



# Sociology

**GCSE**

**Sociology**

Unit B672

Exemplar Responses and  
Commentaries 2014

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The sample answers in this resource have been extracted from original candidate scripts to maintain their authenticity.

## QUESTION 3: EXEMPLAR 1

8 MARKS

3 Identify and explain **two** ways family roles might not be equal.

[8]

Feminists argue that family roles benefit men at the expense of women. Women are more naturally obliged to take a leading role in emotional support, primary socialization and physical support because it is more suited to them. Men aren't expected to take such an active part in ~~the~~ emotional + physical support and primary socialization which creates extra work for them.

Women suffer from the glass ceiling effect and often fall prey to the part-time trap so women work but also have to juggle housework and childcare, this is known as triple shift. Women have to look after the children, the husband, the elderly and the home whilst still working, whereas men only have to work, so the family roles aren't equal.

## COMMENTARY

### MARKS AWARDED

**8 marks**

### WHY DID IT ACHIEVE THE MARKS?

This response received full marks. The two ways that family roles may not be equal are clear: women as primary emotional and physical care givers alongside women suffering at the hands of the part time trap. There is a wide range of sociological concepts used: feminist, types of socialisation, functions of the family, part time trap (the specification gives examples of concepts available for use, although others are credited). Both ideas are explained clearly and developed by showing the alternate position of men.

## QUESTION 3: EXEMPLAR 2

4 MARKS

3 Identify and explain **two** ways family roles might not be equal.

[8]

family roles may not be equal because women spend more time ~~longer~~ than men at housework chores.

family roles also may not be equal because men have been known to be the breadmaker.

## COMMENTARY

### MARKS AWARDED

**4 marks**

### WHY DID IT ACHIEVE THE MARKS?

AO1: There are two clear ideas here and thus the answer picked up one AO1 mark for each.

AO2: The answer only received 2 marks as there was a basic ability to apply ideas i.e. explain or give examples.

### HOW THE ANSWER COULD BE IMPROVED

Whilst the structure is a good one i.e. two separate paragraphs, this answer needed planning first. Candidates need to try and think of two different ways family roles are unequal. For weaker candidates answers often overlap and thus do not receive full AO2 marks, so looking at other members of the family and considering inequality may have helped. This candidate also does not include any sociological knowledge i.e. concepts/studies or theory and thus only reaches basic on the AO1 mark. Writing frames for weaker students should ensure they find a reason, explain the reason ensuring a key concept/evidence is used, then give an example or effect of their idea to ensure they fully develop their idea. A common issue was choosing two ways when referring to domestic roles e.g. women do more, men do less in the home – then – second way, men do work, women do less work which led to repetition and failing to gain the top marks.

## QUESTION 7: EXEMPLAR 3

8 MARKS

7 Identify and explain **two** changes in education since 1988.

[8]

Since 1988 many changes have been made. Annual tests such as SATS and GCSE's have been brought in to test a child's ability and to see how well schools are performing. These replaced the 11+ test and O-levels. SATS are taken by year 6 children and GCSE's are taken by year 10 and 11 students.

Another change that has been made is the use of school league tables. These are national statistics that put all the schools in the country into a table of best and worst performing schools. These tables can help parents to decide on which school is best to send their children.



## COMMENTARY

### MARKS AWARDED

**8 marks**

### WHY DID IT ACHIEVE THE MARKS?

This has two clear changes to education: League tables and SATS. Both are explained and both developed. For example the second idea of league tables is explained and then developed by explaining how parents use them. Both changes are using sociological knowledge by using the correct name and thus the answer receives full marks.

## QUESTION 7: EXEMPLAR 4

2 MARKS

7 Identify and explain **two** changes in education since 1988.

[8]

Many things have happened which has lead to changes in education. Many exams such as GCSE's now have different structure and depending on what year you took your exams depends on when in your life you took them compared to everyone else. The exams have changed for us now so all the exams are at the end of year 11 when they ~~used~~ used to be spread out across the year. Another way education has changed is that teachers now need to be more qualified than they were before to enable them to teach.

## COMMENTARY

### MARKS AWARDED

**2 marks**

### WHY DID IT ACHIEVE THE MARKS?

AO1: This response received one AO1 mark for being aware of some change to GCSE's and their structure and when they are sat.

AO2: The answer received one mark for AO2 as the idea is limited, but relevant.

### HOW THE ANSWER COULD BE IMPROVED

The candidate needed two examples of changes since 1988. Many candidates lost marks citing changes from pre 1988. The candidate needed to be far more precise in what was the change in education that is verifiable such as citing Ofsted, National Curriculum, League Tables. The idea presented was stated without clear explanation or development. Writing frames for weaker students should ensure they find a change, explain the change ensuring a verifiable policy change has been used, then give an example or effect of their change to ensure they fully develop their idea.

## QUESTION 19: EXEMPLAR 5

8 MARKS

3 Identify and explain **two** examples of actions that are only deviant in a certain situation.

[8]

One example of situational deviance is swearing. If with a group of peers who are of a similar status and age swearing is tolerated more than if a person swears in a professional situation such as at a teacher interview or swears to a member of society who is respected, the mayor for example.

Another example of situational deviance is laughing. It is appropriate to laugh at a comedy club or whilst telling jokes, yet it is deviant to laugh at a funeral or at the failure of a peer because it is seen as disrespectful and against the norm of respecting one another.

## COMMENTARY

### MARKS AWARDED

**8 marks**

### WHY DID IT ACHIEVE THE MARKS?

AO1: The candidate was awarded level 4 as the answer includes two clear deviant acts and there is good use of sociological concepts as evidence e.g. situational deviance and norms.

AO2: The candidate was awarded level 4 as both ideas clearly explain what their deviant act is and why it is situational.

## QUESTION 19: EXEMPLAR 6

4 MARKS

3 Identify and explain **two** examples of actions that are only deviant in a certain situation.

[8]

one example is that is you were drunk at 11 o'clock in the morning it would be looked upon as bad but it ~~was~~ could be fine if you were drunk at 11 o'clock in the evening. This works like this with many other situations.

Another ~~examp~~ example is that that you is ~~freer~~ looks bad if you punch somebody in the street but in a boxing match is what you are meant to do. Punching someone in the street can be an ~~of~~ offence but doing it with rules is ok.

## COMMENTARY

### MARKS AWARDED

**4 marks**

### WHY DID IT ACHIEVE THE MARKS?

There are two clear ideas: being drunk at 11am and punching someone in the face in the street. For neither answer did the candidate use any sociological concepts/evidence. For AO2 both ideas had a little explanation e.g. where the act would not be deviant, but neither were fully developed.

### HOW THE ANSWER COULD BE IMPROVED

They could have used terms such as “situational deviance” or “positional deviance” to gain full marks for AO1. For AO2, a possible way to develop the ideas would be to show what norms / values are being broken e.g. the value of personal safety.

Writing frames for weaker students should ensure they find an act, explain why/when it is deviant then label what type of deviance this is an example of (historical, situational, cross cultural or positional).

## QUESTION 23: EXEMPLAR 7

8 MARKS

23 Identify and explain **two** reasons why childhood is **not** disappearing.

[8]

Children remain protected through the law and Child Right Acts because the age of consent is 16, children can't marry without parental permission until they are 18. It is also illegal for children under the age of 14 to work. All the legislation prevents childhood from disappearing and returning to the Middle Ages when adulthood began at 6 as Philippe Ariès believed. Education has been extended, all students must remain in education until they are 18. This prevents them from getting a full time job and being financially independent - they still have to depend on their family to fund their life, hence not yet an individual adult.



## COMMENTARY

### MARKS AWARDED

**8 marks**

### WHY DID IT ACHIEVE THE MARKS?

AO1: The candidate was awarded level 4 for two clearly different ways childhood is not disappearing. The candidate is succinct and substantiates their ideas with examples of laws and gains full marks.

AO2: The candidate was awarded level 4 as both ideas are developed and show why the ideas given have resulted in childhood not disappearing.

## QUESTION 23: EXEMPLAR 8

4 MARKS

23 Identify and explain **two** reasons why childhood is **not** disappearing.

[8]

- Childhood is not disappearing because ~~the~~ children are manipulated and canalised into their gender roles at a young age. Parents teach the children norms and values ~~etc~~ at a young age which prepares them for adulthood. ~~to~~ Without childhood children are unable to progress to adulthood which is the secondary socialisation. Childhood teaches children the rights and wrongs in society (values) and the way they are expected to behave (norms)

## COMMENTARY

### MARKS AWARDED

**4 marks**

### WHY DID IT ACHIEVE THE MARKS?

AO1: This answer is based only on one idea: socialisation occurs with gender and norms and values, but it did gain 2 marks for AO1 as it had some sociological evidence: manipulation/socialisation etc. If only one idea is given it cannot be awarded more than 2 marks for AO1 no matter how much evidence is used.

AO2: As only one idea is referred to, although developed, it cannot be awarded more than 2 marks.

### HOW THE ANSWER COULD BE IMPROVED

The candidate needed to plan ahead and consider two discreet examples of how childhood has not disappeared. Writing frames for weaker students should ensure they find two ways childhood has not disappeared. The candidate needed a more diverse base than just family, they should have considered the law, education and other areas of social life.

**QUESTION 4: EXEMPLAR 9**

24 MARKS

4 'Divorce has increased due to changes in the law.'

Evaluate the arguments for and against this claim.

[24]

For	Against
irretrievable breakdown	women are more supported. socialisation, stigma expectations

In 1970 the divorce reform act was passed which means that men and women can get a divorce simply because their marriage isn't working, nobody has to be blamed. Before the divorce reform act was passed people had to go to the Houses of Parliament and ask for a divorce and somebody had to be at fault eg committing adultery or being abusive. Only about 400 people got divorced in the 1800s but in the last 10 years about 17,000 people have gotten divorced. As it is now easier to get a divorce, it is becoming more popular and more people are doing it.

The equal rights movement and equal pay act mean that women are earning a lot more and are offered equal opportunities. As a result of this, women are able to support themselves much more, as they earn more and are respected more. Due to this, women

aren't afraid to ask for a divorce and are more confident in the fact that they can look after themselves and their children. Divorce rates have increased because women are more equal and therefore aren't afraid to live on their own.

Another reason divorce has increased is due to the secularisation of society. Society has become less religious and therefore they don't go to church as a sin to get divorced. Also there is less of a stigma towards divorced couples, people used to be shunned for getting a divorce. As divorces have become more accepted by society, they happen more often because people don't feel so ashamed for getting them.

This is due to the media raising expectations of marriage, now women are disappointed when they enter a marriage and therefore search for a divorce. Magazines encourage women to get married and tell them how lovely it will be, TV shows and movies over sell weddings and behaviours husbands behaviours, because of this a lot of women think marriages will be very lovely and jump right into it. However not the case and when marriages don't live up to their expectations, a lot of women file for a divorce. So high expectations <sup>an increase in</sup> cause divorce.

I think the change in laws has had a large impact on the increase in divorces but I don't think that it is the only factor. I think a range of factors have caused the increase in divorce.

# COMMENTARY

## MARKS AWARDED

**24 marks**

## WHY DID IT ACHIEVE THE MARKS?

AO1: This is a clear full mark answer. It makes good use of relevant key concepts such as: secularisation, stigma, Divorce Reform Act, Equal Pay Act all showing good understanding and accuracy.

AO2: Full marks are awarded as there are four fully developed points - which is the minimum required for full marks.

AO3: The candidate was awarded level 4 full marks. It is not a balanced debate as it has 3 points of justification and 1 evaluation, but as the mark scheme shows it has a clear, explicit wide ranging (just) debate with a clear conclusion and this is enough for full marks.

## QUESTION 4: EXEMPLAR 10

12 MARKS

4 'Divorce has increased due to changes in the law.'

Evaluate the arguments for and against this claim.

[24]

Divorce rates have dramatically increased in recent years. This is partially because of changes in the law, but it is also affected by other factors like attitudes.

Changes in the law mean it is now possible to ~~divorce~~ get a divorce after just one year. This means people can get divorced much easier so they are far less likely to stay together.

On the other hand attitudes towards marriage and divorce have changed. Religion is far less important today so people see no reason to stay with a partner. This is another large factor that affects divorce.



The law makes it easier to leave a partner if they are abusive. The dark side of the family is easier to stop if the law allows you to leave early. This means the law is the reason they can leave.

However the law may make it easy to leave but the dark side of the family is the reason why they leave so regardless of the law it is because of the dark side that they leave.

As attitudes change people feel less of an urge to stay in a marriage that clearly isn't working. This causes them to just up and leave with or without the law making it easy.

The law is a factor in divorce rates but it isn't the only one. Attitudes are changing divorce rates but an easy exit from the ~~law~~ law is a good ~~reason~~ reason not to hang around.

## COMMENTARY

### MARKS AWARDED

**12 marks**

### WHY DID IT ACHIEVE THE MARKS?

This is a good example of an implicitly sociological debate.

AO1: There is only one sociological concept: dark side of the family. Without the evidence it cannot be awarded above level 2 basic.

AO2: There were four relevant ideas that were underdeveloped. This would therefore normally be awarded level 3, but as there is only a basic level of knowledge, as stated in the mark scheme this response cannot be credited beyond basic, as there is not the sociology to apply.

AO3: There is an explicit and wide ranging debate (two ideas for and two against) but again as the mark scheme states there has to be above basic AO1 to rise out of basic for AO2 and AO3.

### HOW THE ANSWER COULD BE IMPROVED

This answer needed four pieces for sociological evidence. Ideas such as naming legal changes: 1969 Divorce Reform Act and 1984 Family Law Act, but also the Equal Pay Act 1975 and/or Sex Discrimination Act 1975 or other popular alternatives were secularisation, longer life expectancy, changing attitudes of women and societal acceptance of divorce becoming a norm.

With wide ranging AO1 this would have scored very highly.

## QUESTION 8: EXEMPLAR 11

24 MARKS

4 'Schools are only there to control students' behaviour.'

Evaluate the arguments for and against this claim.

[24]

Schools have 5 primary functions, <sup>which include political, economic, socialisation and selection</sup> One of these is an informal agency of social control because although schools control behaviour this is not their primary function. Schools control behaviour through positive and negative sanctions, if a student hasn't completed their homework or is late to lesson they may be punished with the negative sanction of a detention to reinforce the deviance of their actions. Marxists argue that the social control role of school is to ensure that all students conform to the norms of the most powerful group in society. Schools also use positive sanctions to control behaviour by rewarding students with praise if they achieve a high grade.

However, schools also have an economic role when they prepare all students for work in society through teaching them new skills and knowledge needed for the work place. This then benefits society as the students are well prepared to succeed in their jobs, economically benefiting society. Functionalists agree that it is through the economic role when every student is given an equal opportunity at success because of their meritocratic belief in meritocracy when as long as the student puts effort in to their education any student can gain the top professions as allowed by the equal content of teaching to all.

On the other hand, schools also control behaviour through the hidden curriculum when segregation occurs between the genders, boys are manipulated to study resistant materials whereas girls are encouraged to take food technology. This is to control the gender identity of students, to ensure they behave correctly for their gender.

Conversely, schools also have a selective role when they ~~select~~ select and push students into a specific career path.

according to their ability. Schools sort out the strengths and weaknesses of students and attempt to find a job suitable for them. This is important as it ensures that the best person is doing a specific job later in life, as functionalists believe. Marxists would agree that Middle Class students are pushed into middle class jobs with a profession, despite their educational ability.

Overall to conclude that schools only exist to control behaviour is a reductionist argument because schools have many more functions than just to control behaviour. In order for the statement to be correct a more holistic view should be taken, appreciating other functions of education.

## COMMENTARY

### MARKS AWARDED

**24 marks**

### WHY DID IT ACHIEVE THE MARKS?

This is a clear full mark answer. Application and Interpretation are all used to accurately debate whether schools are only there to control students. Whilst it contains sociology that is wide ranging its strength is in its real understanding of the debate. It is nice to see GCSE candidates using A level concepts with accuracy and this seems to be a positive trend at the top end, showing centres stretching their most gifted and talented students.

## QUESTION 8: EXEMPLAR 12

18 MARKS

4 'Schools are only there to control students' behaviour.'

Evaluate the arguments for and against this claim.

[24]

Schools are an example of formal socialisation. This means that schools will teach their students what is acceptable behaviour in society. They will teach them this using the hidden curriculum which is an unwritten curriculum where through learning other things they will also learn the correct behaviour society accepts. So going back to the statement schools are not here to control students' behaviour, but to teach them how society finds it acceptable for them to behave.

on the other hand if schools are not there to control students' behaviour then why do they have so many punishments and reward systems? Schools educate the students by controlling their behaviour. Schools are too controlling of students,

especially in more recent times. Students are told what they can and can't wear, what ~~they~~ their attitude towards different things should be and in some schools are told where they can and can't sit during lessons, break and lunch. New health and safety rules that are being constantly added and adapted / changed are also controlling the way students behave. They are being told too often about things they can and can't do. Some are just a joke but others are so ridiculous the students are no longer allowed to enjoy school. Also there are a lot of examples where if you control someone's behaviour too much they will eventually stop and their behaviour will be bad because students are so used to being controlled.

To conclude I disagree with the marxist statement, I do agree that schools are very controlling but they are there to educate, socialise and sometimes the schools have to be controlling otherwise the students will leave school under the



impression that when they go out to work/  
into the world they can do whatever they  
like and get away with it.

## COMMENTARY

### MARKS AWARDED

**18 marks**

### WHY DID IT ACHIEVE THE MARKS?

AO1: This response was just awarded a level three (5 marks) as it had 3 question specific concepts/evidence (hidden curriculum, Marxist, socialise) but is bottom of the level as it lacks some clarity and fluency.

AO2: The candidate was awarded top of level three as their answer had one developed idea and three underdeveloped. The candidate was starting to develop ideas, all of which were relevant.

AO3: This response was awarded the top level (4) as it had a range of for and against, but it was taken to the bottom of the level as the ideas were not always clearly expressed.

### HOW THE ANSWER COULD BE IMPROVED

The answer needed to stay more focussed on the question: functions of education. The best responses looked at sanctions, gender socialisation, Marxist and Feminist ideas, evaluating them with other agents such as family and peers. Another clear way of answering was to debate the functions of education: socialisation, economic, selection etc. There should be four (minimum) clear paragraphs. This candidate also needed to develop more ideas, often successfully done through examples. For example the candidate could have shown an example of the hidden curriculum and how it controls behaviour which would have developed the first point. To gain full evaluation marks, this answer would need to be clearer as it lacks clarity and fluency in places.

## QUESTION 20: EXEMPLAR 13

24 MARKS

4 'Formal agencies are most effective for controlling crime.'

Evaluate the arguments for and against this claim.

[24]

Informed agencies and formal agencies of social control exist to control behaviour and prevent deviance both legal and illegal. Formal agencies of social control consist of the penal system, courts, police and government/law. These agencies have the primary function of controlling criminal behaviour. They use Prison is part of the penal system and it controls behaviour through deterrence, rehabilitation, and punishment. It is an effective deterrent as ~~rather than~~ potential criminals who are contemplating committing a crime has not due to the fear of a prison sentence when they are stripped of their freedom, a value of society. The police are also very influential in controlling crime because they have the power to enforce the law if they see it being broken through arrest and physical force if necessary. However, formal agencies aren't

always effective because 75% of criminals re-offend in their first two years after they have served their sentence. This illustrates how prison isn't a big enough deterrent for preventing crime or is effective at reforming criminals. However, the police aren't always effective because they tend to target young, black males from the working class, as discovered by Acorn's investigation. Therefore they aren't effective at policing white collar crime. Furthermore, many police are also biased towards male criminals because of the Chivalry Thesis.

Informal agencies of social control have an effect on controlling behaviour. During primary and secondary socialisation enforced by ~~state~~ education, family and peers it is shown that crime is deviant therefore in order to conform to society certain actions must not be committed. Informal agencies of social control may also be more effective than formal agencies because agencies such as religion, family and education surround people all the time therefore these agencies are more likely to be imperiousible as a person. Informal agencies are also the first to enforce

Informal agencies are also the first to enforce negative reactions, ~~on that~~ This permits individuals to realise what is right and wrong in society but also gain a fear of punishment which acts as a great deterrent. However, informal agencies do have their limitation because if from a disfunctional family with a missing role needed to look up to adolescents are likely to turn to their peer or gangs in order to feel the sense of belonging the sociologist Miller discovered was so vital to youths. This group of peers or the gang may value crime and see it as a means of transgression and going against society to alleviate their status frustration. If a person becomes involved in this then their peer group, which is identified as a form of social control, may persuade them to commit crime.

In conclusion, both formal and informal agencies of control are needed to prevent crime because there are limitations to them both which prevent them from being effective alone. However, combined there is more influence and reinforcement on the social intolerance of crime.

## COMMENTARY

### MARKS AWARDED

**24 marks**

### WHY DID IT ACHIEVE THE MARKS?

AO1: This response was awarded level 4 for excellent use of a variety of forms of evidence. There is wide ranging evidence of the types of formal controls as well as types of crime. All are clearly accurate and well understood.

AO2: This response was awarded Level 4. Every idea was developed, making excellent use of examples.

AO3: This response was awarded Level 4. A wide ranging debate, with clear structure and conclusion.

## QUESTION 20: EXEMPLAR 14

15 MARKS

4 'Formal agencies are most effective for controlling crime.'

Evaluate the arguments for and against this claim.

[24]

Formal agencies are most effective for controlling crime because it is their job to enforce the law on everyone and in society. Their ways of punishment are a lot more valued than other agencies such as parents, teachers etc.

Formal agencies have a lot more power and most people are threatened by them. Most people know that once the police are involved it is a serious problem. The police have the power to fine you or send you to prison. This thought can scare a lot of people so they don't act up.

~~After prison~~ After prison lots of people do not re-offend because prison was a good way of controlling crime but some do because they don't mind being in

Prison ~~and~~ for example some drug users like going to prison to have detox which is where you get off drugs for free they find it useful. Also homeless people don't mind it because it's a place to stay and they provide three ~~meals~~ meals a day.

~~I think that formal~~ Some people ~~don't~~ are not threatened by formal ~~social~~ control but are by informal such as family members, peers or education. They can all control how some people act ~~but~~ they can do this with words or many other ways.

I think that formal control is the most effective because ~~that~~ the police have lots of power over everyone and can enforce the law on to lots of different people.



## COMMENTARY

### MARKS AWARDED

**15 marks**

### WHY DID IT ACHIEVE THE MARKS?

AO1: This response was only awarded three marks, bottom of level 2 (basic) as it relies on implicit sociology with hardly any evidence/key concepts.

AO2: The response was very well developed, but as stated in the mark scheme if the AO1 is level 2 (basic) or level 1 (limited) it cannot be awarded above basic for AO2 as there is not the knowledge to apply.

AO3: Despite being wide ranging in its debate (2 ideas for and 2 against) this answer again cannot be awarded above level 2 (basic) due to not having the sociology to evaluate.

### HOW THE ANSWER COULD BE IMPROVED

This response needed evidence. Other successful candidates discussed: types of social control i.e. formal v informal and looked at different types of punishment e.g. prison v detentions. They used concepts such as hidden curriculum, sanctions and primary socialisation alongside the functions of punishment: deterrence and rehabilitation to substantiate their ideas. This was an essay that needed substantiation/evidence.

## QUESTION 24: EXEMPLAR 15

24 MARKS

24 'Young people join gangs to make friends.'

Evaluate the arguments for and against this claim.

[24]

During adolescence, in Western culture, due to the long transition period between childhood and adulthood, functionalists such as Eisenstadt believe that many youth turn to their peers for emotional support during this time in "limbo" because they understand and appreciate the hardship a teenage goes through. This could contribute to the motivation to join a gang in order to be with friends and peers who understand the hardship which youths are facing. Young people may join a gang to gain the sense of belonging which they feel deprived of but achieve through being with peers who patently are friends. The motivation to join a gang in order to be with friends is a significant contributing factor because of the large effect peer pressure has on youths.

To add on this, young people may join gangs to achieve a sense of family. Hong Kong culture is most at risk with the working class which is shown to have the greatest number of single parent families. This can cause young people, particularly boys, to feel in need of a role model which can only be achieved by a father figure. It is believed by sociologists that this role model is found for many youths in the gang leader, as they see someone to look up and aspire to be like.

Another reason for the joining of a gang is due to Cohen's theory of status frustration where a young person falls in the bottom of the class hierarchy with no respect or status and has been looked down upon by the social system. This may lead to joining a gang to gain status within that structure through being a delinquent which may lead to criminal activity in order to gain status. Criminal activity in gangs gains status because of hegemonic it being an extension of hegemonic masculinity which provides an aggressive, assertive identity which is respected by the gang providing those who

respected by the gang providing them with  
a sense of status & freedom with huge  
status status.

Additionally, young people may join gangs due  
to teenage boredom. This is a result of  
the high unemployment rate within the  
country leaving many young  
people with nothing to do. However, by  
joining a gang they are provided with  
a reason to live by being with  
peers who are suffering from the effect  
of unemployment too. Due to gangs  
usually being involved in criminal  
activity a sense of tension may be felt  
by members which relieves the boredom.  
Due to the humor can be a

## COMMENTARY

### MARKS AWARDED

**24 marks**

### WHY DID IT ACHIEVE THE MARKS?

AO1: This response was awarded a level 4. There was a variety of excellent evidence used, from key terms to studies and theory. A clear full mark answer

AO2: This response was awarded a level 4. All evidence was relevant, explained and used to debate why gangs are joined.

AO3: The answer was again awarded level 4. A clear debate with excellent evaluative skills demonstrated. Clearly wide-ranging with a very mature conclusion.

## QUESTION 24: EXEMPLAR 16

12 MARKS

24 'Young people join gangs to make friends.'

Evaluate the arguments for and against this claim.

[24]

In this argument I will be providing a for and against essay on the statement 'Young people join gangs to gain friends.' Young people join gangs because of boredom. They have nothing to do so they decide to join gangs. However - there are many other things to do than join gangs, such as ~~leisure~~ leisure activities. They join gangs because they feel left out and want to be a part of a group who are just like them. However this can lead to peer pressure and ~~peeps~~ children being pressured into doing things they don't want to do but

they do it anyway to gain respect and status. Some young people join gangs because they want to ~~be~~ feel respected and wanted in a group. However this may not always be the right choice for them as it can lead them to ~~be~~ being pressured or even threatened. Lastly young people may join gangs because they are being bullied and need that stability of a small group. ~~of Gangs and gangs~~  
~~But~~ However this may result in revenge and serious harm. In conclusion young people join gangs for many different reasons. Girls also join gangs because of "belonging subculture".

# COMMENTARY

## MARKS AWARDED

**12 marks**

## WHY DID IT ACHIEVE THE MARKS?

AO1: This answer was awarded level 3 as it had three relevant sociological concepts/ideas: peer pressure, status and boredom.

AO2: The answer was awarded the bottom of level 3 for having all relevant ideas, but only one was fully developed, thus it only “starts to include developed ideas” (see mark scheme).

AO3: This response only received level 1, limited evaluation, as all ideas evaluated the claim without any clear justification of it. It was awarded one mark as in the introduction it showed an awareness of the debate.

## HOW THE ANSWER COULD BE IMPROVED

Two common problems for this question were: not sticking to the question “gangs” and not making clear what arguments were for or against the claim. This candidate needed to plan their ideas before they wrote them. Candidates that find essays hard should work more on the planning stage ensuring they have a debate clear in their head before they write.

Successful candidates used a plethora of evidence: status frustration (Cohen), sense of belonging (Miller), social networks (Williamson). More width would have helped the candidate to ensure they did not only provide examples of peer influence. This candidate would also have received more marks if they gave examples of their ideas to develop them e.g. how gangs relieve boredom - living in deprived areas there is not much to do, so deviant activities may replace that boredom.



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