

**Sociology**

Advanced GCE

Unit **G674**: Exploring Social Inequality and Difference

**Mark Scheme for January 2011**

---

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of pupils of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, OCR Nationals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by Examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking commenced.

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 should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the Report on the Examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this mark scheme.

© OCR 2011

Any enquiries about publications should be addressed to:

OCR Publications  
PO Box 5050  
Annesley  
NOTTINGHAM  
NG15 0DL

Telephone: 0870 770 6622  
Facsimile: 01223 552610  
E-mail: [publications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:publications@ocr.org.uk)

**1 Outline and explain why concepts are operationalised in sociological research.****[15]****AO1: Knowledge and Understanding**

Candidates are expected to show knowledge and understanding of research design in general and operationalisation in particular in sociological research, drawing upon the source material and their own background knowledge from across the Specification to illustrate their responses.

Operationalisation is generally regarded as the process of defining a concept or idea so that it can be measured in sociological research. It is an important part of planning and designing research in sociology. Abstract concepts have to be translated into a form which enables data to be gathered about the ideas being investigated. The method used often shapes how a concept may be operationalised. For example, observation and experiments usually record behaviour and actions whilst interviews and questionnaires record opinions and views.

Abstract concepts are usually turned into operational definitions with different components or dimensions that have clear indicators that can be recorded and usually measured.

Candidates may refer to concepts such as:

- measurement
- recording data
- data analysis
- quantitative and qualitative approaches
- patterns and trends
- abstract concepts
- operational definitions
- validity
- reliability
- practicality
- value freedom
- reflexive
- replicable
- objectivity
- other relevant response.

Data may be used from the source material for illustrative purposes and/or from other sociological sources, from material associated with this unit, as well as other units in the Specification. Uses and examples may relate to sociological research and the development of social policy and practice.

Examples of operationalisation drawn from the source include:

- ethnic-religious background being defined as religion and visible skin colour differences
- educational attainment as qualifications
- class as occupation
- gender as male or female
- age in years.

All of the data was recorded and gathered through census questionnaires.

There are many examples of operationalisation that can be used from general background knowledge, for example of class, poverty and religiosity.

This question does not test evaluation, however credit should be given to awareness of the advantages and disadvantages of operationalising concepts for sociological research if this reveals knowledge and understanding of the process in general.

**9–10 marks**

Candidates show an excellent knowledge and understanding of the nature, purpose and uses of operationalisation. The response demonstrates depth, detail and accuracy of a wide range of sociological knowledge and understanding of operationalisation, with a strong focus on sociological theory and a holistic approach to sociological thinking. Candidates draw upon information from the source material and their wider knowledge. The quality of written communication will be excellent presenting appropriate material in a logical, accurate and coherent manner, with very few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**7–8 marks**

Candidates show a very good knowledge and understanding of the nature, purpose and uses of operationalisation. The response shows wide ranging and detailed knowledge and understanding, with an emphasis on sociological theory, although lacks the depth of the band above. Candidates draw upon information from the source material and their wider knowledge. The quality of written communication will be very good presenting appropriate material in a logical, accurate and coherent manner, with few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**5–6 marks**

Candidates show a good knowledge and understanding of the nature, purpose and uses of operationalisation. The response shows knowledge and understanding which is *either* wide ranging *or* detailed. There will be some understanding of sociological theory and concepts but not fully developed. Candidates draw upon information from the source material and/or their wider knowledge. The quality of written communication will be good, presenting appropriate material in a logical, accurate and coherent manner, with few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**3–4 marks**

Candidates show a basic knowledge and understanding of the nature, purpose and uses of operationalisation. The response lacks width or depth, and may occasionally be unclear or inaccurate; however the candidate does establish the basic meaning of operationalisation. Knowledge and understanding of theoretical material and concepts may be partial, inaccurate and undeveloped. Candidates may draw upon information from the source material or wider knowledge only. The quality of written communication will be basic, presenting some sociological material with limited coherence and some errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**1–2 marks**

Candidates show a limited knowledge and understanding of the nature, purpose and uses of operationalisation. The response lacks width or depth, and shows some inaccuracy and lack of clarity; the candidate may simply describe the research method without reference to theoretical or conceptual material. Candidates may/may not draw upon information from the source material or wider knowledge only. The quality of written communication will be limited, presenting some sociological material with limited coherence and many errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**0 marks**

No relevant sociological knowledge or understanding of the nature, purpose and uses of operationalisation.

**AO2a: Interpretation and Application**

Candidates are expected to interpret and apply their knowledge and understanding of operationalisation and methodology in general in their response to the question. This may also be related to the study of the context and aspect of social inequality under consideration; that of the *impact of ethnicity and religion on educational and occupational achievement*. A detailed understanding of ethnicity and educational and occupational achievement is not expected.

**5 marks**

Candidates show an excellent ability to interpret sociological knowledge and apply it to the uses of operationalisation in sociological research. The material is clearly, explicitly and consistently related to the question.

**4 marks**

Candidates show a very good ability to interpret sociological knowledge and apply it to the uses of operationalisation in sociological research. The material is clearly related to the question.

**3 marks**

Candidates show a good ability to interpret sociological knowledge and apply it to the uses of operationalisation in sociological research. The material is related to the question.

**2 marks**

Candidates show a basic ability to interpret sociological knowledge and apply it to the uses of operationalisation in sociological research. The material is related to the question implicitly and there may be irrelevant material.

**1 mark**

Candidates show a limited ability to interpret sociological knowledge and apply it to the uses of operationalisation in sociological research. The relation of the material to the question is only implied and mainly irrelevant/tangential.

**0 marks**

No relevant sociological interpretation or application.

**2 Outline and assess the view that analysis of statistical trends and patterns is the best way to understand ethnic inequality. [25]**

**AO1: Knowledge and Understanding**

Candidates are expected to show knowledge and understanding of the analysis of statistical trends and patterns as a method of research and related methodological issues.

Analysis of statistical trends and patterns within sociological research is generally regarded as the quantitative analysis of the relationship or changes in numerical data associated with two or more variables.

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key methodological concepts of validity, reliability, generalisability and representativeness through discussion of the use of statistical trends and patterns for this research problem - that of understanding *ethnic inequality, especially differences in educational and occupational achievement of different ethnic and religious groups*.

Candidates are likely to refer to methodological issues and concepts such as:

- positivism
- quantitative
- subjectivity and objectivity
- validity – accuracy/truthfulness/reality of data gathered
- reliability – comparability of data gathered
- generalisability – the ability to apply evidence and conclusions to the wider population
- representativeness – the degree to which the sample or participants are typical of the wider population
- other relevant response

**5 marks**

Candidates show an excellent knowledge and understanding of statistical trends and patterns, and related methodological issues. The response demonstrates depth, detail and accuracy of a wide range of sociological knowledge and understanding of official statistics, with a strong focus on sociological theory and a holistic approach to sociological thinking. The quality of written communication will be excellent, presenting appropriate material in a logical, accurate and coherent manner, with very few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**4 marks**

Candidates show a very good knowledge and understanding of statistical trends and patterns, and related methodological issues. The response is wide ranging and detailed, with an emphasis on sociological theory and concepts, although lacks the depth of the band above. The quality of written communication will be very good, presenting appropriate material in a logical, accurate and coherent manner, with few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**3 marks**

Candidates show a good knowledge and understanding of statistical trends and patterns, and related methodological issues. The response shows knowledge and understanding which is *either* wide ranging *or* detailed. There will be some understanding of sociological theory and concepts but not fully developed. The quality of written communication will be good, presenting appropriate material in a logical, accurate and coherent manner, with few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**2 marks**

Candidates show a basic knowledge and understanding of statistical trends and patterns, and related methodological issues. The response lacks width or depth, and may occasionally be unclear or inaccurate; however the candidate does establish the basic meaning of statistical trends and patterns. Knowledge and understanding of theoretical material and concepts may be partial, inaccurate and undeveloped. The quality of written communication will be basic, presenting some sociological material with limited coherence and some errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**1 mark**

Candidates show a limited knowledge and understanding of statistical trends and patterns, and related methodological issues. The response lacks width or depth, and shows some inaccuracy and lack of clarity; the candidate may simply describe the research method without reference to any theoretical or conceptual material. The quality of written communication will be limited, presenting some sociological material with limited coherence and many errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**0 marks**

No relevant sociological knowledge and understanding of statistical trends and patterns, and methodological issues.

**AO2a: Interpretation and application**

Candidates are expected to interpret and apply their knowledge and understanding of statistical trends and patterns as a research method and methodology in general in their response to the question. Discussion of the concepts of validity, reliability, representativeness and generalisability in relation to statistical trends and patterns for this research problem is also expected. This may also relate to the study of the context and aspect of social inequality under consideration; that of *ethnic inequality, especially in educational and occupational achievement*. The inter-relationship of different factors in social inequality with ethnicity may be recognised, including class, age, and gender, discussing how statistical trends and patterns might illuminate these aspects of social inequality. A detailed understanding of educational and occupational differences in achievement for different ethnic groups itself is not expected. The sensitivity of studying disadvantaged groups through statistical trends and patterns and ethical considerations may also be discussed. The response may also relate the selection or choice of statistical trends and patterns to the research aim – studying patterns of ethnic inequality in education and occupation.

Candidates are likely to refer to methodological issues and concepts such as:

- access
- target population
- sampling
- quantitative data analysis
- cause and effect
- objectivity and value freedom
- other relevant response.

**5 marks**

Candidates show an excellent ability to interpret and apply sociological knowledge to the methodological view that analysis of statistical trends and patterns provide the best method of sociological research into ethnic inequality and educational and occupational achievement. The material is clearly, explicitly and consistently related to the question.

**4 marks**

Candidates show a very good ability to interpret and apply sociological knowledge to the methodological view that analysis of statistical trends and patterns provides the best method of sociological research into ethnic inequality and educational and occupational achievement. The material is clearly related to the question.

**3 marks**

Candidates show a good ability to interpret and apply sociological knowledge to the methodological view that analysis of statistical trends and patterns provides the best method of sociological research into ethnic inequality and educational and occupational achievement. The material is related to the question.

**2 marks**

Candidates show a basic ability to interpret and apply sociological knowledge to the methodological view that analysis of statistical trends and patterns provides the best method of sociological research into ethnic inequality and educational and occupational achievement. The material is related to the question implicitly and there may be irrelevant material.

**1 mark**

Candidates show a limited ability to interpret and apply sociological knowledge to the methodological view that analysis of statistical trends and patterns provides the best method of sociological research into ethnic inequality and educational and occupational achievement. The relation of the material to the question is only implied and mainly irrelevant/tangential.

**0 marks**

No relevant sociological interpretation or application.

**AO2b: Analysis and Evaluation**

Candidates should discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the analysis of statistical trends and patterns as a research method, especially in relation to the concepts of validity, reliability, representativeness and generalisability, and relate this to the context of the question, that of understanding ethnic inequality and educational and occupational achievement.

Candidates are likely to refer to methodological issues and concepts such as:

- the influence of the original purpose of official statistics on quality of data gathered and subsequent uses
- objectivity
- sample size effects
- representativeness
- generalisability
- validity
- reliability
- subject and researcher biases
- fitness for purpose
- complexity of social life and difficulty in isolating the impact of different variables
- difficulties in establishing cause and effect
- not seeing reality of social life
- difficulties in exploring meanings and personal experience
- positivist and interpretive approaches
- sensitivity to disadvantage and potential exploitation
- other relevant response.

Ethical issues may be raised, for example of confidentiality, permission, access and the potential impact on the lives of those studied.

**13–15 marks**

Candidates show an excellent ability to analyse and evaluate ie assess the view that analysis of statistical trends and patterns provides the best way to understand ethnic inequality. Sustained evaluative skills are demonstrated throughout and the response has an analytical and discursive tone. There will be a clear discussion of analysis of statistical trends and patterns for the purpose of the research, and a clear attempt to draw a conclusion about the value of this method in this context. Responses should offer a critical review of sociological methodology drawing upon theoretical and conceptual arguments. At this level the discussion is likely to identify a wide range of issues/advantages/disadvantages in a balanced way. The discussion will be explicitly related to the research context in a clear and consistent way.

**10–12 marks**

Candidates show a very good ability to analyse and evaluate ie assess the view that analysis of statistical trends and patterns provides the best way to understand ethnic inequality. Responses will include a range of relevant evaluative arguments together with some precise points of evaluation of different methodological approaches. There will be a discussion of the analysis of statistical trends and patterns for the purpose of the research, and an attempt to draw a conclusion about the value of this method in this context. The evaluation will be sustained and balanced, though lacking depth and/or detail at times. The discussion will be related to the research context.

**7–9 marks**

Candidates show a good ability to analyse and evaluate ie assess the view that analysis of statistical trends and patterns provides the best way to understand ethnic inequality. Responses will raise some clear points of evaluation but may leave these only partially developed. Different methodological approaches are likely to be compared briefly. The evaluation is not necessarily balanced. The discussion will be explicitly related to the research context occasionally.

**4–6 marks**

Candidates show a basic ability to analyse and evaluate ie assess the view that analysis of that statistical trends and patterns provides the best way to understand ethnic inequality. Responses are likely to offer some generalised, evaluative points with little supporting evidence or argument. If present, different methodological approaches are likely to be juxtaposed simply and implicitly. The discussion may not be related to the research context, or merely implied.

**1–3 marks**

Candidates show a limited ability to analyse and evaluate ie assess the view that analysis of statistical trends and patterns provides the best way to understand ethnic inequality. Responses will include at least one point of evaluation; however this is likely to be minimal, unbalanced, assertive or tangential to the main issue. The discussion of statistical trends and patterns may not be related to the research context.

**0 marks**

No relevant sociological analysis or evaluation.

- 3 (a) Outline the evidence that racism affects minority ethnic groups in the contemporary UK. [20]

### AO1: Knowledge and Understanding

#### Indicative Content

Candidates should draw upon their knowledge and understanding of patterns of ethnic inequality from different units within the Specification. Aspects of ethnic inequality that are likely to be identified and discussed are:

- education
- employment
- income and wealth
- health and welfare
- housing
- political power
- patterns of crime and deviance
- other relevant response

Sociological evidence may include theoretical, conceptual, empirical and contemporary examples.

The following concepts may be identified and discussed:

- race
- racism and institutional racism
- migration
- ethnicity
- nationalism
- globalisation
- ethnic penalty
- economic, social and cultural capital
- class
- status
- power
- poverty
- income and wealth
- social exclusion
- marginalisation
- dual labour markets
- situational constraints
- access to power and political representation
- other relevant response.

Candidates may refer to sociological studies and writing by:

- Banton
- Richardson and Lambert
- Castles and Kosack
- Rex
- Miles
- Cox
- BCCCS

- Lawrence
- Gilroy
- Runnymede Trust
- Said
- Alexander
- Abbas and Allen
- Cohen
- Pilkington
- Hall
- Modood
- Rattansi
- Malik
- Other relevant response drawn from other units of study.

Theoretical material for ethnic inequality and racism may be used as evidence. The impact on ethnic inequality of social class, gender and age may be compared or contrasted with ethnicity, as well as the intersection/interrelationship of these dimensions.

Contemporary examples might include:

- Media treatment of Muslims and Islamophobia
- Impact of racism on interpretations of terrorism
- Eastern European migration and employment
- Asian 'gangs'
- Recent evidence about patterns of ethnic inequality in education and work.

### **13–15 marks**

Candidates show an excellent knowledge and understanding of racism and patterns of inequality. The knowledge is appropriate, wide ranging, accurate, detailed and in depth, including a range of different types of sociological evidence. The response demonstrates a deep sociological understanding of racism and inequality and a holistic approach to thinking sociologically. Responses are presented in a confident and purposeful manner. The quality of written communication will be excellent, presenting appropriate material in a logical, accurate and coherent manner, with very few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

### **10–12 marks**

Candidates show a very good knowledge and understanding of racism and inequality in society. The knowledge is appropriate, full, wide ranging and detailed, although lacks the depth of understanding of racism and inequality shown in the band above. The quality of written communication will be very good, presenting appropriate material in a logical, accurate and coherent manner, with few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

### **7–9 marks**

Candidates show a good knowledge and understanding of racism and inequality in society. The knowledge is appropriate and *either* wide ranging *or* detailed. Sociological evidence will not be fully developed. The quality of written communication will be good, presenting appropriate material in an accurate and coherent manner, with few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**4–6 marks**

Candidates show a basic knowledge and understanding of racism and inequality in society. The knowledge displayed is appropriate but lacks width or depth, however the candidate is aware of racism and basic patterns or examples of ethnic inequality. Knowledge and understanding of sociological evidence may be partial, inaccurate and undeveloped. The quality of written communication will be basic, presenting some sociological material with limited coherence and some errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**1–3 marks**

Candidates show a limited knowledge and understanding of racism and inequality in society. The knowledge displayed is appropriate but lacks width or depth, and is often inaccurate and assertive. The response demonstrates very little awareness of sociological evidence and presents mainly anecdotal and personal material. The quality of written communication will be limited, presenting some sociological material with very limited coherence and many errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**0 marks**

No relevant sociological knowledge or understanding displayed.

**AO2a: Interpretation and Application****5 marks**

Candidates show an excellent ability to interpret sociological knowledge and understanding and apply it to the concept of racism and inequality. The material is clearly, explicitly and consistently related to the question.

**4 marks**

Candidates show a very good ability to interpret sociological knowledge and understanding and apply it to the concept of racism and inequality. The material is clearly related to the question.

**3 marks**

Candidates show a good ability to interpret sociological knowledge and understanding and apply it to the concept of racism and inequality. The material is related to the question. If no racism, not above L3.

**2 marks**

Candidates show a basic ability to interpret sociological knowledge and understanding and apply it to the concept of racism and inequality. The material is related to the question implicitly and there may be irrelevant material.

**1 mark**

Candidates show a limited ability to interpret sociological knowledge and understanding and apply it to the concept of racism and inequality. The relation of the material to the question is only implied and mainly irrelevant/tangential.

**0 marks**

No relevant interpretation or application.

**3 (b) Outline and assess sociological explanations of ethnic inequality. [40]****AO1: Knowledge and Understanding**

## Indicative Content

Sociological explanations of ethnic inequality should be presented and described. The following concepts may be identified and discussed:

- Nationalism
- Racism
- Migration
- Identity
- Representation
- Reserve Army of Labour
- Underclass
- Globalisation
- other relevant response.

Candidates may refer to writers such as:

- Cox
- Gilroy
- Bauman
- Goldberg
- Rattansi
- Malik
- Modood
- Hall
- Giddens
- other relevant response.

Ethnic inequalities in different aspects of social life may be used to illustrate answers, such as education, employment, income and wealth, health and welfare, housing, political power, and patterns of crime and deviance. Alternative theoretical explanations of ethnic inequality and difference may be explored and/or juxtaposed, for example Marxist, neo-Marxist, functionalist, feminist, post modern and Weberian. Structural and cultural approaches to explaining ethnic inequality may be explored. The impact on inequality of class, gender and age may be compared or contrasted with ethnicity, as well as the intersection/interrelationship of these dimensions.

**13–15 marks**

Candidates show an excellent knowledge and understanding of sociological explanations of ethnic inequality. The response demonstrates considerable depth, detail and accuracy of a wide range of sociological evidence and material, with a strong focus on sociological theory and a holistic approach to sociological thinking. Responses are presented in a confident and purposeful manner. The quality of written communication will be excellent, presenting appropriate material in a logical, accurate and coherent manner, with very few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**10–12 marks**

Candidates show a very good knowledge and understanding of sociological explanations of ethnic inequality. The response shows wide ranging and detailed knowledge and understanding, with an emphasis on sociological theory, although lacks the depth of the band above.

The response demonstrates good sociological understanding of explanations of ethnic inequality and a holistic approach to sociological thinking. The quality of written communication will be very good, presenting appropriate material in a logical, accurate and coherent manner, with few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**7–9 marks**

Candidates show a good knowledge and understanding of sociological explanations of ethnic inequality. The knowledge is appropriate and *either* wide ranging *or* detailed. There will be some understanding of sociological theory and concepts but not fully developed. The quality of written communication will be good, presenting appropriate material in a logical, accurate and coherent manner, with few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**4–6 marks**

Candidates show a basic knowledge and understanding of sociological explanations of ethnic inequality. The knowledge displayed is appropriate but lacks width or depth however the candidate is aware of some areas of ethnic inequality and demonstrates a basic understanding of some theory. Knowledge and understanding of theory may be partial, inaccurate and undeveloped. The quality of written communication will be basic, presenting some sociological material with limited coherence and some errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**1–3 marks**

Candidates show a limited knowledge and understanding of sociological explanations of ethnic inequality. The knowledge displayed is appropriate but lacks width or depth. The response demonstrates very little awareness of sociological evidence and presents mainly anecdotal and personal material. The quality of written communication will be limited, presenting some sociological material with limited coherence and many errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**0 marks**

No relevant sociological knowledge or understanding displayed.

**AO2a: Interpretation and Application****5 marks**

Candidates show an excellent ability to interpret sociological knowledge and apply it to sociological explanations of ethnic inequalities. The material is clearly, explicitly and consistently related to the question.

**4 marks**

Candidates show a very good ability to interpret sociological knowledge and apply it to sociological explanations of ethnic inequalities. The material is clearly related to the question.

**3 marks**

Candidates show a good ability to interpret sociological knowledge and apply it to sociological explanations of ethnic inequalities. The material is related to the question.

**2 marks**

Candidates show a basic ability to interpret sociological knowledge and apply it to sociological explanations of ethnic inequalities. The material is related to the question implicitly and there may be irrelevant material.

**1 mark**

Candidates show a limited ability to interpret sociological knowledge and apply it to sociological explanations of ethnic inequalities. The relation of the material to the question is only implied and mainly irrelevant/tangential.

**0 marks**

No relevant interpretation or application.

**AO2b: Analysis and Evaluation**

## Indicative Content

Candidates are expected to evaluate sociological explanations of ethnic inequality, presenting a range of strengths and/or weaknesses of different approaches to understanding ethnic inequality. Likely arguments might include:

- provides understanding of ethnic inequality in relation to identity, changing cultural patterns and social networks
- useful to understand experience and meanings of ethnic groups – interpretive approach
- useful to include emotional and subjective elements of human experience
- highlights importance of different experiences of different ethnic groups
- underestimates other dimensions to inequality and their inter-relationship - gender, age and class
- focuses on structural aspects of ethnic inequality
- emphasizes impact of class and economic factors – Marxist approaches
- emphasizes status, power and political processes in inequality – Weberian approaches
- other relevant response.

Comparison of alternative theoretical explanations is expected, for example Marxist, neo-Marxist, feminist, functionalist, post modern and Weberian. Candidates are expected to discuss at least two sociological explanations.

**17–20 marks**

Candidates show an excellent ability to evaluate and analyse sociological explanations of ethnic inequality. Responses offer a critical commentary on contemporary sociological debate drawing on a range of theoretical positions and conceptual arguments. Sustained evaluative skills are demonstrated throughout and the response has an analytical and discursive tone with a wide range of clear evaluative points, including some explicit evaluation of concepts and/or theoretical arguments and/or empirical evidence addressing both strengths and weaknesses in a balanced way.

**13–16 marks**

Candidates show a very good ability to evaluate and analyse sociological explanations of ethnic inequality. Responses will include a range of relevant evaluative arguments together with some precise points of evaluation of different theoretical approaches, addressing both strengths and weaknesses in a reasonably balanced way.

**9–12 marks**

Candidates show a good ability to evaluate and analyse sociological explanations of ethnic inequality. Candidates will raise some precise points of evaluation but may leave these undeveloped and unexplored. Some comparison and contrasting of different theoretical positions is present, but not fully developed or wide ranging. Responses may not be balanced in assessing strengths and weaknesses, but include both.

**5–8 marks**

Candidates show a basic ability to evaluate and analyse sociological explanations of ethnic inequality. Candidates may offer simple evaluative points which are not explained or developed. Responses are likely to offer some generalised, evaluative points with little supporting evidence or argument. If present, different theoretical approaches are likely to be juxtaposed simply and implicitly. Responses may not include both strengths and weaknesses.

**1–4 marks**

Candidates show a limited ability to evaluate and analyse sociological explanations of ethnic inequality. Responses will have at least one point of relevant evaluation, however this is likely to be minimal, assertive or tangential to the main issue.

**0 marks**

No relevant evaluation or analysis.

- 4 (a) Outline the evidence that the middle classes are advantaged in the contemporary UK.

[20]

**AO1: Knowledge and Understanding**

## Indicative Content

Candidates should draw upon their knowledge and understanding of the position of the middle classes in the contemporary UK from different units within the specification. Aspects of social life that are likely to be identified and discussed are:

- education
- employment
- income and wealth
- health and welfare
- housing
- political power
- patterns of crime and deviance
- portrayal within and use of the media
- other relevant response

Candidates may discuss the relative advantages of the middle class in particular or compare and contrast different social classes. The following concepts may be identified and discussed:

- different social classes – ruling, upper, middle, working, lower, underclass
- occupational structure
- professionals
- income and wealth
- status
- power
- social exclusion
- marginalization
- fragmentation
- embourgeoisement
- social mobility
- class identity and culture
- other relevant response.

Candidates may refer to writers such as:

- Marx
- Weber
- Parsons
- Westergaard and Resler
- Scott
- Lansley
- Saunders
- Ehrenreich
- Braverman
- Lockwood
- Goldthorpe
- Savage
- Wynne
- Devine

- Murray
- Giddens
- Gallie
- Bourdieu
- Charlesworth
- Skeggs
- Pakulski and Waters
- Other relevant response.

Theoretical explanations for middle class advantage/disadvantage are likely to be identified and discussed, including Marxist, neo-Marxist, functionalist, post modern, Weberian and feminist. The impact on social inequality of ethnicity, gender and age may be compared or contrasted with class, as well as the intersection/interrelationship of these dimensions.

Contemporary examples might include:

- Impact of economic recession on middle class position
- Continuing importance of private education and health
- Increasing inequality in the distribution of wealth and income
- New taxation regimes hitting higher earners
- Greater emphasis on middle class crime eg fraud, tax evasion, etc
- Other relevant response

### **13–15 marks**

Candidates show an excellent knowledge and understanding of social class inequality and the middle classes. The knowledge is appropriate, wide ranging, accurate, detailed and in depth, including a range of different types of sociological evidence. The response demonstrates a deep sociological understanding of social class inequality and a holistic approach to thinking sociologically. Responses are presented in a confident and purposeful manner. The quality of written communication will be excellent, presenting appropriate material in a logical, accurate and coherent manner, with very few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

### **10–12 marks**

Candidates show a very good knowledge and understanding of social class inequality and the middle classes. The knowledge is appropriate, full, wide ranging and detailed, although lacks the depth of understanding of social class inequality shown in the band above. The quality of written communication will be very good, presenting appropriate material in a logical, accurate and coherent manner, with few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

### **7–9 marks**

Candidates show a good knowledge and understanding of social class inequality and the middle classes. The knowledge is appropriate and *either* wide ranging *or* detailed. Sociological evidence will not be fully developed. The quality of written communication will be good, presenting appropriate material in an accurate and coherent manner, with few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

### **4–6 marks**

Candidates show a basic knowledge and understanding of social class inequality and the middle classes. The knowledge displayed is appropriate but lacks width or depth, however the candidate is aware of social class inequality and the middle class. Knowledge and understanding of sociological evidence may be partial, inaccurate and undeveloped. The quality of written communication will be basic, presenting some sociological material with limited coherence and some errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**1–3 marks**

Candidates show a limited knowledge and understanding of social class inequality and the middle classes. The knowledge displayed is appropriate but lacks width or depth, and is often inaccurate and assertive. The response demonstrates very little awareness of sociological evidence and presents mainly anecdotal and personal material. The quality of written communication will be limited, presenting some sociological material with very limited coherence and many errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**0 marks**

No relevant sociological knowledge or understanding displayed.

**AO2a: Interpretation and Application****5 marks**

Candidates show an excellent ability to interpret sociological knowledge and understanding and apply it to patterns of middle class advantage. The material is clearly, explicitly and consistently related to the question.

**4 marks**

Candidates show a very good ability to interpret sociological knowledge and understanding and apply it to patterns of middle class advantage. The material is clearly related to the question.

**3 marks**

Candidates show a good ability to interpret sociological knowledge and understanding and apply it to patterns of middle class advantage. The material is related to the question.

**2 marks**

Candidates show a basic ability to interpret sociological knowledge and understanding and apply it to patterns of middle class advantage. The material is related to the question implicitly and there may be irrelevant material.

**1 mark**

Candidates show a limited ability to interpret sociological knowledge and understanding and apply it to patterns of middle class advantage. The relation of the material to the question is only implied and mainly irrelevant/tangential.

**0 marks**

No relevant interpretation or application.

- 4 (b) Outline and assess the view that social class is becoming less significant in the contemporary UK. [40]

### AO1: Knowledge and Understanding

#### Indicative Content

Post modern approaches to social class inequality should be presented and described. The following concepts may be identified and discussed:

- diversity
- fragmentation
- cultural differences
- individualization
- reflexivity
- identity
- consumption
- risk society
- social class
- status
- power
- gender inequality
- ethnicity and inequality
- patriarchy
- other relevant response.

Candidates may refer to post modern writers such as:

- Lyotard
- Baudrillard
- Pakulski and Waters
- Beck
- Westergaard
- Bradley
- Giddens
- other relevant response.

Social class inequalities in different aspects of social life may be used to illustrate answers, such as education, employment, income and wealth, health and welfare, housing, political power, and patterns of crime and deviance. Alternative theoretical explanations of inequality and difference may be explored and/or juxtaposed, for example Marxist, neo-Marxist, Weberian, feminist and functionalist. The impact on class inequality of ethnicity, gender and age may be compared or contrasted with class, as well as the intersection/interrelationship of these dimensions.

#### 13–15 marks

Candidates show an excellent knowledge and understanding of the view that social class is no longer significant in the contemporary UK. The response demonstrates considerable depth, detail and accuracy of a wide range of sociological evidence and material, with a strong focus on sociological theory and a holistic approach to sociological thinking. Responses are presented in a confident and purposeful manner. The quality of written communication will be excellent, presenting appropriate material in a logical, accurate and coherent manner, with very few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**10–12 marks**

Candidates show a very good knowledge and understanding of the view that social class is no longer significant in the contemporary UK. The response shows wide ranging and detailed knowledge and understanding, with an emphasis on sociological theory, although lacks the depth of the band above. The response demonstrates good sociological understanding and a holistic approach to sociological thinking. The quality of written communication will be very good, presenting appropriate material in a logical, accurate and coherent manner, with few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**7–9 marks**

Candidates show a good knowledge and understanding of the view that social class is no longer significant in the contemporary UK. The knowledge is appropriate and *either* wide ranging *or* detailed. There will be some understanding of sociological theory and concepts but not fully developed. The quality of written communication will be good, presenting appropriate material in a logical, accurate and coherent manner, with few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**4–6 marks**

Candidates show a basic knowledge and understanding of the view that social class is no longer significant in the contemporary UK. The knowledge displayed is appropriate but lacks width or depth however the candidate is aware of a few concepts and/or a little sociological theory. Knowledge and understanding of theory may be partial, inaccurate and undeveloped. The quality of written communication will be basic, presenting some sociological material with limited coherence and some errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**1–3 marks**

Candidates show a limited knowledge and understanding of the view that social class is no longer significant in the contemporary UK. The knowledge displayed is appropriate but lacks width or depth. The response demonstrates very little awareness of sociological evidence and presents mainly anecdotal and personal material. The quality of written communication will be limited, presenting some sociological material with limited coherence and many errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**0 marks**

No relevant sociological knowledge or understanding displayed.

**AO2a: Interpretation and Application****5 marks**

Candidates show an excellent ability to interpret sociological knowledge and apply it to the view that social class is no longer significant in the contemporary UK. The material is clearly, explicitly and consistently related to the question.

**4 marks**

Candidates show a very good ability to interpret sociological knowledge and apply it to the view that social class is no longer significant in the contemporary UK. The material is clearly related to the question.

**3 marks**

Candidates show a good ability to interpret sociological knowledge and apply it to the view that social class is no longer significant in the contemporary UK. The material is related to the question.

**2 marks**

Candidates show a basic ability to interpret sociological knowledge and apply it to the view that social class is no longer significant in the contemporary UK. The material is related to the question implicitly and there may be irrelevant material.

**1 mark**

Candidates show a limited ability to interpret sociological knowledge and apply it to the view that social class is no longer significant in the contemporary UK. The relation of the material to the question is only implied and mainly irrelevant/tangential.

**0 marks**

No relevant interpretation or application.

**AO2b: Analysis and Evaluation**

## Indicative Content

Candidates are expected to evaluate the view that social class is no longer significant in the contemporary UK, presenting a range of strengths and/or weaknesses of this view and different theoretical interpretations of social class in society. Likely arguments might include:

- Reflects changes in post industrial societies, especially over greater material wealth and knowledge based economies
- Recognises diversity and a variety of different dimensions to social inequality – gender, ethnicity, age, race, culture
- Emphasizes importance of culture and status in patterns of inequality
- Acknowledges the changing and fragmented nature of social inequality
- Underestimates the importance of class and wealth in inequality and determination of lifestyle and identity
- Lack of empirical evidence – often based on assertion
- Ignores evidence for the hardening of class inequality due to increased inequalities of wealth and income, the power of the ‘super rich’ and international corporations (Westergaard)
- Doesn’t acknowledge the way class and other aspects of inequality may reinforce each other, eg race and gender
- The role of political processes in addressing inequalities is underestimated
- theory may be applied to many societies – universalistic
- under-emphasizes social structure and stability
- other relevant response.

Comparison of alternative theoretical explanations is expected, for example Marxist, neo-Marxist, feminist, Weberian and functionalist.

**17–20 marks**

Candidates show an excellent ability to analyse and evaluate the view that social class is no longer significant in the contemporary UK. Responses offer a critical commentary on contemporary sociological debate drawing on a range of theoretical positions and conceptual arguments. Sustained evaluative skills are demonstrated throughout and the response has an analytical and discursive tone with a wide range of clear evaluative points, including some explicit evaluation of concepts and/or theoretical arguments and/or empirical evidence addressing both strengths and weaknesses in a balanced way.

**13–16 marks**

Candidates show a very good ability to analyse and evaluate the view that social class is no longer significant in the contemporary UK. Responses will include a range of relevant evaluative arguments together with some precise points of evaluation of different theoretical approaches, addressing both strengths and weaknesses in a reasonably balanced way.

**9–12 marks**

Candidates show a good ability to analyse and evaluate the view that social class is no longer significant in the contemporary UK. Candidates will raise some precise points of evaluation but may leave these undeveloped and unexplored. Some comparison and contrasting of different theoretical positions is present, but not fully developed or wide ranging. Responses may not be balanced in assessing strengths and weaknesses, but include both.

**5–8 marks**

Candidates show a basic ability to analyse and evaluate the view that social class is no longer significant in the contemporary UK. Candidates may offer simple evaluative points which are not explained or developed. Responses are likely to offer some generalised, evaluative points with little supporting evidence or argument. If present, different theoretical approaches are likely to be juxtaposed simply and implicitly. Responses may not include both strengths and weaknesses.

**1–4 marks**

Candidates show a limited ability to analyse and evaluate the view that social class is no longer significant in the contemporary UK. Responses will have at least one point of relevant evaluation, however this is likely to be minimal, assertive or tangential to the main issue.

**0 marks**

No relevant analysis or evaluation.

**OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)**  
**1 Hills Road**  
**Cambridge**  
**CB1 2EU**

**OCR Customer Contact Centre**

**14 – 19 Qualifications (General)**

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: [general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk)

**[www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)**

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored

**Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations**  
**is a Company Limited by Guarantee**  
**Registered in England**  
**Registered Office; 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU**  
**Registered Company Number: 3484466**  
**OCR is an exempt Charity**



**OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)**  
**Head office**  
**Telephone: 01223 552552**  
**Facsimile: 01223 552553**

© OCR 2011