



ASSESSMENT and
QUALIFICATIONS
ALLIANCE

General Certificate of Education

Sociology 6191

SC5W Theory and Methods

Mark Scheme

2007 examination - June series

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

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**GUIDANCE NOTES IN THE USE OF GENERAL AND QUESTION SPECIFIC
MARK SCHEMES FOR UNITS 4 AND 5**

TWO RELATED MARK SCHEMES ARE PROVIDED

Examiners are required to consult and apply the two related mark schemes as follows:

A General Mark Scheme made up of two sections on:

- (i) Knowledge and Understanding;
- (ii) Identification, Analysis, Interpretation and Evaluation.

A Question Specific Mark Scheme made up of one section on:

- (i) Knowledge and Understanding. This will enable examiners to assess the knowledge and understanding requirements of particular questions.

Marking

In the process of marking a particular question, you must follow the procedure detailed below in marking the different Skill Domains:

(i) **Knowledge and Understanding**

Refer to the Question Specific Mark Scheme and the General Mark Scheme.

(ii) **Identification, Analysis, Interpretation and Evaluation**

Refer to the General Mark Scheme.

Each answer should be assessed separately for each of the two Skill Domains and the mark for each Skill Domain recorded and totalled to give an overall mark. For example in the case of an answer which was rewarded 6 marks for Knowledge And Understanding and 6 for Identification, Analysis, Interpretation and Evaluation, the total mark for this answer would be 12.

GENERAL MARK SCHEME FOR UNIT 5

AO1: Knowledge and Understanding

0 No relevant knowledge or understanding.

1 – 5 Answers in this band will show a very limited sociological knowledge and understanding.

Lower in the band, knowledge will consist of commonsensical points. Answers will show only minimal understanding of either the question or the material offered in response to it.

Higher in the band, knowledge will consist of a few isolated quasi-sociological points, with omissions and perhaps with significant errors. Understanding both of the question and of material offered in response to it will be very simplistic and perhaps confused.

6 – 10 Answers in this band will show a somewhat limited sociological knowledge and understanding.

Lower in the band, there will be a shallow knowledge of a limited amount of sociological material, perhaps with errors. Understanding both of the question and the material presented in response to it will be superficial.

Higher in the band, there will be a reasonably accurate but rather shallow and descriptive knowledge of a still limited amount of sociological material, or alternatively a slightly deeper but very narrow knowledge. There may be a generalised understanding of the question, or one which shows a specific understanding of only a very limited aspect of the question.

11 – 16 Answers in this band will show a reasonably good sociological knowledge and understanding.

Lower in the band, there will be a reasonably accurate knowledge of a range of sociological material with some limited success in conveying conceptual detail, or alternatively a more conceptually detailed but narrowly based knowledge. Knowledge shown may be either theoretical, empirical or both. Answers will show a specific understanding of some of the demands of the question and of the material offered in response to it, but other aspects will be neglected or treated in a generalised fashion.

Higher in the band there will be somewhat greater success in conveying conceptual detail, or a slightly greater breadth, of knowledge; however, answers will remain somewhat limited in range or depth. Knowledge shown will be both theoretical and empirical. There will be a specific understanding of most of the principal demands or aspects of the question, but some others will be neglected or treated in a generalised fashion.

17 – 20 Answers in this band will show a very good sociological knowledge and understanding.

Lower in the band, there will be a wide-ranging theoretical and empirical knowledge which will, with only very minor exceptions, be thorough, accurate and conceptually detailed. Accurate and explicit links will be made between some of the theoretical and empirical material. There will be a clear understanding both of the question, including its theoretical context, and of the material offered in response to it.

Higher in the band, knowledge will be comprehensive and will be thorough, accurate and conceptually detailed throughout. There will be a clear understanding of the theoretical context of the question, and there will be accurate and explicit links between the theoretical and empirical parts of the answer. Answers will show a clear, full and complex understanding of the question and the material offered.

GENERAL MARK SCHEME FOR UNIT 5**AO2: Identification, Analysis, Interpretation and Evaluation**

0 No relevant identification, analysis, interpretation or evaluation.

1 – 5 Answers in this band will show very limited skills of identification, analysis, interpretation and evaluation.

Lower in the band, identification of perspectives/arguments will be very limited and/or inaccurate. There will be little or no evidence of the ability to distinguish between facts, opinions and value judgements. Interpretation of the question and the material offered in answer to it will be minimal and/or confused. Analysis of arguments and/or methodological issues, if present, will be very limited. Evaluation may be absent or limited to one or two undeveloped examples.

Higher in the band, there will be some limited and undeveloped identification of perspectives, arguments and/or methodological issues, and some evidence of the ability to distinguish between facts, opinions and value judgements. There will be some limited interpretation of the question and/or the material offered in answer to it. Analysis, if present, will be undeveloped and possibly contain inaccuracies. Evaluation may be implicit or confined to one or two critical comments on some aspect of the question or general topic area.

6 – 10 Answers in this band will show somewhat limited skills of identification, analysis, interpretation and evaluation.

Lower in the band, identification of perspectives/arguments will be broadly accurate, although limited and undeveloped. Attempts to distinguish between facts, opinions and value judgements will show some sociological awareness. Interpretation of the question and the material offered in answer to it will be limited but broadly sociological. Examples may be undeveloped or applied to the general topic area rather than the set question. Analysis of material, if present, will be partial and poorly focused. Evaluation may take the form of a weak juxtaposition and/or brief list of criticisms of a study, concept, perspective or method.

Higher in the band, arguments/perspectives will be accurately identified, and there will be clear evidence of the ability to distinguish between facts, opinions and value judgements. Interpretation will be focused and examples will show some development and be broadly applied to the question set. There will be some, albeit limited and undeveloped, attempt to analyse material. There will be a few explicit points or criticisms raised.

11 – 16 Answers in this band will show reasonably good skills of identification, analysis, interpretation and evaluation.

Lower in the band, there will be some explicit and largely successful attempts to identify and interpret sociological arguments and perspectives. There will be a general awareness of methodological issues. Analysis may remain undeveloped and/or partial. There will be some explicit evaluation, although this may be one-sided and/or undeveloped.

Higher in the band, the use of skills will be more balanced and comprehensive. Sociological arguments, perspectives and methodological issues will be accurately identified and interpreted and examples will be generally applied to the question. Both analysis and evaluation will be explicit, though not necessarily fully developed or comprehensive.

17 – 20 Answers in this band will show very good skills of identification, analysis, interpretation and evaluation, applied to a range of sociological ideas, evidence and issues.

Lower in the band, sociological arguments and perspectives will be, with only very minor exceptions, accurately identified and successfully interpreted to meet the demands of the question. Analysis and evaluation of a wide range of material, including methodological issues, will be thorough, comprehensive and balanced.

Higher in the band, all the skills will be demonstrated in a thorough, accurate and comprehensive manner throughout. There will be clear evidence that identification, interpretation, analysis and evaluation follow a clear rationale and are applied with sensitivity and sophistication. Evaluative comparisons and contrasts may be made between different areas of sociology, and analysis and argument may be applied to wider and possibly more complex issues than those raised by the set question.

QUALITY OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Where candidates are required to produce extended written material in English, the scheme of assessment must make specific reference to the assessment of the quality of written communication. Candidates must be required to:

- select and use a form and style of writing appropriate to purpose and complex subject matter;
- organise relevant information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate;
- ensure text is legible, and spelling, grammar and punctuation are accurate, so that meaning is clear.

The assessment criteria for quality of written communication apply to the assessment of Question 1 (d) and Questions 2 and 3. The following criteria should be applied in conjunction with the mark schemes (the general mark scheme and the question specific mark scheme).

The quality of written communication bands must be regarded as integral to the appropriate mark scheme band even though they are listed separately in the mark scheme. Examiners should note that, in the assessment of candidates' sociological knowledge and skills, the assessment of the Quality of Written Communication will be judged through the assessment of the clarity and appropriateness of the sociological material presented.

Question 1 (d)

In the 1 – 3 band, candidates' answers are likely to be characterised by the poor logical expression of ideas and the use of a limited range of conceptual terms, perhaps often used imprecisely and/or inaccurately. Spelling, punctuation and grammar may show serious deficiencies and frequent errors, perhaps impairing the intelligibility of significant parts of the answer.

In the 4 – 7 band, candidates' answers are likely to be characterised by the fair to good logical expression of ideas and the competent use of a reasonable range of conceptual terms. Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be of a reasonable standard. Commonly used words and sociological terms will generally be spelt correctly. There may be minor errors of punctuation and grammar, but these will not seriously impair the intelligibility of the answer.

In the 8 – 10 band, candidates' answers are likely to be characterised by the very good to excellent logical expression of ideas and the precise use of a broad range of conceptual terms. Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be of a very good to excellent standard. Commonly and less commonly used words and sociological terms will almost always be spelt correctly. Punctuation and grammar will be used correctly throughout to facilitate the intelligibility of the answer.

Questions 2 and 3

In the 1 – 5 band, candidates' answers are likely to be characterised by the very poor logical expression of ideas and the use of a very limited range of conceptual terms, perhaps often used imprecisely and/or inaccurately. Spelling, punctuation and grammar may show serious deficiencies and frequent errors, impairing the intelligibility of significant parts of the answer.

In the 6 – 10 band, candidates' answers are likely to be characterised by the generally fair logical expression of ideas, though perhaps with some occasional flaws, and the use of a somewhat limited range of conceptual terms, perhaps sometimes used imprecisely and/or inaccurately. Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be fair. Commonly used words and sociological terms will mostly be spelt correctly. There may be some errors in punctuation and grammar which impair the intelligibility of some parts of the answer.

In the 11 – 16 band, candidates' answers are likely to be characterised by the reasonable to good logical expression of ideas and the competent use of a reasonable range of conceptual terms. Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be of a good standard. Commonly used words and sociological terms will be spelt correctly. Punctuation and grammar will be of a good standard facilitating a competent expression of ideas.

In the 17 – 20 band, candidates' answers are likely to be characterised by the very good to excellent logical expression of ideas and the precise use of a broad range of conceptual terms. Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be of a very good to excellent standard, with commonly and less commonly used words and sociological terms almost always spelt correctly. Meaning will be clear throughout.

SECTION A: THEORY AND METHODS

Answer **all** parts of this Section.

Total for this section: 20 marks

1	(a) Briefly explain what is meant by a ‘paradigm’ (Item A , line 13).	<i>(2 marks)</i>
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Two marks for a satisfactory explanation such as:

- an agreed set of key facts, assumptions, methods, problems or solutions.

One mark for a partial explanation or a relevant example, such as:

- key facts;
- assumptions;
- earth flat, earth round.

(b) Identify and briefly explain two reasons why some argue that sociology can or should be seen as a science.	<i>(4 marks)</i>
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One mark for each of **two** reasons identified, such as:

- to maintain objectivity;
- because sociology uses systematic procedures;
- to gain credibility within society;
- because society has an objective reality;
- to be value-free;
- to discover laws of behaviour.

One further mark for each of **two** satisfactory explanations, such as:

- to maintain objectivity: some argue that in adopting the stance of science sociologists will maintain an objectivity and detachment in their research which will give more credibility to their findings;
- because sociology uses systematic procedures: sociology follows certain agreed rules of methodology to improve the reliability and comparability of their research by following similar systematic procedures to those of science;
- to gain credibility within society: some argue that science has a special place in terms of status in society and that by adopting a scientific approach sociology will itself gain credibility and status.

(c) Identify and briefly explain two reasons, apart from those referred to in Item A , why some argue that sociology cannot or should not be a science.	<i>(4 marks)</i>
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One mark for each of **two** reasons identified, such as:

- people are thinking beings;
- sociologists cannot be detached from their study;
- sociologists cannot be value-free;
- people are not predictable;
- it would not be ethical to use experimentation.

No marks for ‘no paradigm’ and no marks for ‘image of how science works is not matched by its reality’.

One further mark for each of **two** satisfactory explanations, such as:

- people are thinking beings: people are not inanimate objects like rocks or chemicals and cannot be studied in the same way as such entities;
- sociologists cannot be detached from their study: sociologists are a product of society and a part of society and as such cannot divorce themselves fully from the things they are studying;
- sociologists cannot be value-free: sociologists have values and however much they might try to persuade themselves that they can be value-free this is impossible as values have effects on every decision sociologists make.

(d) Briefly compare the usefulness of primary and secondary data in sociological research.

(10 marks)

0 No relevant points.

1 – 3 Answers in this band will have only limited success in identifying, interpreting, analysing and evaluating material to meet the requirements of the question. There will be little evidence of relevant knowledge or understanding.

Lower in the band, one or two points may be made on statistics or forms of data in general. Alternatively, there may be a tendency to recycle material from Item B without identifying specific points or analysing possible explanations.

Higher in the band, one or two points related to different sources or types of data may be mentioned with some limited attempt to address the question. Evaluation will be limited or non-existent. Understanding will be partial.

4 – 7 Answers in this band will be reasonably successful in identifying, interpreting, analysing and/or evaluating material to meet the requirements of the question.

Lower in the band, this may be confined to a competent, if basic, account, for example listing two or three advantages of using one or other form of data or method, possibly with links to different substantive areas of the specification. Answers will show reasonable underlying knowledge and understanding. Some limited explicit evaluation may be offered.

Higher in the band, answers will be more developed and focused. Knowledge and understanding will be broader and/or deeper and will begin to identify a wider range of material. There may still be a tendency to present the material in a rather list-like manner, for example briefly listing two or three advantages or disadvantages of each form of data, such as those relating to accessibility, cost, range, depth, focus, control and availability and drawing links to research from substantive areas in the specification. Knowledge and understanding may extend to an awareness of some theoretical aspects but these are likely to be undeveloped.

8 – 10 Answers in this band will be successful in identifying, interpreting, analysing and evaluating material to meet the requirements of the question. Analysis and evaluation will be explicit and relevant. Sociological knowledge will be more detailed, showing an understanding of a range of sociological material.

Lower in the band, interpretation may be less selective or evaluation less developed and more list-like.

Higher in the band, interpretation will be more focused and evaluation more thorough, developed and explicit.

Answers will address the central issues of the question, such as the theoretical and practical reasons why different forms of data may be useful and issues such as reliability and validity. Many answers may take as a starting point a substantive area of the specification, such as the family, crime, religion or work and identify examples that illustrate the usefulness of one or other form of data. Comparisons may be drawn between different perspectives and their attitudes to research. Factors such as those mentioned in the 4 – 7 band may be considered. Candidates may then go on to provide a more detailed and balanced comparison, giving consideration to theoretical as well as practical concerns, though not necessarily to the same depth.

Note: however, not all the points mentioned in the last paragraph above are necessary for an answer to be awarded full marks.

SECTION B – THEORY AND METHODS

Answer **one** question from this Section.

Total for this section: 40 marks

2 Evaluate the relationship between the theoretical perspective of the sociologist and their choice of research methods. *(40 marks)*

AO1: Knowledge and Understanding

20 marks

0 No knowledge or understanding relevant to the set question.

1 – 5 Answers in this band will show very limited sociological knowledge and understanding.

Lower in the band, candidates will present an answer based on a common sense understanding of research methods rather than sociological arguments or evidence. There will be only a peripheral link to the question, with little evidence that the candidate has understood either the question or the material offered in response to it.

Higher in the band, candidates may present a flawed account of knowledge on research or sociological methods in general. The answer is likely to be characterised by isolated or disjointed points that show very little understanding. The material is still likely to lack a clear focus and is unlikely to raise issues stemming from the question set. Conceptual terms will tend to be used imprecisely or inaccurately and meaning will be unclear.

At this level possible answers might include:

- some isolated points about different research methods or,
- some flawed material from different theoretical perspectives.

6 – 10 Answers in this band will show limited sociological knowledge and understanding.

Lower in the band, candidates will present knowledge on the set question that is likely to contain inaccuracies and some confusion in understanding. Knowledge is likely to be stronger than understanding. Answers at this level may contain significant amounts of irrelevant material.

At this level possible answers might include:

- a brief list of practical points related to different research methods or,
- some disjointed but basically accurate material from one or more perspective(s) or,
- a list of examples of research or studies from different perspectives.

Higher in the band, candidates will present an essentially descriptive account of sociological knowledge on the question. Answers will display a basic understanding of the material presented, although a few inaccuracies may still be present. There will be a limited understanding of the demands of the question set.

At this level possible answers might include:

- accounts of one or two studies focused more on their findings than on their methods or,

- a more extensive list of practical points related to the choices of different research methods, probably including strengths and weaknesses or,
- more coherent and accurate material from one or more perspective(s) but lacking detail on the implications for research methods.

11 – 16 Answers in this band will show reasonably good sociological knowledge and understanding.

Lower in the band, candidates may present accounts that are still somewhat generalised and descriptive and often narrowly focused.

At this level possible answers might include:

- more detailed descriptions of studies focused more on a substantive topic area rather than on the question set, and with the question largely implicit or,
- a more extensive list of points related to choices of different research methods, probably considering mainly practical strengths and weaknesses and with a limited theoretical structure or,
- coherent and broadly accurate material from two or more perspectives but with only limited development on the implications for research methodology, probably placed in the context of the positivist versus anti-positivist debate or whether sociology can or should be scientific.

Higher in the band, candidates' answers will present an increased amount of appropriate empirical and/or theoretical detail, and will be increasingly accurate and organised. There will be evidence that the theoretical debate is understood. Candidates will display a clear understanding of the demands of the set question.

At this level possible answers might include:

- more detailed accounts of studies focused on the question set, but with a limited theoretical structure or,
- fuller and more accurate descriptions of factors related to choices of different research methods, still with a fairly limited theoretical structure or,
- coherent and broadly accurate material from two or more perspectives and with more development on the relationship between perspective and research methodology.

17 – 20 Answers in this band will show very good sociological knowledge and understanding.

Lower in the band, candidates' answers will demonstrate a thorough and accurate knowledge on the set question and a very good understanding of a range of relevant empirical and theoretical material.

At this level possible answers might include:

- increasingly full, accurate and wider accounts of factors related to choices of different research methods and with a clear theoretical structure or,
- coherent and accurate material from a range of perspectives and with terms and concepts such as reliability, validity, objectivity, value-freedom and triangulation understood and discussed or,
- detailed and/or referenced accounts of research studies with concepts and/or ideological issues accurately explored and clearly understood.

Higher in the band, the links between theoretical and empirical material will be made more explicit. Accounts of studies and theories will be more detailed and the understanding of the debate and its complexities made explicit.

At this level possible answers might also include some of the following:

- discussion of the pragmatic nature of many research decisions;
- consideration of the changing nature of sociological research, including political and funding issues;
- greater understanding of the educational and social context in which research choices are made.

3	Assess the contribution of functionalist and New Right theories and research to our understanding of society today.	(40 marks)
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AO1: Knowledge and Understanding**20 marks**

0 No knowledge or understanding relevant to the set question.

1 – 5 Answers in this band will show very limited sociological knowledge and understanding.

Lower in the band, candidates will present an answer based on a common sense understanding of society rather than sociological arguments or evidence. There will be only a peripheral link to the question with little evidence that the candidate has understood either the question or the material offered in response to it.

Higher in the band, candidates may present a flawed account of knowledge on functionalist or New Right approaches or sociology in general. The answer is likely to be characterised by isolated or disjointed points that show very little understanding. The material is likely to lack a clear focus and is unlikely to raise issues stemming from the question set. Concepts will tend to be used imprecisely or inaccurately and meaning will be unclear.

At this level possible answers might include:

- some isolated, potentially relevant points about society today or,
- some flawed material from theories of society.

6 – 10 Answers in this band will show limited sociological knowledge and understanding.

Lower in the band, candidates will present knowledge on the set question that is likely to contain inaccuracies and some confusion in understanding. Knowledge is likely to be stronger than understanding. Answers at this level may contain significant amounts of irrelevant material.

At this level possible answers might include:

- a brief list of points related to sociological perspectives or,
- some disjointed but basically accurate material from one or more functionalist or New Right studies, possibly a few points about an organic analogy.

Higher in the band, candidates will present an essentially descriptive account of sociological knowledge on the question. Answers will display a basic understanding of the material presented, although a few inaccuracies may still be present. There will be a limited understanding of the demands of the question set.

At this level possible answers might include:

- outlines of one or two studies focused more on a substantive topic area than the question set, possibly Durkheim or Parsons or,
- a more extensive list of points related to functionalism or the New Right, for example referring to a list of functions relating to a substantive area or,
- more coherent and accurate material on functionalist or New Right views, possibly in a simple juxtaposition with another perspective, but lacking focus on understanding society today.

11 – 16 Answers in this band will show reasonably good sociological knowledge and understanding.

Lower in the band, candidates may present accounts that are still somewhat generalised and descriptive and often narrowly focused.

At this level possible answers might include:

- more detailed descriptions of studies focused more on a substantive topic area rather than on the question set, possibly Durkheim, Parsons, Malinowski and/or similar presented in a fairly timeless manner with the question largely implicit or,
- a more extensive list of points related to functionalist and/or New Right possibly focusing on a substantive topic such as religion, crime or education, etc but with a limited or one-sided theoretical structure or,
- coherent and broadly accurate material from two or more perspectives, possibly a developed juxtaposition, but with only limited development on how functionalism and/or the New Right have affected our understanding of society today.

Higher in the band, candidates' answers will present an increased amount of appropriate empirical and/or theoretical detail, and will be increasingly accurate and organised. There will be evidence that the theoretical debate is understood. Candidates will display a clear understanding of the demands of the set question.

At this level possible answers might include:

- more detailed descriptions of studies focused on the question set or,
- fuller and more accurate descriptions of factors related to functionalism and/or the New Right, possibly still focused on a substantive topic such as religion, crime or education and considering issues and concepts such as functional prerequisites, function and dysfunction, manifest and latent functions with limited theoretical structure or,
- coherent and broadly accurate material from two or more perspectives and with more development on how functionalism and/or the New Right have affected our understanding of society today.

17 – 20 Answers in this band will show very good sociological knowledge and understanding.

Lower in the band, candidates' answers will demonstrate thorough and accurate knowledge on the set question and very good understanding of a range of relevant empirical and theoretical material.

At this level possible answers might include:

- increasingly full, accurate and wide descriptions of factors related to functionalist and New Right theories and research and with a clear theoretical structure or,
- coherent and accurate material from a range of perspectives and with relevant concepts clearly explored and understood or,
- detailed and/or referenced accounts of studies on the question set with concepts and/or ideological issues accurately explored and clearly understood.

Higher in the band, the links between theoretical and empirical material will be made more explicit. Accounts of studies and theories will be more detailed and the understanding of the debate and its complexities made explicit.

At this level possible answers might also include some of the following:

- greater awareness of the complexity of ideological issues;
- greater understanding of the subtle differences between functionalist and New Right views;
- greater awareness and understanding of a wider range of substantive areas in which functionalist and New Right have made significant contributions to our understanding.

In answering this question, sources referred to by candidates may vary depending on the substantive area from which the candidate draws the material, but could include: Bauman, Becker, Davis & Moore, Durkheim, Friedman, Giddens, Gouldner, Malinowski, Marsland, Marx, Merton, Murray, Oakley, Parsons, Weber.

ASSESSMENT GRIDS FOR UNIT 5 (SC5W)
Theory and Methods (Data Response)

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES			
Questions	AO1	AO2	Total
1 a	0	2	2
1 b	0	4	4
1 c	0	4	4
1 d	4	6	10
Total	4	16	20

Theory and Methods (Essay)

Candidates answer **one** question.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES			
Questions	AO1	AO2	Total
2	20	20	40
3	20	20	40
Total	20	20	40