highlighted this and raised awareness to challenge abuse of female models and actresses by men like Harvey Weinstein.' **(1 mark)**

Lines 98-101 'Black Feminism would highlight the lack of black female identity examples in media, the vast majority of female actor and models being white. This reinforces a 'white female' identity which is also usually very tall and thin. This does not relate well to many black women so their female gender identity is not common in the mainly white western media.' **(1 mark)**

Lines 106-109 'Feminism has campaigned for change politically, to improve women's gender identity. Campaigning for an end to FGM for example, improves women and girls safety worldwide, and this improves their gender identity as not people who should be victims of this violent behaviour against their Human Rights.' **(1 mark)**

Lines 110-114 'A strength of the Feminist explanations is that media clearly is a male dominated industry and women are displayed in the media by these men, they way men wish to display women. The Dolce and Gabbana advert showing a woman on her back surrounded by five men promotes rape culture, and this shows the media is sexist and does promote dangerous attitudes towards women which affects women and girl identity.' **(1 mark)**

Overall, a total of **24 marks** were awarded.

Candidate 3

Culture and identity essay

Introduction

The candidate was awarded **4 marks** as follows:

Line 1 and 2 'Culture describes the set of norms and values which a group of people in society agree is the shared way of life. This includes music, food, and clothing.' (**1 mark**)

1 mark was awarded for the remarks on learning culture via socialisation on lines 3-5.

Lines 6-7; 'Diversity is the idea that all groups in society are represented equally in all aspects of culture such as films, books and other media.' (**1 mark**)

1 mark was awarded for the comments on UK being a culturally diverse society but that some groups such as minority ethnic groups and women are misrepresented and/or underrepresented in ...'many aspects of culture such as media....' (lines 8-11)

Study

The candidate was awarded **5 marks** as follows:

1 mark was awarded for the accurate finding on line 2-3 of study paragraph. 'Cohen found Media exaggerated the extent of the 'trouble' between the Mods and Rockers...'

A further **1 mark** was awarded on lines 2-5 of study paragraph as candidate elaborated on their point by quoting from the study.

1 mark was awarded for lines 6-9 of study paragraph as the candidate explains Cohen's concept of a moral panic.

1 mark was awarded for the explanation of the role of moral entrepreneurs, line 10-13 of study paragraph.

1 mark was also awarded for the comments on the current day relevancy of the study on lines 13-15 of study paragraph.

Theory 1 – Marxist

The candidate was awarded **7 marks** for the following:

1 mark was awarded in lines 1-2 for stating that Marxists claim that culture is created by the bourgeoisie as they are the dominant group.

A further **1 mark** was awarded in lines 2-4 as the candidate then goes on to explain that the bourgeoisie controls the economy and therefore also controls the institutions of society which put forward ideas about culture.

2 marks were awarded in lines 4-8 for the explanation and examples about High Culture and low culture.

2 marks are awarded in lines 8-11 for the explanation of bourgeois control of cultural Institutions keeping the proletariat in a state of false consciousness and in lines 12-15 for the relevant example from the Sutton Trust.

A further **1 mark** was awarded for the strength of Marxist on lines 16-21 and for the weakness on line 22-23 of the Marxist paragraph.

Please note the response could have elicited more marks but only 7 marks in total were available for this section of the essay.

Theory 2 Symbolic interactionism

The candidate was awarded **5 marks** as follows:

1 mark was awarded for the definition of culture by SI in lines 1-2, 'Symbolic Interactionism claims that culture is made through out interactions with others.'

1 mark was awarded for the explanation of the formation of culture according to social issues on lines 2-9.

A further **1 mark** was awarded in lines 10-12 for the explanation of how cultural norms are made.

2 marks were awarded in lines 13-17 for a weakness of social issues view.

Overall, a total of **21 marks** were awarded.

Candidate 4

Social mobility

Introduction

This candidate was awarded **4 marks** for the following:

1 mark was awarded for line 6-10; the definition of absolute social mobility, ‘...total mobility...’

And relative social mobility, ‘...the mobility of certain classes in comparison to another.’

1 mark was awarded for the definition of intergenerational and intragenerational social mobility on lines 17-19.

1 mark was awarded for the points made in lines 17-19 as the candidate explains that after WW2 there was an increase in social mobility and in lines 20-21 as the candidate further explains about, ‘the welfare state/national health service....’

1 mark was awarded for the developed point that this then, ‘...allowed working class individuals to become middle class’ on lines 27-28.

The candidate exceeds the requirement but could have been credited for the points made about social mobility today on lines 29-32 ‘...social mobility in today’s society is possible but very limited due to austerity/cost of living crisis/inflation + Covid 19 pandemic effect’.

Study

The candidate was awarded **7 marks** for the following:

1 mark for explaining that the study was of 10,000 men on lines 1-5.

1 mark was awarded as the candidate explained that Goldthorpe found increased absolute social mobility in the period after WW2 on lines 10-11 but also commented that the study found that relative social mobility rates were lower in certain classes due to social closure on lines 12-14.

1 mark was awarded for the finding that sons had a greater chance of mobility than their fathers on lines 15-18.

2 marks were awarded for the candidates explanation of Goldthorpes (finding) 1-2-4 rule on line 19 and the explanation of this on lines 21-27.

1 mark was awarded for the candidates criticism of Goldthorpe's study on lines 2-4 by explaining that the study omitted large areas of the UK and women.

1 mark was awarded as the candidate linked the study to Weberian theory and to social closure.

Theory 1 – Functionalism

The candidate was awarded **7 marks** for the following:

1 mark was awarded for the statement on lines 1-3, '...functionalist theory would state that mobility is very possible and achievable in society.'

1 mark was awarded for the candidate's explanation about functionalism and inequalities and **1 mark** for linking inequalities allowing the best people to achieve the top jobs '...inequalities are a positive thing as it promotes competition allowing the best to achieve the top jobs.' On lines 4-7.

1 mark was then awarded for pointing out that, '...education levels the playing field for individuals to have equal opportunities.' on lines 8-10.

1 mark was awarded for explaining about the role of socialisation in forming value consensus to create the illusion that we live in a meritocracy on lines 12-15.

The candidate was awarded a further **1 mark** as they go on to explain in lines 17-19, that 'hard work' and 'determined' motivates us to work hard and become socially mobile.

1 mark was awarded for the candidate's comments in line 20 about the role of the education system and the hidden curriculum in reinforcing, '...to children that hard work pays off...'.

Theory 2 – Weberism

The candidate was awarded **7 marks** for the following:

1 mark is awarded for commenting that Weber claimed mobility is possible but he also identified social closure on lines 1-3.

1 mark is awarded for the candidate's definition of social closure on lines 4-6.

A further **1 mark** is awarded for the explanation of Weber's concept of 'market position', linking it to social mobility '....as individuals' skills and talent could be exchanged for monetary value in the market resulting in increased social mobility.' on lines 7-11.

In lines 21-26 **1 mark** was awarded as the candidate discusses the Weberian concept of Party, as party gives individuals more power and status and therefore can result in increased mobility.

1 mark was also awarded to comments on line 27 linking '.....social/cultural capital...' to social mobility.

2 marks were awarded for the example of social closure (not advertising internships) on lines 29-32 and then further explaining elites protect their jobs for their children on lines 32-35.

Overall, a total of **25 marks** were awarded.