

Families (Paper 1)

In this section we look at what the Families section of Paper 1 will look like, with some possible questions and marked candidate responses.*

*Please be aware that marks are advisory, based on sample AQA materials. Examination grade boundaries and marking guidance change annually – please visit the official AQA website for more information.

01 Which term is commonly used by sociologists to describe a marriage where domestic roles are not shared? [1 mark]

- A Traditional conjugal roles
- B Modern conjugal roles
- C Joint conjugal roles
- D Segregated conjugal roles 1/1

Tip: Read these questions carefully! Often, in the hurry to get started, candidates can misread the question and lose what is essentially an easy mark.

02 Identify and describe how economic dependency can affect the power relationship within families. [3 marks]

Economic dependency is sometimes referred to as covert power and is where one or more members of a family are financially dependent on another family member. Traditionally, women have been economically dependent on men in families, as traditional views have meant that men have worked to earn money and women took on work in the home.

Tip: In the exam you will simply need to tick whichever you think is the correct answer.

Examiner comment: This is a good example of a 'partial description'. Although the candidate shows an understanding of what economic dependence is and how it might look within a family, they do not say how economic dependence affects the 'power balance' within a family – for example, by giving the breadwinner more of a say in what they buy. 2/3

Item A

This bulletin (from the Office for National Statistics) presents annual statistics for 1996 to 2015 on the number of families by type, people in families by type and children in families by type.

- In 2015 there were 18.7 million families in the UK.
- The most common family type in 2015 was the married or civil partner couple family with or without dependent children, at 12.5 million.
- The cohabiting couple family continues to be the fastest growing family type in the UK in 2015, reaching 3.2 million cohabiting couple families.
- In 2015 around 40 per cent of young adults aged 15 to 34 in the UK were living with their parents.
- There were 27.0 million households in the UK in 2015; 35 per cent of all households were two-person households.
- In 2015 there were 7.7 million people in UK households who were living alone.

Source: Office for National Statistics (2015), November.

Tip: Be sure to study items carefully. Pay extra attention to things such as dates and who conducted the research, as this will be crucial to answering the next couple of questions, which will test how well you have read the item. You could be asked about the type of research methods that the researcher has used, strengths or weaknesses of the research, or even to identify trends, patterns or make observations.

Tip: The three questions that follow in the actual exam will expect you to have the 'context' of this item in mind. Try to refer to it whenever you can!

03 From Item A, examine one weakness of the research. [2 marks]

The research in item A is quantitative research conducted by a government body 'the Office for National Statistics'. Such research does not tell sociologists anything about the experience of individuals in their families, only what family types

Tip: This question is testing how well you can read and analyse Item A!

are common or not in the UK. For example, sociologists might be interested in the reasons why 35 per cent of all households are two-person households in 2015 but this research does not provide anything other than the statistics.

04 Identify and explain one factor that may have led to the growth in cohabiting couple families referred to in Item A. [4 marks]

Item A shows that cohabiting couples are the fastest growing family type in the UK, reaching over 3 million in 2015. One factor that may have led to this is secularisation in UK society; this refers to the fact that religion (for example, the Church) is now less influential over people's lives and in forming social attitudes in society (research in 2015 revealed that 28 per cent of the UK had no religious beliefs and that this was increasing yearly). The Church has tended to see sex outside marriage and having children 'out of wedlock' as unacceptable.

05 Discuss how far sociologists agree that families are the main agent of socialisation. [12 marks]

Sociologists would have differing views about the importance of family in socialising individuals; while some would argue that they are the main agent of socialisation, others might say other agencies of socialisation such as the media are more influential.

Socialisation refers to the process through which individuals learn the norms and values of society, such as how to behave in public and how to use a knife and fork. Families are an agent of 'primary' socialisation; this means they are often the main or only agent for individuals in the early stages of their lives. As they are the first part of socialisation and the only agent present through our whole lives, some sociologists may say this makes them the main agent.

However, there are lots of other 'secondary' agents of socialisation such as the media, school and our peers/friends. Schools play a large part in our socialisation, teaching us things about the world and enforcing standards and expectations such as punctuality through the hidden curriculum so we behave the way society expects us to when we go to work. As you get older, you may even spend more time at school than with your family, so although school is not a primary agent of socialisation it takes over as the main agent. Despite this, your family are often involved in your school life and have a choice in what school you attend; they may only choose schools that support their own values (for example, a faith school). This would mean family remains the main agent of socialisation, as they have control over where and how you are educated.

Some sociologists would argue that the media is the main agent of socialisation; you are exposed to the media from a very young age (such as children's TV programmes).

Examiner comment: This response scores full marks. 1 mark is awarded for successfully analysing the item: the candidate has spotted that the research is quantitative data from the Office for National Statistics and has given an appropriate weakness of such data. The second mark is awarded as the candidate has successfully evaluated the reason they have given (sociologists may want to know reasons behind statistics.) 2/2

Examiner comment: This is a good response where the candidate has successfully identified a factor (secularisation) and given a brief explanation. To score the missing mark, the candidate would need to have explicitly linked secularisation to the context of the item, e.g. because the Church's attitude may no longer be accepted, people are now comfortable to cohabit and so this could be causing the increase in this family type we see in Item A. 3/4

Tip: In the essays, you are being assessed on four things: 1. Sociological knowledge (AO1: 4 marks); 2. Your ability to apply knowledge of theories, research and methods (AO2: 4 marks); 3. Your ability to evaluate sociological theories and concepts (AO3: 4 marks); 4. Your ability to write clearly and coherently, spelling well and using specialist terms accurately will affect the total mark you receive. If your response is not well structured (for example, in bullet points), even if you have demonstrated knowledge, application and evaluation, you will be unable to go beyond 7–9 marks.

Examiner comment: The candidate shows a good understanding of the concept of socialisation and some of the agents involved. They have mentioned peers but this point is not developed. The response is relevant to the question; note how the candidate refers back to family as an agent of socialisation in every paragraph in comparison to the other agents of socialisation. To raise the mark, the candidate could reach a conclusion that explicitly addresses the issue of 'how far'. 9/12

Crime and deviance (Paper 2)

In this section we look at what the Crime and deviance section of Paper 2 will look like, with some possible questions and marked candidate responses.*

*Please be aware that marks are advisory, based on sample AQA materials. Examination grade boundaries and marking guidance change annually – please visit the official AQA website for more information.

- 01 What type of sociological research asks people about crimes they have experienced? [1 mark]

- A Self-report surveys
- B Victim surveys 1/1
- C Police reports
- D Official statistics

Tip: Read these questions carefully! Often in the hurry to get started, candidates can misread the question and lose what is essentially an easy mark.

- 02 Identify and describe one formal agency of social control. [3 marks]

Formal social control refers to written rules and the law in society. Agencies of social control seek to enforce these laws and rules. One formal agency of social control would be the police, who investigate crimes and ensure that the people who break the laws are sent to prison, which means that people will obey the rules, as they do not want to be punished.

Tip: In the exam, you simply need to tick whichever you think is the correct answer.

Examiner comment: This is a good example of a concise response which scores full marks. This candidate has shown a clear understanding of what formal social control is and described the role the police have in enforcing social control and how fear of punishment ensures that people follow the rules. 3/3

- 03 Describe one example of deviant behaviour. [3 marks]

Deviant behaviour is behaviour that goes against the norms and values of society. For example, if you were to go outside naked this would not be seen as normal.

Examiner comment: This candidate has demonstrated some understanding of what deviant behaviour is. This candidate needed to develop their explanation of what sociologists mean by 'norms and values' to score the extra mark. 2/3

Item A

Worry about crime

The British Crime Survey (BCS) asked approximately 50 000 people aged 16 and over about the crimes they had experienced in the last year. Respondents had to be a resident in a private household.

BSC respondents were questioned on their worry about crime. The following information shows changes in the proportion of people who answered that they were 'very worried' about burglary, violent crime and car crime.

Percentages of respondents who answered 'very worried' when asked how worried they were about particular crimes (England and Wales)

	2000	2006/07
Burglary	19	13
Violent crime	24	17
Car crime	21	13

Source: adapted from *Social Trends* (2008)

Tip: Be sure to study items carefully. Pay extra attention to things such as dates and who conducted the research, as this is crucial to answering the next question, which tests how well you have read the item. You could be asked about the type of research methods that the researcher used, strengths or weaknesses of the research, or even to identify trends, patterns or make observations.

Tip: The three questions that follow in the actual exam will expect you to have the 'context' of this item in mind. Try to refer to it whenever you can!

- 04 From Item A, examine one weakness of the research. [2 marks]

One weakness of the research in Item A is that it only asked people who were residents in private households. This may mean it does not give you a true picture of 'worry about crime'.

Tip: This question is testing how well you can read and analyse Item A!

Examiner comment: This candidate has identified a weakness with the sampling frame for the research (private households), which is enough to score them 1 mark. The development of why this is a weakness, implying that the sample may mean the researcher's findings are not a 'true picture', scores the second mark for this question. 2/2

- 05 Identify and explain one disadvantage of using covert observation to investigate criminal behaviour. [4 marks]

Covert observation is when you observe people without their knowledge. One disadvantage of using covert observation to investigate criminal behaviour would be that it could be dangerous to the researcher. The researcher will have to keep their real identity a secret otherwise the research may not be valid, but this might mean they have to do things like lie and hide cameras. If the researcher was discovered the criminals may hurt them; if the researcher used overt observation they would not be at risk as everyone would know who they are.

Examiner comment: The candidate shows a clear understanding of what covert observation is and explains a weakness of using it in the context of research into criminal activity. The comparison with overt observation as a safer method makes this a very strong answer. 4/4

- 06 Identify and describe one way the government has tried to reduce anti-social behaviour in recent years. [4 marks]

The government introduced criminal behaviour orders (CBOs) in 2014; these orders meant that the police could put restrictions on what people convicted of anti-social behaviour offences could do. The police can tell people with CBOs that they are not allowed to do certain things or meet certain people; they can also tell them to go to things such as rehab if they need to. If people break their CBO they can go to prison (which is not the case if they break ASBOs), so these acts stop them from committing more anti-social behaviour.

Tip: When a question says 'recent' years, examiners are looking for examples from the last 20 years or so. Try not to write about policies older than this.

Examiner comment: This is a good response where the candidate has shown a strong understanding of a recent government policy. They have explained what CBOs are and why they might reduce anti-social behaviour. Although only briefly, they compare them to ASBOs, implying they may be more effective. 4/4

- 07 Discuss how far sociologists agree that the middle class is less likely to commit crime than other social classes. [12 marks]

Sociologists would have different ideas about whether the middle class is less likely to commit crime than other classes.

Some sociologists would agree that the middle class is less likely to commit crime as they do not need the money or anything. Working class people may be poor and want things that others have and so commit crime, whereas the middle class have these things already.

Other sociologists may disagree and say that the middle class do commit lots of crime but they do things like tax evasion and stealing pens from work, so it is not that they commit less crime it is just different.

Tip: In the essays, you are being assessed on four things: 1. Sociological knowledge (AO1: 4 marks); 2. Your ability to apply knowledge of theories, research and methods (AO2: 4 marks); 3. Your ability to evaluate sociological theories and concepts (AO3: 4 marks); 4. Your ability to write clearly and coherently, spelling well and using specialist terms accurately will affect the total mark you receive. If your response is not well structured (for example, in bullet points), even if you have demonstrated knowledge, application and evaluation, you will be unable to go beyond 7–9 marks.

Examiner comment: The candidate has shown only a very limited understanding of sociological arguments about class and crime, making only two real points. This candidate would have scored more marks if they had explained their sociological terms more and given more points to support agreement/disagreement with the statement. 3/12