Grade boundary information for this subject is available on the WJEC public website at: https://www.wjecservices.co.uk/MarkToUMS/default.aspx?l=en

Online results analysis

WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC secure website. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

Annual Statistical Report

The annual Statistical Report (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit 1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
General issues

The paper appears to have been accessible so that even weaker candidates were able to make a reasonable attempt at the questions, particularly in Section A. Some candidates struggled to write a significant amount for Section B. Many candidates struggled with some of the technical language that was used in the paper. Centres are reminded that any term on the specification may be used in the examination. In some cases, there was a disappointing problem with language so that terms which appeared on the paper were misspelled. Nevertheless, despite this, there were a number of excellent and mature responses to the paper.

Section A

In this section, brief but specific answers usually gain the highest marks. This approach allows candidates time to think about their responses to Section B and plan their answers with care.

Q.1 Most gained full marks and some then went on the use the terms to support other answers elsewhere on the paper.

Q.2 This was generally done very well indeed, with most candidates gaining the full number of marks available.
   (b) Many candidates described gender in biological terms and not social terms despite the clues in the item and the questions themselves.
   (d) This question that was handled less well by some candidates. Weaker candidates failed to confine their answers to just one role, or referred to Zulu society.

Q.3
   (b) There are still those who refer to socialisation in terms of mixing with other people rather than learning from them the expected behaviour for society. Most candidates managed very well however.
   (c) This was generally well done, though a minority of candidates failed to give an example to explain how parents influenced children. It may be worth noting that questions specifying ‘how’ usually require some reference to a process.
(e) Many answers to this question were common sense and vague; many did not specify a norm. The best answers cited suggestions such as following the rules of the game, and pointed out that this was useful in everyday life or supported by sanctions.

(f) The research element of this question was generally handled very well and the performance of candidates on research questions is improving. Nevertheless a number of responses included interview. The term interview of itself is vague, and an unstructured interview would be inappropriate for research that gathers numerical information.

(g) This was generally done well. Some still struggle with the difference between reliability and validity but most were able to explain a problem and then offer some context. A number of candidates referred to ethical issues and did very well. A few mentioned the difficulty of obtaining a representative sample, and this was rewarded by markers too.

Q.4

(b) Some answers were a little vague about the meaning of culture.

(d) Strong candidates named and then described a sampling method in simple terms. Others described a viable method without naming it. Weaker candidates failed to respond to the term sample and many described a method such as ‘questionnaire’ or ‘interview’. There were a few circular answers such as ‘A random sample is when you pick people randomly’. As no understanding of the term ‘random’ is actually displayed, then only one mark could be awarded.

Q.5 Generally this was done well and with obvious understanding.

(a) There were those who did not refer to the item. Such answers were not credited.

(c) A minority of candidates stated both nature and nurture, and were not credited. Others referred to all kinds of theories such as Marxism or Functionalism.

(d) This was generally well done. To gain full marks, some sociological language was required and many candidates are relying on common sense explanations. The use of technical language is important to gain all possible marks.

(f) Generally, this was the weakest question. Answers often relied on common sense, detailing something generally seen on television. Again, when a question specifies ‘how’ then an understanding of process such as role modelling or imitation is required.

(g) On the whole, this was well done with most candidates correctly stating observation or unstructured interview. A minority did answer this question incorrectly with interview / questionnaire, for those who answered it incorrectly this then affected their ability to score highly on g (ii). Those who did answer it correctly with a qualitative method the main issue for g (ii) was that answers were very brief, and lacking in sociological language such as validity.
Q.6 All parts of this question, apart from perhaps (d), were well received by the majority of candidates.

6 (a) (b) and (c) caused few problems, the only observation here was that for b) and c), many candidates gave common sense answers, and failed to develop their points in order to achieve the full two marks.

(d) Generally, this was well done with detailed responses. Only a minority scored the full marks, as they did not include a stated difference in their answer. A minority were also confused about this question and mixed up the two terms, giving the definition for formal sanctions when writing about informal sanctions and vice versa.

Options

Parts (a) and (b) often use classical sociology theory badly. It is not really necessary until part (c) questions and is often not essential in this part of the question, though it is credited if done well. The commands are ‘describe’, ‘explain’ and ‘discuss’. Some very good candidates are over-writing parts (a) and (b) and simply not addressing the commands. Lots of use of studies and contemporary evidence – excellent.

Q.7 Family
This was the most popular choice of topic.

(a) Few candidates achieved full marks. The question was unexpectedly challenging because many ignored the command to describe and offered reasons for family change which could not be credited. A significant number of candidates focused on how the family used to be, with only a small part of their answer focussing on ways in which families have changed in recent years. The best candidates referred to both structural change and to changes in family roles.

(b) This was a little disappointing. Better candidates were able to explain two or three reasons why the roles of men and women had changed and those who referred to feminism and used it to explain changes in family roles did well. Those who used technical language were credited. Many weaker candidates simply described changes in the roles of men and women without suggesting reasons why they have undergone change.

(c) Generally, this was handled well, though there are still those who refer back to pre-industrial Britain and are therefore unable to focus on the key points that they need to make because they describe family change over the centuries. Many referred to classical theory on the lines of ‘Functionalists would say divorce is a bad thing’ but generally did not link this to a reason for change, such as the impact of these ideas on the law. Feminism was generally well used if it was linked to women’s attitudes and behaviours with regard to marriage and divorce. Where it was simply described then it was not really relevant to the issue of attitudinal change. Many candidates discussed reasons why people did not marry, and unfortunately this could not be credited.
Q.8 Education

(a) Most candidates, even those who did not seem prepared for the question, managed some marks if they discussed changes in education.

(b) Again, this was handled fairly well by most but there are still those few who were not certain of the meaning of the terms or did not refer to education.

(c) This was a struggle for some who discussed material deprivation rather than cultural deprivation. Those who understood the term did well.

Q.9 Media

(a) This was a little weak with most focusing on body image issues in magazines without discussing other ways in which women may be represented or considering positive representations of women.

(b) Most candidates were able to write something, but again, they tended to focus on how different social groups used the media rather than why there were differences in media usage.

(c) Where the concept of media causation of deviancy was understood, then the answers were clear and sensible. Discussions of moral panics were generally well-written. There were references to Bandura and the Bobo Doll experiments. Many candidates are still uncritically claiming that the James Bulger murder was 'caused' by the Chucky video, without appreciating the complexity of the case or the fact that many violent videos are produced and do not result in murders.

Q.10 Sport

10 (a) (b) (c) – generally weak and based on common sense answers. Few responses, fewer than in previous years, but those who had studied the topic and understood the questions were able to do well.
SOCIOLOGY
General Certificate of Secondary Education
Summer 2015
UNIT 2

Q.1  This question was answered successfully by most candidates. A substantial minority confused meritocracy and the New Right.

Q.2  (a) These questions caused no concern and students used the source comprehension style to tackle this.
     (b) Better answers linked 2 or 3 reasons. Weaker answers included a simple focus on better pay and lacked terminology. Better responses included the differences in the type of employment and even fatalism, culture of poverty and educational failure.
     (c) This was tackled well in general using stereotyping and discrimination well. Weaker answers just included practical problems, such as a lack of facilities. A small number just talked about general social problems, such as the recession.

Q.3  (a) Many students failed to identify the source as the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
     (b) No concerns on this and either naming the Equal Pay Act specifically or writing about improvements in working conditions or pay also gained the mark.
     (c) Surprisingly status caused problems and students struggled to nail the concept firmly. Examples and explaining the difference between ascribed and achieved status helped these answers. Some students still failed to give an example.
     (d) This question caused some problems as students failed to come up with more than one reason. Many introduced useful concepts, such as the glass ceiling and the breadwinner but did not make the explicit links to pay required by the question.

Q.4  (a) I haven’t seen the statistics yet but I would judge that under 50% got this answer correct. This seemed to be a careless reading of the question rather than lacking the numeracy or literacy skills to tackle it. There will be some exceptions to this but a lesson in being careful for all students.
     (b) Some interesting approaches to this. Some tackled it from a global perspective, which worked well. Others went for Marxist theory, which worked well, but most common seemed to be the cycle of deprivation or culture of poverty approach. Some students also used the Matthew Effect successfully. Unsuccessful answers wrote definitions of poverty and not reasons.
Q.4  (c) Some students wrote moderately successful generalised methods answers that didn’t specifically relate to the issue in the question itself. They gained credit for this where due. Some students still confuse reliability and validity and use both interchangeably. The best answers noted that people may feel bad about their actual views about charities so may lie resulting in low validity. Some misunderstood the question completely and thought it was about researching the charities themselves. A smaller number did not recognise it as a methods question at all.

(d) Answered well, but weaker answers only gave one simple general reason.

(e) Generally good and no problems.

Q.5  (a),(b) No concerns. Students used the text well.

(c) Some failed to link this to female MP’s specifically and just cited general reasons for gender inequality.

(d) There were a variety of approaches. Very few gained full marks which involved an understanding of why inequality may affect British society itself. These could have included an increase in crime, social unrest, wastage of talent or others.

Q.6  (a),(b) No concerns. Students used the text well.

(c) Folk devils not known by all. Some forgot the example. Better answers grasped the process and the role of the media.

(d) Students struggled here and tended to repeat the same way twice. Better answers wrote about stereotyping of youth and old age leading to failure to gain employment. Some answers lacked sociological knowledge.

Q.7  Work

Only a few candidates tackled this topic. Those that had been taught the topic had clearly studied it and had good responses to offer.

(a) Better answers wrote about the different types of work and recognised that non-work included a range of situations including leisure and unemployment.

(b) There was clearly a wide range of ideas about what was meant by “recent”. Some answers went back too far to industrial revolution times. Others dealt with more contemporary issues, such as unemployment, new technology and the increased presence of women in the workplace.

(c) Answers struggled to get beyond prejudice and discrimination of ethnic minorities. Others talked about the ethnic pay gap, migrant workers and exploitation with success.

*Q.8 and Q.10 are difficult to comment on as so few students answered these.*
Q.9  
(a) Lots of knowledge was shown about the different types of courts. Some good basic answers focussed on social control as a key role of the courts. There were lots of comments on Functionalist and Marxist views of the courts. The best of these focussed on the role of courts. Where answers were unsuccessful, they made little link to the role of the courts, but wrote everything they knew about courts. Some lacked any sociological knowledge.

(b) This question was answered well. A range of useful sociological ideas was used and applied to the question. These included labelling, stereotyping, policing styles and moral panics. The question was generally interpreted better than 9a) but there were some who drifted on to a question they hoped for on youth or blue collar crime.

(c) Generally answered well with a focus on unreported and unrecorded crime and the “dark figure”. Better answers still focussed on the chivalry factor, institutional racism and moral panics. Good knowledge was shown of Self Report and Victim studies. The best answers tackled a full range of ideas. Some students tried to treat this as a methods question with little success and some did not focus enough on the official crime statistics but wrote about patterns of conviction.