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CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

SOCIOLOGY **9699/33**

Paper 3 Education **May/June 2026**

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 50

Published

This mark scheme contains the instructions and marking guidance that our examiners used to mark candidate responses for this component.

Before they start marking, examiners complete a standardisation process. They review a range of candidate responses and discuss the mark scheme in detail to agree which answers can and cannot be accepted. Examiners award marks where it is clear that candidate responses have met the requirements of the mark scheme. These requirements may vary between different components or different versions of the same component, depending on the exact requirements of the question and the candidate responses seen during the standardisation process.

Sometimes, our mark schemes may allow marks to be awarded to responses which contain elements that are factually incorrect or for content not covered by the syllabus. We do this in response to the demands of a specific question to support candidates and make sure that our assessments are fair. However, these allowances should not be used as a guide for teaching and learning.

We cannot discuss the mark scheme with schools, and we recommend that schools read the mark scheme together with the assessment material and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

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General marking principles

All examiners must apply these marking principles when marking candidate responses.

1	Examiners must award marks for each response in line with: • the specific **content** defined in the mark scheme • the specific **skills** defined in the mark scheme or in the level descriptions • the **standard of response** required as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.
2	Examiners must award **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).
3	Examiners must award marks **positively**. This means that: • marks are not deducted for errors or omissions • marks are awarded for correct/valid answers as defined in the mark scheme and also for **other valid answers** which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme referring to your team leader as appropriate • the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar are judged **only** when the mark scheme indicates that these features are **specifically assessed** in the question. However, the meaning of all responses must be unambiguous.
4	Examiners must **consistently** apply the requirements of the mark scheme and any rules for what to do when candidates have not followed instructions correctly.
5	Examiners must use the **full range of marks** defined in the mark scheme, unless limited by the quality of the candidate responses seen.
6	Examiners must award marks according to the mark scheme and **must not** award marks with grade thresholds or grade descriptions in mind.

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Social Sciences-Specific Marking Principles
(for point-based marking)

1 Components using point-based marking:

- Point marking is often used to reward knowledge, understanding and application of skills. We give credit where the candidate's answer shows relevant knowledge, understanding and application of skills in answering the question. We do not give credit where the answer shows confusion.

From this it follows that we:

a DO credit answers which are worded differently from the mark scheme if they clearly convey the same meaning (unless the mark scheme requires a specific term)
b DO credit alternative answers/examples which are not written in the mark scheme if they are correct
c DO credit answers where candidates give more than one correct answer in one prompt/numbered/scaffolded space where extended writing is required rather than list-type answers. For example, questions that require *n* reasons (e.g. State two reasons …).
d DO NOT credit answers simply for using a 'key term' unless that is all that is required. (Check for evidence it is understood and not used wrongly.)
e DO NOT credit answers which are obviously self-contradicting or trying to cover all possibilities
f DO NOT give further credit for what is effectively repetition of a correct point already credited unless the language itself is being tested. This applies equally to 'mirror statements' (i.e. polluted/not polluted).
g DO NOT require spellings to be correct, unless this is part of the test. However spellings of syllabus terms must allow for clear and unambiguous separation from other syllabus terms with which they may be confused (e.g. corrasion/corrosion)

2 Presentation of mark scheme:

- Slashes (/) or the word 'or' separate alternative ways of making the same point.
- Semi colons (;) bullet points (•) or figures in brackets (1) separate different points.
- Content in the answer column in brackets is for examiner information/context to clarify the marking but is not required to earn the mark (except Accounting syllabuses where they indicate negative numbers).

3 Calculation questions:

- The mark scheme will show the steps in the most likely correct method(s), the mark for each step, the correct answer(s) and the mark for each answer
- If working/explanation is considered essential for full credit, this will be indicated in the question paper and in the mark scheme. In all other instances, the correct answer to a calculation should be given full credit, even if no supporting working is shown.
- Where the candidate uses a valid method which is not covered by the mark scheme, award equivalent marks for reaching equivalent stages.
- Where an answer makes use of a candidate's own incorrect figure from previous working, the 'own figure rule' applies: full marks will be given if a correct and complete method is used. Further guidance will be included in the mark scheme where necessary and any exceptions to this general principle will be noted.

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4 Annotation:

- For point marking, ticks can be used to indicate correct answers and crosses can be used to indicate wrong answers. There is no direct relationship between ticks and marks. Ticks have no defined meaning for levels of response marking.
- For levels of response marking, the level awarded should be annotated on the script.
- Other annotations will be used by examiners as agreed during standardisation, and the meaning will be understood by all examiners who marked that paper.

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Annotations guidance for centres

Examiners use a system of annotations as a shorthand for communicating their marking decisions to one another. Examiners are trained during the standardisation process on how and when to use annotations. The purpose of annotations is to inform the standardisation and monitoring processes and guide the supervising examiners when they are checking the work of examiners within their team. The meaning of annotations and how they are used is specific to each component and is understood by all examiners who mark the component.

We publish annotations in our mark schemes to help centres understand the annotations they may see on copies of scripts. Note that there may not be a direct correlation between the number of annotations on a script and the mark awarded. Similarly, the use of an annotation may not be an indication of the quality of the response.

The annotations listed below were available to examiners marking this component in this series.

Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
BOD	Benefit of the doubt given / the point is just about worthy of credit
E1	Explanation of the point
E2	Explanation of why it is a strength/ limitation
EXP	Development / description of the point.
EVAL	Evaluation point
DEV	Developed point
GEN	General point using sociological material but not applied to the question
IR	Point is irrelevant to the question
J	Juxtaposition of point
M	Material used to support the point
NAQ	Not answered question
REP	Repetition
SEEN	This material receives no credit, additional points not required
TV	Too vague
	Point that has been credited
	Incorrect response
	Irrelevant material

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Annotation	**Meaning**
On page comment	On page comment
Highlighter	Identification of a point

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Using the mark scheme
Some of the questions are marked using a point-based system, awarding marks for specific points and accumulating a total mark by adding points.

Some of the questions are marked using level of response. For these, the level descriptor represents performance **at the top of the level**.

For levels of response marking you should:
- award a mark at the top of the level if all criteria in the level are met
- consider the level descriptors across the full range, bearing in mind that it is not necessary for a candidate to give a faultless performance for maximum marks to be awarded within any single category
- award marks on a 'best-fit' basis; thus, compensation between higher and lower achievement for different criteria is acceptable

When marking holistically, the marks awarded for an answer are usually based on a judgement of the overall quality of the response. For holistic marking, inevitably, the mark scheme cannot cover all responses that candidates may make for all of the questions. In some cases, candidates may make some responses which the mark scheme has not predicted. These answers should nevertheless be credited according to their quality.

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Question	Answer	Marks
1	**Describe <u>two</u> ways that streaming may have a negative impact on a pupil's education.** **Indicative content** • Lower streams may limit access to parts of the curriculum or to higher levels of assessment - e.g. lower tier exams in bottom streams. • Lower streams may develop anti-school subcultures - e.g. peer group pressure to under-achieve or misbehave. • Placement in a lower stream may be taken as a negative label by pupils. This may reduce their self-confidence and motivation. • Teacher expectations for higher / lower streams may lead to students internalising the label and achieving / underachieving. • Higher levels of disruption in lower streams - may reduce learning opportunities. • Difference in quality of teaching in different streams - e.g. more experienced teachers in higher streams. • Pressure from teachers / peers in higher streams to achieve - this may lead to stress and sense of inadequacy compared to others. • Any other appropriate way. Reward a maximum of **two** ways. For each way, up to 2 marks are available: 1 mark for identifying a way that streaming may have a negative impact on a pupil's education. 1 mark for describing how that way may have a negative impact on a pupil's education. (2 × 2 marks)	**4**

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Question	Answer	Marks
2	**Explain <u>two</u> reasons why boys might achieve less at school than girls.** **Indicative content** • Macho and laddish subcultures which value toughness and having a laugh above schoolwork. • Crisis of masculinity leading to lack of clear employment goals and reduced motivation. • Teacher expectations of boys being less able, hardworking and well behaved, leading to self-fulfilling prophecy. • Lack of male role models on school staff. • Assessment methods, e.g. coursework more suited to female cultural norms of neatness etc. • Boys' literacy skills less developed outside school, e.g. active pay rather than 'bedroom culture'. • Male privilege, some boys may feel that they do not need to work hard. • Cognitive factors disadvantaging boys. • Any other appropriate reason. Reward a maximum of **two** reasons. Up to 4 marks are available for each reason. 1 mark for making a point / giving a reason why boys might achieve less at school than girls (e.g. macho and laddish subcultures). 1 mark for explaining that point (e.g. they value toughness and having a laugh above schoolwork). 1 mark for selecting relevant sociological material such as study / concept / theory / empirical evidence to support the point (e.g. hegemonic masculinity). 1 mark for explaining how the material supports the point (e.g. sees academic work as effeminate and uncool and challenges authority). (2 × 4 marks)	**8**

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Question	Answer	Marks
3	**'Family income has no influence on a child's educational attainment.'** **Using sociological material, give <u>two</u> arguments against this view.** **Indicative content** • Pupils from families with a lower income (poorer families) are under more pressure to leave school as soon as possible to start earning, or to take part-time jobs. • Families with a lower income may not be able to afford to buy their children all the equipment required for study or access to cultural resources and experiences. • Pupils from families with lower income often experience housing and health issues that may have a detrimental effect on their education. • Families with lower income cannot afford to live in the catchment areas of the best schools. • Families with a lower income cannot afford private school fees or extra private tuition. • Tuition fees (in some countries) may put off students from poor backgrounds going to university due to fear of debt and lack of parental financial support. • Teachers may stereotype pupils from poorer backgrounds as less able or potentially disruptive, leading to effects of labelling and self-fulfilling prophecy. • Any other appropriate argument. Reward a maximum of two arguments. Up to 6 marks are available for each argument. ***Note:*** *This question is asking for arguments against the view. There are no marks for explaining the view or giving arguments supporting the view.* **Levels of response** Use the following levels to mark **each** argument. **Level 3: 5–6 marks** • One clear and developed argument against the view that family income has no influence on a child's educational attainment. • Sociological material, such as concepts, theories and evidence, is used to support the argument against the view. The material selected is appropriate and focused on the question with its relevance made clear. **Level 2: 3–4 marks** • One clear but underdeveloped argument against the view that family income has no influence on a child's educational attainment. • The material selected is appropriate but not fully focused on the question. Sociological evidence is used but its relevance to the argument is not made clear.	**12**

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Question	Answer	Marks
3	**Level 1: 1–2 marks** • One point disagreeing with the view that family income has no influence on a child's educational attainment, which is undeveloped or lacking clarity. • Any material selected lacks focus on the specific question. **Level 0: 0 marks** • No response worthy of credit.	

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<table>
<tr><th>Question</th><th>Answer</th><th>Marks</th></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>

Evaluate the view that education systems ensure that the workforce has appropriate skills and attitudes.

Indicative content

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>In support of the view</th><th>Against the view</th></tr>
<tr><td>Points</td><td>

- Functionalist theory of role allocation
- Arguments for meritocracy and social mobility
- Universalistic standards in IQ tests and qualifications
- Secondary socialisation
- Responsiveness of curriculum and structures to economic demands
- Vocationalism
- Marketisation
- Marxist views of preparation of labour force for capitalism
- Expansion of opportunities for girls

</td><td>

- Limits to equality of opportunity and resulting loss of talent
- Barriers to meritocracy and mobility
- Loss of motivation linked to class, gender or ethnicity resulting from school processes
- Resistance to socialisation through school subcultures
- Factors shaping the curriculum other than economic benefit
- Oversupply of qualified people in some areas
- Other functions of education may divert from teaching appropriate skills and attitudes
- Lack of resources and qualified teachers for vocational courses
- Questioning of meaning of appropriateness and who benefits – consensus v conflict models
- Different societies place different values on vocational education
- Gender differences, boys or girls may be channelled into subjects that may provide them with the wrong skills

</td></tr>
</table>

</td><td>**26**</td></tr>
</table>

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<table>
<tr><th>Question</th><th>Answer</th><th>Marks</th></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>
<table>
<tr><th></th><th>In support of the view</th><th>Against the view</th></tr>
<tr><td>Research evidence / theory</td><td>Durkheim
Parsons
Davis and Moore
Bowles and Gintis
Halsey
Rikowski</td><td>Althusser
Willis
Bourdieu
Young
Brown</td></tr>
<tr><td>Relevant concepts</td><td>Equality of opportunity
Meritocracy
Universalistic standards
Correspondence theory
Marketisation
Vocationalism</td><td>Material and cultural deprivation
Cultural capital
Labelling
Subcultures
Class conflict
Patriarchy</td></tr>
</table>

The above content is indicative and other relevant approaches to the question should be rewarded appropriately.
</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

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Levels of response for Question 4

The maximum mark for **Question 4** is 26.

Examiners should award up to 10 marks for AO1, up to 6 marks for AO2, and up to 10 marks for AO3.

Level	AO1: Knowledge and Understanding	Marks
5	• Very good knowledge and understanding of the view that education systems ensure that the workforce has appropriate skills and attitudes. • The response contains a wide range of detailed points with very good use of concepts and theory or research evidence.	9–10
4	• Good knowledge and understanding of the view that education systems ensure that the workforce has appropriate skills and attitudes. • The response contains a range of detailed points with good use of concepts and theory or research evidence.	7–8
3	• Reasonable knowledge and understanding of the view that education systems ensure that the workforce has appropriate skills and attitudes. • The response contains a narrow range of detailed points or a wider range of underdeveloped points, with some use of concepts or theory or research evidence.	5–6
2	• Basic knowledge and understanding of the view that education systems ensure that the workforce has appropriate skills and attitudes. • The response contains a narrow range of underdeveloped points and may include basic references to concepts or theories or research evidence.	3–4
1	• Limited knowledge and understanding of the view that education systems ensure that the workforce has appropriate skills and attitudes. • The response contains only assertive points or common-sense observations.	1–2
0	• No knowledge and understanding worthy of credit.	0

Level	AO2: Interpretation and Application	Marks
3	• A range of material is selected, accurately interpreted, well developed and consistently applied to answering the question.	5–6
2	• Some relevant material is selected and accurately interpreted but it lacks either development or application to the question.	3–4
1	• There is some attempt to apply sociological material but this is limited, inaccurate or lacks relevance to the specific question.	1–2
0	• No interpretation and application worthy of credit.	0

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Level	AO3: Analysis and Evaluation	Marks
5	• Very good analysis/evaluation of the view that education systems ensure that the workforce has appropriate skills and attitudes. • There is clear and sustained analysis with detailed and explicit evaluation.	9–10
4	• Good analysis/evaluation of the view that education systems ensure that the workforce has appropriate skills and attitudes. • The evaluation is explicit and direct but not sustained or relies on a good account of evidence and arguments suggesting that education systems do **not** ensure that the workforce has appropriate skills and attitudes.	7–8
3	• Some analysis/evaluation of the view that education systems ensure that the workforce has appropriate skills and attitudes. • There is either one explicitly evaluative point or a simple descriptive account of evidence and arguments suggesting that education systems do **not** ensure that the workforce has appropriate skills and attitudes.	5–6
2	• Basic analysis/evaluation of the view that education systems ensure that the workforce has appropriate skills and attitudes. • There is an attempt to consider more than one side of the debate or one point suggesting that education systems do **not** ensure that the workforce has appropriate skills and attitudes.	3–4
1	• Limited analysis/evaluation of the view that education systems ensure that the workforce has appropriate skills and attitudes. • Any analysis or evaluation is incidental, confused or simply assertive.	1–2
0	• No analysis and evaluation worthy of credit.	0

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