

# Cambridge International AS & A Level

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**SOCIOLOGY****9699/41**

Paper 4 Globalisation, Media, Religion

**May/June 2025****MARK SCHEME**Maximum Mark: 70

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**Published**

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

Cambridge International will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

Cambridge International is publishing the mark schemes for the May/June 2025 series for most Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge International A and AS Level components, and some Cambridge O Level components.

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This document consists of **19** printed pages.

**Generic Marking Principles**

These general marking principles must be applied by all examiners when marking candidate answers. They should be applied alongside the specific content of the mark scheme or generic level descriptions for a question. Each question paper and mark scheme will also comply with these marking principles.

**GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 1:**

Marks must be awarded in line with:

- the specific content of the mark scheme or the generic level descriptors for the question
- the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the generic level descriptors for the question
- the standard of response required by a candidate as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.

**GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 2:**

Marks awarded are always **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).

**GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 3:**

Marks must be awarded **positively**:

- marks are awarded for correct/valid answers, as defined in the mark scheme. However, credit is given for valid answers which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme, referring to your Team Leader as appropriate
- marks are awarded when candidates clearly demonstrate what they know and can do
- marks are not deducted for errors
- marks are not deducted for omissions
- answers should only be judged on the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar when these features are specifically assessed by the question as indicated by the mark scheme. The meaning, however, should be unambiguous.

**GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 4:**

Rules must be applied consistently, e.g. in situations where candidates have not followed instructions or in the application of generic level descriptors.

**GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 5:**

Marks should be awarded using the full range of marks defined in the mark scheme for the question (however; the use of the full mark range may be limited according to the quality of the candidate responses seen).

**GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 6:**

Marks awarded are based solely on the requirements as defined in the mark scheme. Marks should not be awarded with grade thresholds or grade descriptors in mind.

**Social Science-Specific Marking Principles  
(for point-based marking)****1 Components using point-based marking:**

- Point marking is often used to reward knowledge, understanding and application of skills. We give credit where the candidate's answer shows relevant knowledge, understanding and application of skills in answering the question. We do not give credit where the answer shows confusion.

From this it follows that we:

- a** DO credit answers which are worded differently from the mark scheme if they clearly convey the same meaning (unless the mark scheme requires a specific term)
- b** DO credit alternative answers/examples which are not written in the mark scheme if they are correct
- c** DO credit answers where candidates give more than one correct answer in one prompt/numbered/scaffolded space where extended writing is required rather than list-type answers. For example, questions that require  $n$  reasons (e.g. State two reasons ...).
- d** DO NOT credit answers simply for using a 'key term' unless that is all that is required. (Check for evidence it is understood and not used wrongly.)
- e** DO NOT credit answers which are obviously self-contradicting or trying to cover all possibilities
- f** DO NOT give further credit for what is effectively repetition of a correct point already credited unless the language itself is being tested. This applies equally to 'mirror statements' (i.e. polluted/not polluted).
- g** DO NOT require spellings to be correct, unless this is part of the test. However spellings of syllabus terms must allow for clear and unambiguous separation from other syllabus terms with which they may be confused (e.g. Corrasion/Corrosion)

**2 Presentation of mark scheme:**

- Slashes (/) or the word 'or' separate alternative ways of making the same point.
- Semi colons (;) bullet points (•) or figures in brackets (1) separate different points.
- Content in the answer column in brackets is for examiner information/context to clarify the marking but is not required to earn the mark (except Accounting syllabuses where they indicate negative numbers).

**3 Calculation questions:**

- The mark scheme will show the steps in the most likely correct method(s), the mark for each step, the correct answer(s) and the mark for each answer
- If working/explanation is considered essential for full credit, this will be indicated in the question paper and in the mark scheme. In all other instances, the correct answer to a calculation should be given full credit, even if no supporting working is shown.
- Where the candidate uses a valid method which is not covered by the mark scheme, award equivalent marks for reaching equivalent stages.
- Where an answer makes use of a candidate's own incorrect figure from previous working, the 'own figure rule' applies: full marks will be given if a correct and complete method is used. Further guidance will be included in the mark scheme where necessary and any exceptions to this general principle will be noted.

**4 Annotation:**

- For point marking, ticks can be used to indicate correct answers and crosses can be used to indicate wrong answers. There is no direct relationship between ticks and marks. Ticks have no defined meaning for levels of response marking.
- For levels of response marking, the level awarded should be annotated on the script.
- Other annotations will be used by examiners as agreed during standardisation, and the meaning will be understood by all examiners who marked that paper.

**Using the mark scheme**

The questions are marked using a generic analytic mark scheme, which separates the marks for the different assessment objectives (AO). The work is marked for each AO using generic levels of response mark schemes. The marks awarded are usually based on a judgement of the overall quality of the response for that AO, rather than on awarding marks for specific points and accumulating a total mark by adding points.

Indicative content is provided as a guide. Inevitably, the mark scheme cannot cover all responses that candidates may make for all of the questions. In some cases candidates may make some responses which the mark scheme has not predicted. These answers should nevertheless be credited according to their quality.
















**Annotations guidance for centres**

Examiners use a system of annotations as a shorthand for communicating their marking decisions to one another. Examiners are trained during the standardisation process on how and when to use annotations. The purpose of annotations is to inform the standardisation and monitoring processes and guide the supervising examiners when they are checking the work of examiners within their team. The meaning of annotations and how they are used is specific to each component and is understood by all examiners who mark the component.

We publish annotations in our mark schemes to help centres understand the annotations they may see on copies of scripts. Note that there may not be a direct correlation between the number of annotations on a script and the mark awarded. Similarly, the use of an annotation may not be an indication of the quality of the response.

The annotations listed below were available to examiners marking this component in this series.

**Annotations**

<b>Annotation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
	Benefit of the doubt given / the point is just about worthy of credit
	Development / description of the point.
	Evaluation point
	Developed point
	General point using sociological material but not applied to the question
	Point is irrelevant to the question
	Juxtaposition of point
	Material used to support the point
	Not answered question
	Repetition
	This material receives no credit, additional points not required
	Too vague
	Point that has been credited
	Incorrect response
	Irrelevant material
On page comment	On page comment

Question	Answer	Marks
1	<p><b>‘Cultural differences between countries are disappearing as a result of globalisation.’ Evaluate this view.</b></p> <p><b>Key focus of the question</b></p> <p>The question invites discussion of the view that globalisation has led to a loss of cultural differences between countries or ‘cultural convergence’. The cultural convergence perspective is associated with the idea that globalisation has brought about a one-way flow of culture from the West to the less economically developed countries. A process of Westernisation (or Americanisation) has occurred whereby local cultures become less valued by people in poorer countries who come to identify increasingly with the same values and lifestyles that are found in rich capitalist countries such as the US and Western Europe. Good evaluative responses may contrast the cultural convergence viewpoint with transformationalist and postmodernist theories of globalisation. The latter theories argue that the idea of cultural convergence exaggerates the impact of globalisation and fails to acknowledge how Western culture is enriched by inputs from other world cultures and religions. In this view, globalisation is producing greater cultural diversity, both by exposing more people to different cultures and through glocalisation (a process whereby cultural influences from other countries are modified and adapted to local culture and needs). Good responses will set out the arguments for suggesting that globalisation is producing greater cultural convergence and offer an evaluation that is likely to make contrasts between the cultural convergence and the cultural divergence/diversity perspectives.</p> <p><b>Indicative content</b></p> <p>For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural convergence theory and the idea that globalisation is replacing local cultures with a single culture shaped by Western norms and values.</li> <li>• Martell argues that global processes are sweeping away significant territorial boundaries and bringing about the global homogenisation of cultural tastes.</li> <li>• Cultural globalisation of food and diet has been promoted by American fast-food transnationals such as McDonald’s and KFC.</li> <li>• Cultural icons are increasingly global celebrities, including pop stars, sports stars, movie stars and social influencers.</li> <li>• Global markets/trading networks have spread Western consumer culture to most parts of the world and an interest in brands, and materialistic lifestyles is undermining local cultures to young people.</li> </ul>	35

Question	Answer	Marks
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Globalisation has contributed to the dominance of English as the universal language of international trade and global culture. It is predicted that at least 50% of languages spoken in the world in 2018 will have disappeared by the end of the 21st century.</li> <li>Social media is becoming increasingly important as an influence on culture; it may be significant that most social media platforms are based in the US and to a lesser extent in China.</li> </ul> <p>Against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The extent to which the world is characterised by cultural homogeneity today can be questioned; there are still considerable differences between cultures and countries, and the extent to which different parts of the world are affected by the processes of globalisation varies (some people and countries are more connected to global networks than others).</li> <li>Postmodernists have argued that the social interaction of people from very different cultures has produced glocalised and hybrid responses to globalisation, which in turn has led to an increase in cultural diversity in most parts of the world.</li> <li>Global tourism, travel, migration and trade have all contributed to a situation where people are exposed to a wider variety of cultural influences today. Elements of different cultures are increasingly combined (what Steger refers to as ‘cultural hybridity’).</li> <li>Global corporations have seized the opportunity to strengthen the appeal of their products and services by incorporating attractive elements from different cultures around the world (aspects of Bollywood incorporated in Hollywood films, for example).</li> <li>The spread of global media is helping to diffuse different cultural styles around the world and creating new global hybrid styles in fashion, food, music, and lifestyle.</li> <li>Local people modify and adapt elements of global culture to strengthen and enhance local cultures.</li> <li>Globalisation may also have led to a revival or reinvigoration of some cultural forms. For example, traditional social values have been reasserted by fundamentalist movements opposed to the influence of globalisation. A resurgence of nationalism and interest in national cultures is another response by those who feel threatened by the globalising forces.</li> <li>Much depends on the cultural forms under discussion, for example some cultural forms are more likely to be influenced by globalisation, and this might include elements of popular culture and consumer culture. By contrast, civic culture and religious culture may be more resistant to global influences.</li> </ul>	

Question	Answer	Marks
2	<p><b>‘Developing countries remain poor due to dependency on rich capitalist countries.’ Evaluate this view.</b></p> <p><b>Key focus of the question</b></p> <p>This question requires candidates to demonstrate an understanding of different approaches to explaining why developing countries remain poor. Good answers will identify the opportunity to discuss dependency theory as the key to understanding the view expressed in the question. Dependency theory argues that rich countries benefit from a system of global inequality that ensures less economically developed countries remain poor. Some critics claim that dependency theory exaggerates the importance of structural factors in explaining global inequality. For example, supporters of modernisation theory argue that cultural factors play a major role in explaining why some countries develop rapidly while others remain poor. Candidates may draw on contrasts between dependency theory and modernisation theory in developing an evaluation of the view on which the question is based. Comparisons between dependency theory and Wallerstein’s world systems theory might also be used in developing the evaluation.</p> <p><b>Indicative content</b></p> <p>For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dependency theory, as articulated by Marxist sociologist Frank, argues that global capitalism has systematically under-developed the economies of poorer countries to benefit the economies of the richer nations. This capitalist exploitation has left poorer countries unable to generate significant economic growth, no matter how hard they try or what value systems they adopt.</li> <li>• Frank and others have pointed out that Western colonisation has had a particularly destructive and exploitative impact on many poorer countries. Colonisation significantly undermined any opportunity poorer countries had to achieve rapid economic development and it has a legacy in ensuring these countries remain dependent on rich Western countries after the end of the colonial regime (a situation referred to as neo-colonialism).</li> <li>• The dependency of less economically developed countries is exacerbated by political corruption. For example, entrenched religious and military elites often operate in poorer countries and their interests are not necessarily aligned with efforts to eliminate poverty among their people or to modernise the economic base of the country.</li> </ul>	35



Question	Answer	Marks
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wallerstein's world systems theory as a development of dependency theory which broadly supports the view expressed in the question. Wallerstein argues that the capitalist economic system is becoming increasingly global in its search for profit. In turn, this is leading to rich countries increasingly focusing on higher skill, capital intensive production, and the rest of the world focusing on low-skill, labour-intensive production and extraction of raw materials. This constantly reinforces the dominance of the rich countries and condemns workers in poorer countries to a life of exploitative, insecure low wage employment.</li> </ul> <p>Against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modernisation theory draws attention to the importance of cultural factors in understanding the development process. Modernisation theorists may have exaggerated the importance of Western neoliberal values for economic growth in the developing world, but a combination of Western ideas with some traditional values and religious influences has proved a potent mix in helping some poorer countries to advance, China being a particular example. Recognising the contribution of the cultural dimension in development provides a counter to the emphasis in dependency theory on structural factors as the underlying cause of global inequality.</li> <li>Claims by Marxist sociologists that modernisation theory is too optimistic about the chances of poorer countries escaping from global poverty may be unjustified. There have been some improvements in the standard of living of the poor in many developing countries and TNCs, western aid projects, and support from capitalist-leaning transnational organisations, such as the IMF and World Bank, would seem to have contributed to this positive development. Moreover, there is some evidence that the most successful countries economically in the developing world have made a concerted effort to adopt some or all the cultural changes advocated by modernisation theorists. Examples include Singapore, South Korea, and the UAE.</li> <li>'Dependency' is an extremely difficult concept to operationalise and, therefore, test or measure empirically.</li> <li>It may be mistaken to see the impact of colonisation on developing societies as wholly negative. Goldthorpe has argued that the British brought much-needed infrastructure to their colonies in the form of railways, roads, telecommunications, schools, and ports.</li> <li>Factors internal to developing countries may be more significant in causing those countries to remain poor. This might include ecological disasters, wars and ethnic conflicts, climate change, and shortage of natural resources.</li> </ul>	

Question	Answer	Marks
3	<p><b>‘Owners of the media have little control over media content.’ Evaluate this view.</b></p> <p><b>Key focus of the question</b></p> <p>The question invites consideration of which social actors or agencies control the media. Marxist sociologists argue that the content of the media is controlled by the owners of media conglomerates and, more broadly, by the capitalist ruling class. In this view, owners use their powerful position to control the way media organisations operate and the values they represent. Marxists would argue that power of media owners is seen in the way the media content is generally supportive of capitalist interests and rarely challenges the status quo. Good responses to the question are likely to use other theories of who controls the media to set out counterarguments to the Marxist perspective. Interactionists, for example would argue that only detailed study of individual instances of media control would shed light on where power lies. Feminist sociologists would highlight the extent to which the media are controlled by men and serve male interests predominantly. Pluralists argue that the media serve a diverse range of interests in society and no single group controls the media. Postmodernists would point out that the new digital media has created opportunities for more people to influence the media than was perhaps previously the case and this has taken some power away from media owners and professionals, such as editors and journalists. Some candidates might also want to argue that editors and journalists have more influence on media content than the owners.</p> <p><b>Indicative content</b></p> <p>For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pluralist theory states that power in relation to the media is fragmented with different groups in society each having some influence. Audiences, for example, must have their interests considered by media organisations to some extent or sales of media products will be adversely affected. Advertisers have some influence too, as they provide vital funding for media producers. Government is another social agency competing to exercise control of the media.</li> <li>• Editors and journalists play a key role in media production and have various means available to exert power relative to other social actors and agencies who might seek to control the media, such as media owners.</li> <li>• Media production is an increasingly technical process, which may advantage individuals who have specialist skills and knowledge, such as editors and journalists.</li> </ul>	35

Question	Answer	Marks
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some feminist sociologists point out that it is men generally, rather than just male owners, who control the media. For example, most editors and senior journalists are men, which means that women are less well placed to exert influence over decision-making processes within the media.</li> <li>Ownership structures within the media are diverse. Not all media corporations are owned by a single individual/family or even by a powerful majority shareholder. Ownership is often spread between a disparate group of institutional investors who may have relatively little interest in controlling the content of media in a detailed way.</li> <li>The new media has handed some control over media production to individual citizens and this may have lessened the role of owners as gatekeepers of what is published and broadcast.</li> <li>Examples such as X and Elon Musk illustrate the commercial hazards involved where a media outlet is subject to excessive control by a dominant owner.</li> <li>Examples of government intervention to limit the powers of dominant media owners, tighter regulation of social media being an instance.</li> </ul> <p>Against</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marxist sociologists argue that control of the media rests in the hands of owners of the media who ruthlessly use their property assets to generate maximum profit.</li> <li>Editors and journalists are forced to align themselves with the commercial interests of the owners or they will lose their jobs.</li> <li>The power of owners has been boosted in recent years through the emergence of a limited number of large, multi-global media corporations.</li> <li>Ownership of many large media corporations is concentrated in the hands of key individual owners or family groups, The Murdoch empire, for example. The singularity of the ownership structure places the owner in a powerful position to control the output of the media corporation.</li> <li>Owners may be particularly powerful in situations where the owner is also the government of a country (state-owned media), often the case in autocratic regimes.</li> <li>Studies highlighting the influence of owners in shaping media content. Glasgow Media Group, Mark Curtis, Miliband, Nenova et al, Paul Mobbs. Robert McChesney.</li> <li>Agenda-setting as a concept that highlights how owners may be able to influence media content.</li> <li>Integration of media owners in corporate networks, forming power elites and adding to the power of the media owner to dominate the process of media production.</li> <li>Power of large corporations and their owners to dominate social media (Google, Meta, X, Alibaba and figures such as Mark Zuckerberg and Elon Musk).</li> </ul>	

Question	Answer	Marks
4	<p><b>‘Media representations of women no longer reflect gender stereotypes.’ Evaluate this view.</b></p> <p><b>Key focus of the question</b></p> <p>The question invites discussion of how far media representations of women are free of gender stereotypes today. Arguments for the view might focus on changes in the media in recent years and how this has affected media representations of women. For example, some blatant forms of sexism have largely been expunged from the media in the UK. Some media today also try to directly challenge gender stereotypes and to expose the injustices associated with patriarchy. Good evaluative responses will consider arguments against the view that media representations of women no longer reflect gender stereotypes. This is likely to include discussion of the ongoing use of gender stereotypes and the objectification of women for the purposes of attracting male audiences in some forms of media. Gender disparity in the roles assigned to males and females within the media might also be examined. The role of the media in promoting idealised images of femininity would be another relevant line of analysis. Overall, researchers disagree about the extent to which gender inequality is reflected in media representations of women today and the difficulty of drawing firm conclusions on this subject is likely to form the basis of good analytical answers.</p> <p><b>Indicative content</b></p> <p>For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There have been changes in the way women are presented in the media in recent years to reflect opposition to sexism and gender stereotyping (e.g. studies by Ferguson).</li> <li>• The increasing economic power of women in many societies has encouraged some media outlets to avoid alienating female audiences (targets of potential advertisers) with the use of derogatory or patronising stereotypes.</li> <li>• It depends on the type of media; some media are more progressive in their representations of women than other media (e.g. Wilkinson – ‘genderquake’). For example, formerly broadsheet newspapers versus tabloid newspapers.</li> <li>• Some media outlets are committed to combatting gender inequality in the media.</li> <li>• Women working within the media have been effective in confronting some elements of gender inequality within the media industry.</li> <li>• Exposure of sexist behaviour by male media executives recently may help in combating patriarchy in the media domain going forward.</li> </ul>	35

Question	Answer	Marks
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The new media have provided opportunities for more women to create media content (Facebook and YouTube, for example) and to challenge gender stereotypes and sexist representations of women in the media.</li> </ul> <p>Against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The media often still use gender stereotypes that present women in a negative light and reflect patriarchal ideas about the appropriate role of women in society (e.g. Connell).</li> <li>Some media outlets still use objectified and sexualised images of women to advertise products and attract interest from male audiences (e.g. Wolf, Cumberbatch).</li> <li>Men still dominate positions of power within the media and women are often employed within the media in support roles to men.</li> <li>Studies have shown that media content often defines key concerns for women as beauty, appearance, family, relationships, and childcare. This fits with a patriarchal view of women as conforming to traditional female roles.</li> <li>Although media representations of women may have changed in recent years (to reflect a wider range of roles and identities for women, for example), it is still possible to detect patriarchal and sexist values in these new forms of representation, including in some new media platforms.</li> <li>It is possible that negative stereotypes of women in the media have, to some extent been replaced by positive representations but are still nonetheless stereotypical.</li> <li>Within social media particularly, new forms of aggressive male sexism have come to the fore, e.g. case of Andrew Tate.</li> </ul>	

Question	Answer	Marks
5	<p><b>‘The role of religion is to prevent conflict in society.’ Evaluate this view.</b></p> <p><b>Key focus of the question</b></p> <p>The focus of this question is the relationship between religion and social solidarity. Good answers are likely to develop the contrast between sociological theories that view religion as a conservative force that help to bind people together in society, creating social harmony, and theories that view religion as an oppressive force contributing to division and inequality in society. The idea that religion may be used as a force to challenge the existing social order is another thread that might be developed in high-scoring evaluative responses. Durkheim’s ideas about the links between religion and social solidarity are likely to surface in good accounts of the view on which the question is based. This might be supported with relevant ideas from other functionalists such as Radcliffe-Browne and Parsons. Marxist theories of religion might be used to challenge the functionalist perspective by pointing out that while religion may create the appearance of social harmony, it actually serves to promote ideological control of the working class in the interests of the rich and powerful. Religions contribution to social change, as opposed to social solidarity, might be explored through the work of thinkers such as Max Weber and/or case studies such as the Iranian revolution and liberation theology. Links between religion and particular conflicts around the world could also be explored in good analytical responses e.g. the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.</p> <p><b>Indicative content</b></p> <p>For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Durkheim’s view that religion contributes to a sense of collective identity and value consensus; it helps bind people together in support for the existing social order, thereby discouraging conflict and disharmony.</li> <li>• Radcliffe-Browne on the integrative forces of religion.</li> <li>• Malinowski’s arguments about the importance of religion in developing stable, well adapted individuals.</li> <li>• Parson’s ideas about the role of religion in helping to integrate society.</li> <li>• Religious scriptures promoting harmony and social acceptance.</li> <li>• Examples to show how ritual may play a part in promoting social solidarity.</li> <li>• Arguments that the nature of religious belief and practice encourage conformity, respect for authority, and acceptance of the existing social order.</li> <li>• Examples of where religion has been important in encouraging social solidarity, for example during wartime.</li> </ul>	35

Question	Answer	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of religious organisations intervening to help resolve conflicts in the world, for example the peace movement in Northern Ireland was based largely on support from ecumenical movements.</li> </ul> <p>Against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marxist sociologists argue that religion is a form of ideology that deters the working class from rising up and overthrowing the capitalist economic system. Religion makes people passive and accepting of the status quo but fails to achieve a lasting harmony (or solidarity) between the different sections of society.</li> <li>• Some religious movements (liberation theology, for example) have been quite radical in their opposition to poverty and exploitation, putting the fight against inequality ahead of any efforts to promote social solidarity.</li> <li>• Sects and cults are often seen as divisive elements in society, leading to conflicts and tensions with other groups in society.</li> <li>• Some social/political movements that challenge the status quo have links with religious teachings. For example, Labour movements in western Europe historically had a close connection with non-conformist religions. Many of the great social changes of the twentieth century were driven by labour movements.</li> <li>• Feminist theories suggesting that religion contributes to gender divisions rather than promoting social solidarity.</li> <li>• Examples of where religion can be seen as contributing to conflicts and divisions in society, such as religious wars and sectarianism.</li> <li>• Supporters of the secularisation thesis would argue that the declining social significance of religion means that any power that religious organisations must promote social solidarity and avoid conflict is considerably diminished.</li> </ul>	

Question	Answer	Marks
6	<p><b>‘All societies are experiencing a decline in religiosity.’ Evaluate this view.</b></p> <p><b>Key focus of the question</b></p> <p>This question invites candidates to consider the extent to which there has been a decline in religiosity in all societies. Support for the view expressed in the question is likely to come from references to studies purporting to support the secularisation thesis as it applies to western societies. Some candidates might also refer to the impact of globalisation as a force that may be leading to a decline in religiosity in some or all non-western societies. Answers might also consider declining membership of religious organisation, competition from alternative belief systems and the challenges to spiritual belief posed by science as further examples of the possible decline in religious belief. The extent of the decline in religious belief and practice is likely to be challenged in good evaluative responses. The analysis might include references to evidence and arguments against the secularisation thesis. Another line of analysis a candidate might take would be to consider whether the view expressed in the question is true of all societies today. A case could be made for arguing that some developing societies remain deeply religious. Differences between religions might also be explored as a factor influencing religiosity. Catholicism, for example, remains a powerful influence in some European countries and this might be contrasted with the arguably weaker position of the Church of England in the UK today. Likewise, the Evangelical movement is proving a powerful force in many parts of the world presently, attracting many adherents. The growth of new religious movements and new age thinking could also be examined as a way of questioning the idea that people no longer believe in religion.</p> <p><b>Indicative content</b></p> <p>For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence and arguments supporting the secularisation thesis.</li> <li>• Surveys showing a decline in religious belief (e.g. studies by Brierley)</li> <li>• Falling membership of religious organisations and competition from other belief systems.</li> <li>• In western societies particularly, religious organisations are less involved in public life and in the institutions of the state today.</li> <li>• The social and cultural significance of religion has declined in many countries.</li> <li>• Consumerism is a stronger influence in people’s lives today than religion.</li> <li>• Science and rationalisation have undermined belief in religion.</li> </ul>	35



Question	Answer	Marks
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alternative forms of spirituality have emerged to challenge the appeal of religion.</li> </ul> <p>Against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is some evidence of religious revival in western societies.</li> <li>Religious belief remains a powerful influence in some societies (e.g. Heelas).</li> <li>Some religions appear to be gaining followers (Evangelicalism in the US, for example).</li> <li>Pew Research Center noted that demographic changes may be leading to higher populations of people who have strong religious faith, e.g. membership of Islam is growing at a rapid rate globally due to these demographic changes.</li> <li>For some communities, religion remains a central part of social and cultural life.</li> <li>The concept of religiosity is also difficult to define and operationalise.</li> <li>Claims that people are less religious than in the past can be questioned. For example, there is a lack of evidence about how religious people were in previous periods.</li> <li>Many religious organisations are seeking to rejuvenate themselves by, for example, renewing their involvement in the community and engaging more in social and political issues.</li> <li>Evidence of growth in privatised forms of religion and believing without belonging.</li> <li>New forms of technology may have helped strengthen the means through which the faithful are motivated and supported in their beliefs and practises, for example, online religious services, social media means of communicating with followers, tele-evangelism.</li> <li>Many recent migrant groups entering western societies bring strong religious beliefs and commitment to religious worship.</li> <li>Forms of religious belief and practise more suited to the values of modern life have emerged in recent times. This is particularly the case with the development of individualistic, consumerist types of belief e.g. New Age ideas.</li> </ul>	

**Generic levels of response**

Level	AO1: Knowledge and Understanding	Marks
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good knowledge and understanding of the view on which the question is based.</li> <li>The response contains a range of detailed points with good use of concepts and theory/research evidence.</li> </ul>	7–9
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reasonable knowledge and understanding of the view on which the question is based.</li> <li>The response contains either a narrow range of detailed points or a wider range of underdeveloped points, with some use of concepts and references to theory or research evidence</li> </ul>	4–6
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basic knowledge and understanding of the view on which the question is based.</li> <li>The response contains a narrow range of underdeveloped points with some references to concepts or theory or research evidence.</li> </ul>	1–3
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No knowledge and understanding worthy of credit.</li> </ul>	0

Level	AO2: Interpretation and Application	Marks
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very good interpretation and application of relevant sociological material.</li> <li>The material selected will be accurately interpreted and consistently applied to the question in a logical and well-informed way.</li> </ul>	10–11
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good interpretation and application of sociological material.</li> <li>The material selected will be accurate and relevant but not always consistently applied to the question in a way that is logical and clear</li> </ul>	7–9
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reasonable interpretation and application of sociological material.</li> <li>The material selected will be mainly accurate but its relevance to the question may be confused or unclear at times.</li> </ul>	4–6
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited interpretation and application of sociological material.</li> <li>The material selected is relevant to the topic but lacks focus on or relevance to the specific question.</li> </ul>	1–3
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No interpretation and application worthy of credit.</li> </ul>	0

Level	AO3: Analysis and Evaluation	Marks
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very good analysis and evaluation.</li> <li>• Clear and sustained analysis of the view on which the question is based, with detailed and explicit evaluation.</li> <li>• There is also likely to be a range of contrasting views and/or evidence discussed, demonstrating good understanding of the complexity of the issues raised by the question.</li> </ul>	12–15
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good analysis and evaluation.</li> <li>• The evaluation may be explicit and direct but not sustained, or it will rely on a good outline of contrasting views and/or evidence, clearly focussed on evaluating the view in the question.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates some understanding of the complexity of the issues raised by the question.</li> </ul>	8–11
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasonable analysis and evaluation.</li> <li>• There is a description of some relevant contrasting views and/or evidence but these are only implicitly focussed on evaluating the view in the question.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates some awareness of the complexity of the issues raised by the question.</li> </ul>	4–7
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited analysis and evaluation.</li> <li>• There are a few simple points of implicit or tangential evaluation.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates little awareness of the complexity of the issues raised by the question.</li> </ul>	1–3
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No analysis and evaluation worthy of credit.</li> </ul>	0