Statistical Information

The Examiners' Report may refer in general terms to statistical outcomes. Statistical information on candidates' performances in all examination components (whether internally or externally assessed) is provided when results are issued. As well as the marks achieved by individual candidates, the following information can be obtained from these printouts:

*For each component:* the maximum mark, aggregation factor, mean mark and standard deviation of marks obtained by all candidates entered for the examination.

*For the subject or option:* the total entry and the lowest mark needed for the award of each grade.

Annual Statistical Report

Other information on a centre basis is provided when results are issued. 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>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
General Comments

This is the first year of the full new specification. Again there have been innovations, so for this year, the WJEC trialled computer based marking. There will be comments that relate to this throughout the report so that teachers can offer appropriate guidance.

The standard achieved overall has been high and possibly higher than last year because the format of the examination is now slightly more familiar. Most candidates were able to write something, and there were few papers where candidates had not been able to achieve a creditable mark. The standards at the upper end were very high with some candidates achieving nearly full marks for the examination.

There was clear evidence that candidates had been thoroughly prepared for the examination. Even the weakest candidates were able to display evidence of sociological knowledge. The most able candidates referred to theory and to current events - the recession for example. Those who were unable to achieve high grades in section A were unable to achieve high grades in section B. Section B acted as an opportunity for those with good knowledge and ability to excel.

Fewer papers this year were marred by rubric error, though some candidates did not recognise where the answers to their options should be written and conflated their responses. One or two did not even bother to start each section of the question on a new line which caused markers some difficulty. This proved problematic for the computer based marking system, and although no candidate was disadvantaged, it is something for teachers to raise with candidates. They should avoid little arrows and additional bits of answer as much as possible in case the computer systems do not pick up the full response.

Better candidates were able to incorporate examples and sociological concepts into their answers. The weakest answers were those related to research methods where candidates did not understand the key concepts. In particular, reliability and validity were comprehensively misunderstood. Any term that appears on the specification may be used as the basis of a question and therefore understanding of key terms should be reinforced. Please note, too, that AO3 requires candidates to apply their sociological knowledge to unfamiliar contexts, so simple knowledge of key terms is not enough for the top marks.
Unit 1

Section A

Q.1 Most candidates gained full marks on this section, but there were those who were confused by the terms: 'youth culture' and 'agency of socialisation'.

Q.2 Question 2 (d) required candidates to identify and explain how children influence parental behaviour. This was a valid question that tested the understanding of the complexity of socialisation processes. Most managed this well; many misread the question and wrote about parents socialising children. There were a wide range of creditable answers; the best referred obliquely to pester power or to the way that parents have to become more responsible once children are born.

Q.3 Most candidates were able to extract information from the text. Many candidates were not aware of the meaning of the term 'norm' as an expected or routine behaviour. Many were vague, referring to 'unwritten rules' without identifying the difference between a norm and other forms of unwritten social rules. These candidates often then incorrectly chose 'respect' as a norm learned in school. The choice of research methods was generally appropriate and well-justified.

Q.4 The first parts of this question were handled well in general. Questions 4 (d), (e) and (f) were not as well handled in some cases, with repetition of points in (d) and a failure to write an appropriate question in (e). Many candidates wrote closed, double questions or leading questions. Those who understood the nature of the question 4 (d) wrote well and succinctly. They were credited. In addition, many candidates referred to ethics, reliability and validity which was welcomed, especially if the terms were used correctly. Very many candidates misread this question as being about the problems of the media. Large numbers of candidates were very confused indeed as to the nature of a sample. Most referred to it as either a pilot study or as something offered as a trial in a magazine.

Q.5 There were some confusions with regard to the meaning of culture. Some candidates were not clear as to the nature of social control.

Q.6 This generally well handled, though some struggled with nature and nurture theory and others were very confused about the rejections of nature theory. Please note that there are some lesson notes and materials available relating to this topic on the website of the NGfL Cymru GCSE pages.

Section B

Question 7 was the most popular option, with a gratifying number of centres offering the new options of sport and mass media.

Q.7 (a) Most candidates were able to write something relevant though there was not enough detail in answers for candidates to achieve the level 4 marks. Many did not follow the command to describe and wrote long answers about changes in the family, family history (dating back to pre-industrial times) or commentary about functionalism and feminism. Unfortunately, unless this material was relevant it could not be credited. The best candidates looked at traditional gender roles in both childhood and adulthood or used technical sociological language.
(b) This was the weakest section, with a large number of candidates unable to explain why there has been an increase in people living alone. Many read this as a question about single parenthood. The best candidates offered responses that referred to one or more of: choice and personal preference, geographical mobility, divorce and subsequent singlehood or widowhood caused by differences in gendered life expectancy.

(c) This section was well handled, but often there was not enough accurate detail to achieve level 4. Weaker candidates focused on personal reasons for lowered family size. The best candidates were actually able to explain what the patterns and trends relating to birth rates actually are, and were able to do it with some degree of accuracy and the use of sociological language and concepts.

Q.8 (a) Most candidates were able to write something relevant though there was confusion as to the difference between informal and formal education. Please note that there was no requirement to specify a difference and candidates were not penalised if they did not clarify this point.

(b) This was generally well answered, where candidates were aware of the term.

(c) This was generally well handled although some candidates struggled with the idea of material deprivation.

Q.9 (a) Generally this was well handled, though there was a focus on negative aspects of the portrayal of youth. Those who discussed moral panics were well rewarded. In addition, those who referred to anorexic models or sportive bodies for males were also well rewarded.

(b) Many candidates were not aware of the meaning of the term. Nevertheless, those who understood the concept and were able to explain how the media may create deviance were well rewarded.

(c) This was generally well handled, but often at a simple level. Those who handled it best were those who focused on news values. Some candidates wrote at length about proprietors and social theory. This was accepted where it was made relevant to the question. There is a possibility that some able candidates were so anxious to show off their knowledge that they did not look hard at the command.

Q.10 (a) Increasing numbers of centres are offering this option and teaching to it. They are to be commended as there are fewer resources available than for the more familiar topics. Those candidates who understood the question were highly successful.

(b) These answers tended towards the personal, sometimes with anecdotal references. Some referred to participation rather than attendance, but if the points were relevant, they were credited.

(c) Those who had studied the topic and could refer to a range of reasons and explain them did well. There were a number of creditable responses referring to popularity of some sports, financial opportunity, action, televisual appeal, nationality, and gender.
Unit 2

Section A

Q.1 Most candidates gained full marks on this section.

Q.2 Most candidates were able to read and extract information from the graph. Most gained three marks for question 2 (c).

Q.3 Many candidates struggled with the concept of ethnicity. Question 3 (e) proved very challenging in that problems were identified, but they were not ethical issues. Most identified sociological reasons for racism in terms of socialisation.

Q.4 The first parts of this question were handled well, in general. Question 4 (d), not well handled, despite this being a very similar question to one in the sample materials and in Unit 1 last year. Responses were weak in terms of technical language and contextualisation. Many wrote in very general terms about official statistics. For question 4 (f), it might be wise to suggest that boxes indicate a closed question.

Q.5 This was not handled very well. Few, if any, were aware of the context of culture of poverty, though there were those who managed to do very well, and even to refer to the New Right and the Underclass.

Q.6 This was generally well handled, though question (d) elicited vague responses with overlap between the two reasons why women were in positions of power.

Section B

Question 9 was the most popular choice.

Q.7 (a) Most candidates were able to write something relevant though many answers were vague and based on common sense.

(b) This was the weakest section, with a large number of candidates referring to money alone.

(c) This section was well handled by those who had studied the topic. Many answers were vague and referred to the Industrial Revolution without much consideration of very recent history.

Q.8 (a) Most candidates answered this question well.

(b) This was generally well answered, where candidates were aware of the topic.

(c) This was generally well handled.

Q.9 (a) Generally this was well done, but, although many were aware of the meaning of crime, there was considerable confusion as to deviance, with many suggesting that it was a lesser crime.

(b) This was generally well answered. Many different reasons were offered and some even referred to the miner's strike and the politicisation of the police, including references to kettling.

(c) This was generally well handled, but often at a simple level.
Q.10  (a) Increasing numbers of centres are offering this option and teaching to it. They are to be commended as there are fewer resources available than for the more familiar topics. Those candidates who understood the question were highly successful.

(b) These answers tended towards the personal, sometimes with anecdotal references.

(c) Those who had studied the topic and were able to refer to a range of reasons and explain them did well.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank centres for their hard work in preparing candidates. We would be grateful for constructive feedback at CPD sessions and via the subject officer.