



National 5
Coursework
Assessment Task



National 5 Sociology Assignment Assessment task

Valid from session 2017-2018 and until further notice.

This edition: July 2017 (version 1.0)

The information in this publication may be reproduced to support SQA qualifications. This publication must not be reproduced for commercial or trade purposes. **This material is for use by teachers and lecturers.**

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2012, 2017

Contents

Introduction	1
Marking instructions	2
Instructions for candidates	9

Introduction

This document contains marking instructions and instructions for candidates for the National 5 Sociology assignment. It must be read in conjunction with the course specification.

This assignment is worth 30 marks out of a total of 100 marks available for the course assessment.

This is one of two course assessment components. The other component is a question paper.

The assignment is set and externally marked by SQA and conducted in centres under the conditions specified by SQA.

Marking instructions

General marking principles

This information is provided to help you understand the general principles that must be applied when marking candidate responses in this assignment. These principles must be read in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidate responses.

- a Marks for each candidate response must **always** be assigned in line with these general marking principles and the detailed marking instructions for this assignment.
- b Marking should always be positive. This means that, for each candidate response, marks are accumulated for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding: they are not deducted from a maximum on the basis of errors or omissions.
- c Principal assessors will provide guidance on marking specific candidate responses which are not covered by either the general or detailed marking instructions.
- d In presenting their sociologically informed view of a topic in sociology, candidates should show the following skills, knowledge and understanding:
 - A. choosing and describing a topic that is of interest to sociologists
 - B. identifying and describing basic differences between sociological and common-sense explanations of human social behaviour
 - C. using investigation skills to find appropriate sources of information
 - D. organising and interpreting information in sociology
 - E. communicating sociologically informed views

A. Choosing and describing a topic that is of interest to sociologists – maximum of 2 marks available

Candidates describe the topic clearly, giving two points of information about the topic.

B. Identifying and describing basic differences between sociological and common-sense explanations of human social behaviour – maximum of 6 marks available

Candidates give an overview of commonly held views of the topic, supported by contemporary examples, using quotes or information from the media or other sources. They should also describe one difference between a common-sense view and a sociological explanation of the topic.

C. Using investigation skills to find appropriate sources of information – maximum of 2 marks available

Candidates identify resources that can be used to gain a sociological understanding of an issue and provide basic references.

Please note that candidates are not permitted to use the two sociological studies which are a mandatory part of the National 5 Sociology course:

- Rosenthal R. and Jacobson L. 1968. *Pygmalion in the classroom*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston
- Kingdon G. and Cassen R. 2007. *Understanding low achievement in English schools*. London School of Economics

- D. **Organising and interpreting information in sociology – maximum of 10 marks available**
Candidates select and summarise main points of information from two named sources, and interpret the basic sociological meaning of these summarised points by extracting and explaining essential information.
- E. **Communicating sociologically informed views – maximum of 10 marks available**
Candidates explain the topic by referring to information acquired through investigation. They should describe one theoretical explanation for the topic using sociological perspectives, theories or concepts. Candidates should also explain whether the evidence presented supports or challenges a common-sense view of the topic.

Detailed marking instructions

The following tables provide an overview of the detailed marking instructions. The first gives detailed marking instructions; the second is a summary.

Detailed marking instructions

Skills	General marking instructions	Max mark	Specific marking instructions
<p>A. Choosing and describing a topic that is of interest to sociologists</p>	Describes the topic, including two main points of information about the topic.	2	2 marks: the description of the topic given is clear and gives two main points of information, one of which is the sociological issue.
<p>B. Identifying and describing basic differences between sociological and common-sense explanations of human social behaviour</p> <p>(maximum of 8 marks available for A and B combined)</p>	<p>Describes one common-sense view of the topic.</p> <p>Gives two contemporary examples of this commonly held view.</p> <p>Describes one difference between a common-sense view and a sociological explanation of the topic.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p>	<p>2 marks: the description of one common-sense view of the topic is accurate.</p> <p>2 marks: gives two contemporary examples of this commonly held view.</p> <p>2 marks: description of one difference between a common-sense view and a sociological explanation of the topic is clear and accurate.</p>
<p>C. Using investigation skills to find appropriate sources of information for the topic</p> <p>(maximum of 2 marks available)</p>	Identifies and gives basic references for sources that can be used to gain a sociological understanding of an issue.	2	2 marks: is able to identify and give basic references for two appropriate sources.

D. Organising and interpreting information in sociology (maximum of 10 marks available)	Selects and summarises main points of information from one appropriate source.	3	3 marks: selects and clearly summarises main points of information from one appropriate source.
	Selects and summarises main points of information from a second appropriate source.	3	3 marks: selects and clearly summarises main points of information from a second appropriate source.
	Interprets the basic sociological meaning of these summarised points by extracting and explaining essential information.	4	4 marks: explains the importance of essential points of information from two sources which show the sociological meaning.
E. Communicating sociologically informed views (maximum of 10 marks available)	Explains the topic with reference to information from sources.	2	2 marks: explains the topic by making clear links between relevant information from sources and the topic to show sociological understanding.
	Explains the topic using sociological terminology, knowledge and understanding.	4	4 marks: explains the topic clearly using basic sociological terminology, knowledge and understanding of a relevant sociological perspective, theory or concept. The link between theory and topic is clear and developed.
	Explains whether the evidence presented supports or challenges the common-sense view of the topic.	4	4 marks: gives a view on the common-sense point of view of the topic. The viewpoint is clearly supported with a developed explanation of the evidence.
Total marks		30	

Marking instructions summary table

Skill	Requirements	1 mark	2 marks	3 marks	4 marks
A. Choosing and describing a topic that is of interest to sociologists	Describes the topic, including two main points of information about the topic.	Description is unclear or has fewer than two points of information.	Description is clear and gives two main points of information, one of which is the sociological issue.		
B. Identifying and describing basic differences between sociological and common-sense explanations of human social behaviour (maximum of 8 marks available for A and B combined)	Describes one common-sense view of the topic.	Description is basic or unclear.	Description is accurate and developed.		
	Gives two contemporary examples of this commonly held view.	Gives one contemporary example.	Gives two contemporary examples.		
	Describes one difference between a common-sense view and a sociological explanation of the topic.	Description is unclear or contains some inaccuracies.	Description is clear and accurate.		

Skill	Requirements	1 mark	2 marks	3 marks	4 marks
C. Using investigation skills to find appropriate sources of information for the topic (maximum of 2 marks available)	Identifies and gives basic references for sources that can be used to gain a sociological understanding of an issue.	Identifies and gives basic reference for one appropriate source.	Identifies and gives basic references for two appropriate sources.		
D. Organising and interpreting information in sociology (maximum of 10 marks available)	Selects and summarises main points of information from one appropriate source.	Selects points of information from one appropriate source. This may be basic or unclear.	Selects and summarises main points of information from one appropriate source. The summary is basic.	Selects and clearly summarises main points of information from one appropriate source.	
	Selects and summarises main points of information from a second appropriate source.	Selects points of information from a second appropriate source. This may be basic or unclear.	Selects and summarises main points of information from a second appropriate source. The summary is basic.	Selects and clearly summarises main points of information from a second appropriate source.	
	Interprets the basic sociological meaning of these summarised points by extracting and explaining essential information.	Basic sociological meaning is given for one source. The interpretation may lack clarity or contain inaccuracies.	Basic sociological meaning is given for at least one source. The interpretation is clear and accurate.	Interprets the basic sociological meaning by explaining importance of essential points of information from one source.	Interprets the basic sociological meaning by explaining importance of essential points of information from two sources.

Skill	Requirements	1 mark	2 marks	3 marks	4 marks
E. Communicating sociologically informed views (maximum of 10 marks available)	Explains the topic with reference to information from sources.	Explanation has limited reference to information from sources.	Explanation has clear links between relevant information from sources and the topic.		
	Explains the topic using sociological knowledge and understanding. Identifies and uses one sociological perspective, theory or concept to give one possible theoretical explanation for the topic.	Identifies and uses basic sociological knowledge and understanding of a sociological perspective, theory or concept. The explanation and link contain inaccuracies.	Identifies and uses basic sociological knowledge and understanding of a sociological perspective, theory or concept. The explanation and link lack clarity.	Identifies and uses basic sociological knowledge and understanding of a sociological perspective, theory or concept. The explanation and link are clear but may be basic.	Clearly identifies and uses basic sociological knowledge and understanding of a relevant sociological perspective, theory or concept. The explanation and link between theory and topic are clear and developed.
	Explains whether the evidence presented supports or challenges the common-sense view of the topic.	The explanation has little or no supporting evidence.	The explanation has supporting evidence which is unclear.	A basic explanation is clearly supported by the evidence.	The explanation is clearly supported with developed evidence.
TOTAL 30					

Instructions for candidates

This assessment applies to the National 5 Sociology assignment.

The assignment is worth 30 marks out of a total of 100 marks available for the course assessment.

The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate your ability to apply your skills, knowledge and understanding to investigate a sociological topic.

You must carry out an investigation and produce a report. Your report should be between 800 and 1,200 words long, excluding references, footnotes and appendices.

You must provide the word count of your completed report, excluding references, footnotes and appendices. Your report is marked by SQA. If the word count exceeds the maximum by 10%, a penalty will be applied.

Your report must be based on an investigation into a sociological topic. You must use sociological skills, knowledge and understanding to give a sociologically informed view of your topic.

This task assesses the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ choosing and describing a topic that is of interest to sociologists
- ◆ describing the difference between common-sense views and sociological explanations
- ◆ identifying appropriate sources and giving basic references
- ◆ using these sources to extract information to help you understand the sociological issue
- ◆ identifying and using sociological perspectives, theories or concepts
- ◆ using sociological terminology in communicating your views

Your teacher or lecturer will let you know how the assessment will be carried out and any required conditions for doing it.

Choosing a sociological topic

Your teacher or lecturer will help you choose a topic suitable for investigation. You should choose a topic you find interesting. You must make sure that you:

- ◆ have enough resources
- ◆ cover all the points listed in the different stages
- ◆ carry out your investigation within the British Sociological Association's Statement of Ethical Practice

You must be able to describe your chosen topic for investigation and explain why it is of interest to sociologists, ie describe the sociological issue. Your teacher or lecturer will support you by commenting on the suitability and availability of sources related to your chosen topic.

You need to:

- ◆ keep a record of findings and give basic references for sources
- ◆ organise your information in a way that helps you to develop your investigation
- ◆ use sociological terminology as appropriate

You must support your sociological explanations with sources of information and research evidence.

Resources could include, but are not limited to, a variety of media, including textbook and web-based resources such as sociology websites and Scottish government sites.

Please note you are **not** allowed to use the two sociological studies which are a mandatory part of the National 5 Sociology course:

- Rosenthal R. and Jacobson L. 1968. *Pygmalion in the classroom*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston
- Kingdon G. and Cassen R. 2007. *Understanding low achievement in English schools*. London School of Economics

It is a good idea to make use of information from a range of sources and to make notes to help with your assignment. Only a basic list of references is required. Keeping references is an important element of investigating a topic.

It is important that you understand clearly the requirements of the written report before you begin your assignment, so that you can undertake appropriate investigation.

In this assignment you are asked to:

- ◆ identify and use sources that help you to gain a sociological understanding of a topic
- ◆ develop your understanding of that topic by applying sociological perspectives and theories
- ◆ give a personal, informed sociological view on your chosen topic, showing how a sociological explanation differs from a common-sense view

This involves the following stages:

A. Choosing and describing a topic that is of interest to sociologists

- ◆ Describe the topic clearly, giving two points of information about the topic.

B. Identifying and describing basic differences between sociological and common-sense explanations of human social behaviour

- ◆ Give an overview of the common-sense view about the topic. This should be supported with contemporary examples using quotes or information from the media or other sources. You need to describe one difference between a common-sense view and a sociological explanation of the social issue.

C. Using investigation skills to find appropriate sources of information for the topic

- ◆ Identify resources that can be used to gain a sociological understanding of an issue.

D. Organising and interpreting information in sociology

- ◆ Select and summarise main points of information from two appropriate sources.
- ◆ Interpret the basic sociological meaning of your summarised points by extracting and explaining essential information.

E. Communicating sociologically informed views

- ◆ Explain the topic by referring to information acquired through investigation. Describe one theoretical explanation for the topic, using sociological perspectives, theories or concepts.
- ◆ Explain whether the evidence you present **supports** or **challenges** a common-sense point of view of the topic.

Administrative information

Published: July 2017 (version 1.0)

History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date

Security and confidentiality

This document can be used by practitioners in SQA approved centres for the assessment of National Courses and not for any other purpose.

Copyright

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for assessment purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged. If it needs to be reproduced for any purpose other than assessment, it is the centre's responsibility to obtain copyright clearance.

Re-use for alternative purposes without the necessary copyright clearance may constitute copyright infringement.

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2012, 2017