

Markscheme

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Social and cultural anthropology

Standard level

Paper 1

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1. Define the term **status** and explain how you would apply this term in the context of the asylum seekers and refused refugees in the passage. [4]

This question requires candidates to demonstrate conceptual knowledge and understanding of the term **status**, and apply it in relation to the text. Stronger responses may also develop a critical discussion of the concept.

Candidates will be expected to provide any conceptualization along the lines of status as a socially defined aspect of a person, which entails certain rights and duties in relation to others, making clear how statuses are embedded in systems of stratification or inequality. Some candidates may refer to status as a position in a social system, relating it to the closely linked notion of role. Others may refer to the distinction between ascribed and achieved statuses. Some candidates may also well define status as a synonym for social honour or prestige (utilizing Weber), or focus on the notion of embodied status, while others might refer to the concept of master status.

Candidates are expected to apply this concept in relation to the provided ethnographic data in order to show how the different groups in the asylum system experience, manipulate and negotiate the “truth”, as a consequence of their allocated statuses. In this particular ethnographic case, membership of an asylum-seeking group – with its various cultural backgrounds, resources and experiences of uncertainty – is the defining element for comprehending the system of power, with an unequal distribution of rights and privileges, duties and responsibilities, social values and privations.

There are several examples from the text that can be used to show how the concept of status can be applied in this context. In the asylum system, the relationship between asylum seekers and the UKBA is hierarchically organized in relation to asylum claims. Candidates may focus on the discussion of the rationale for this hierarchy and the implications of such ranking in relation to “truth” reflecting a conspicuous structure for status stratification. This stratification of asylum-seekers/refugees and UKBA of different statuses is based on patterns of power, with the asylum seekers/refugees at the bottom of the scale and UKBA personnel above them. The hierarchy established in the asylum system equates patterns of cultural and social power. Inconsistencies and irrationality follow this hierarchy and the outcome is a form of institutionalized discrimination reflecting differential negotiations of the “truth” given assumed abilities or lack of them and rights.

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	The response demonstrates a basic knowledge and understanding of the concept. There is a partial application of the concept in relation to the text.
3–4	The response demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of the concept, and is clearly applied in relation to the text. The concept is explained in detail.

2. Explain how the key concept **belief and knowledge** helps you understand the ethnographic data presented in the passage. [6]

The question requires candidates to develop an analysis and explanation of this ethnographic text using the key concept of belief and knowledge to help make sense of the ethnographic data. In order to do this, candidates are required to demonstrate an understanding of the key concept and use it to illuminate certain issues within the context, supporting arguments by making reference to the ethnographic data of the extract.

Candidates may contextualize belief and knowledge in cultural identities, religious or even class-related beliefs. They can explain how the negotiation for asylum status is mediated by issues of cultural beliefs on the part of asylum seekers. These negotiations may be influenced and given direction by a system of meaningful cultural symbols. In regard to this ethnographic material, they should make reference to how asylum seekers and refugees conceptualize “lying” and the uncertainties and irrationality they experience, in their own cultural terms.

Candidates can explain how the asylum seekers internalize their fragile position in the belief that the system is irrational and requires “lying” and paying lip service to UKBA, given that its standards are inadequate to accommodate the cultural diversity of applicants. These understandings may be the basis for their making sense of their situation.

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	The response offers a common-sense or superficial understanding of the key concept. There is an attempt to relate the key concept to the text, and some ethnographic examples are presented but these are only partially relevant.
3–4	The response demonstrates an understanding of the key concept and establishes its relevance to the text. There is an analysis of the text using the key concept, although there are some inconsistencies. Relevant ethnographic examples from the text are presented to support the analysis.
5–6	The response demonstrates a clear understanding of the key concept, discussing this in the context of the text. There is a clearly explained analysis of the text using the key concept and a detailed interpretation of the ethnographic data. Clear and explicit ethnographic examples from the text support the analysis.

3. Compare and contrast the way in which the key concept of **power** or **culture** is evident in this passage with how it is evident in **one** other ethnographic example you have studied.

The target societies for this comparative question are varied and many. Candidates are expected to show an ability to think about the text in relation to other contexts and draw explicit comparisons. In order to do this, responses must demonstrate an understanding of how either the key concept of **power** or **culture** relates to this ethnographic context. They should be able to establish a relevant comparison with any other case or society based on any of these concepts. The response should be structured as a comparison and contrast, highlighting similarities and differences.

This passage focuses on the assessment of asylum seekers’ honesty and “credibility” as well as the asylum seekers’ widespread mistrust of UKBA bureaucracy and perceived “irrational” and “inconsistent” practices of granting and rejecting requests for asylum. Candidates are expected to

show an ability to think about the text in relation to other contexts and to draw explicit comparisons and contrasts. Either of the key concepts chosen on which such comparison may be drawn should be made explicit and clearly linked to any anthropological issue raised by the text. Candidates must situate the comparative case in terms of place, author and historical context. The discussion should be supported with reference to concepts and ethnography material.

Additional guidance:

The question is broad and allows for a wide array of responses. Some candidates may choose to use **power** to explain this ethnographic account. This key concept may be approached drawing from diverse origins – such as Weberian or Marxist ideas – or any other relevant conceptualization. Terms such as ideology, hegemony and culture may also come into play. These responses may focus on the incoherent practices of reviewing asylum cases resulting in uncertainty and mistrust.

Some candidates may refer to the concept of ideology related to power relations, to explain the relationship between beliefs about fairness and trust and certainty of the immigration system in the UK and elsewhere. The focus on ideology may link the institutional emphasis on truthfulness to images of asylum seekers as liars and opportunistic cheats, in a discussion of metaphors and stereotypes. Some may focus on the power dynamics and highlight how institutional discrimination based on a lack of cultural appreciation of diverse cultural and political conditions in the applicants' home countries creates mistrust and prevents a coherent and trustworthy immigration policy.

Those candidates who choose to support their answers by analyzing the ethnographic data through the lens of the key concept **culture**, will likely make reference to the nature of cultural diversities – the importance of appreciating the cultures of the refugees' home countries, the beliefs, practices, values, ideas, material conditions and economic life and other domains of social and cognitive organization.

Some responses may focus on the discussion of truth and lying and the author's statement that most bureaucracies encourage at least a massaging of truth. Some candidates will also call attention to the challenges of conducting fieldwork in a context where truth is constantly being negotiated.

The responses which focus on **culture** may also refer to the "culture of disbelief", the chronic suspicion of asylum seekers, the lacking cultural knowledge among UKBA officials and the near-impossibility for individuals to meet the ideal of the "genuine" refugee.

OR

4. Compare and contrast the approaches to research adopted by the anthropologist in this passage to the approaches to research used by another anthropologist you have studied. Make reference to concepts and ethnographic material in your answer. **[10]**

While in the previous question the stress of the comparison and contrast needs to be drawn on the key concepts which would help to frame the responses, here candidates are expected to show an ability to think about the text with emphasis on the methodological and theoretical perspectives of the anthropologists as the main principle on which such comparisons should be established.

For example, candidates may note how the author of this passage investigates the ways in which "truth" is constructed by the two sides, by approaching research with a focus on the narratives and comments made by the refugees and UKBA, and may compare and contrast this with how another anthropologist has approached issues of "credibility". Other possible answers may compare the approach to research in closed institutions with other analytical viewpoints, such as Goffman's study. Also, some candidates may highlight how the author's approach is based on the symbolic, focusing on belief systems, and compare and contrast this approach to another ethnographic work.

It would also be relevant if candidates note the use of specific terms – “lying”, “trust” – and a manifest analysis of the search for certainty. With reference to concepts, it is possible to compare how this author analyses truth while other anthropologists that the candidate studied may focus on class or gender inequalities in relation to migration.

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	<p>Comparative ethnography or approaches are presented but in limited detail; relevance is only partially established.</p> <p>The response is not structured as a comparison.</p> <p>The identification of material in terms of fieldwork location(s), historical context(s), group(s) studied, and ethnographer(s) is missing.</p>
3–4	<p>Comparative ethnography or approaches are presented and although this is in limited detail, its relevance is established.</p> <p>The response is structured as a comparison, but this is not balanced and lacks detail.</p> <p>The identification of material in terms of fieldwork location(s), historical context(s), group(s) studied, and ethnographer(s) is partially complete.</p>
5–6	<p>Comparative ethnography or approaches are presented; relevance is established and explained.</p> <p>The response is clearly structured as a comparison; however, either comparison (similarities) or contrasts (differences) are discussed in some detail, but not both; or both are discussed, but superficially.</p> <p>The identification of material in terms of fieldwork location(s), historical context(s), group(s) studied, and ethnographer(s) is mostly complete.</p>
7–8	<p>Comparative ethnography or approaches are presented; relevance is clearly established and explained in detail.</p> <p>The response is clearly structured as a comparison with comparisons (similarities) and contrasts (differences) being discussed in detail, although this is not balanced.</p> <p>The response demonstrates anthropological understanding.</p> <p>The identification of material in terms of fieldwork location(s), historical context(s), group(s) studied, and ethnographer(s) is mostly complete.</p> <p><i>If fieldwork location(s), historical context, group(s) studied and ethnographer(s) have not been fully identified, no more than 8 marks will be awarded.</i></p>
9–10	<p>Comparative ethnography or approaches are presented; relevance is clearly established and discussed in detail.</p> <p>The response is clearly structured as a comparison with comparisons (similarities) and contrasts (differences) discussed critically.</p> <p>The response demonstrates anthropological understanding.</p> <p>The identification of material in terms of fieldwork location(s), historical context(s), group(s) studied, and ethnographer(s) is complete.</p>

5. Why does anthropology matter? Discuss with reference to **at least two** sources of ethnographic material and examples from the passage. [10]

This question requires candidates to develop an argument which is built on an understanding of the following “big anthropological question”: **Why does anthropology matter?** This argumentative response includes discussion and analysis that should be supported by relevant, detailed ethnographic material that gives evidence of the understanding of this big question in different cultural contexts.

This “big anthropological question” should be the very backbone of the response, and be informed by the ethnographic material studied. The aim of this question is to facilitate students to think with and through ethnographic material; to explore these materials analytically, aided by the focus on a “big anthropological question”. A broad variety of ethnographic data can be put forward in order to create meaningful responses.

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	<p>There is limited understanding of the big anthropological question.</p> <p>The response refers to ethnographic material in the passage; relevance to the question is superficial or not established.</p> <p>The identification of material in terms of fieldwork location(s), historical context(s), group(s) studied, and ethnographer(s) is missing.</p>
3–4	<p>There is some understanding of the big anthropological question.</p> <p>The response presents some ethnographic material, but relevance to the question is superficial.</p> <p>There is an attempt to analyse and interpret the ethnographic material in relation to the big anthropological question, but this lacks clarity and coherence.</p> <p>The identification of material in terms of fieldwork location(s), historical context(s), group(s) studied, and ethnographer(s) is partially complete.</p>
5–6	<p>There is an understanding of the big anthropological question in different cultural contexts.</p> <p>The response presents some ethnographic material and partially establishes its relevance to the question, but this lacks detail.</p> <p>There is some analysis and interpretation of the ethnographic material in relation to the big anthropological question and there is some explanation. There are inconsistencies in the overall argument.</p> <p>The identification of material in terms of fieldwork location(s), historical context(s), group(s) studied, and ethnographer(s) is mostly complete.</p>

7-8	<p>There is clear understanding of the big anthropological question in different cultural contexts.</p> <p>The response presents a range of comparative ethnographic material and establishes its relevance to the question.</p> <p>Analysis and interpretation support an argument; however minor inconsistencies hinder the strength of the overall argument.</p> <p>There is some evaluation, which is generally supported by the argument presented.</p> <p>The identification of material in terms of fieldwork location(s), historical context(s), group(s) studied, and ethnographer(s) is mostly complete.</p> <p><i>If fieldwork location(s), historical context, group(s) studied and ethnographer(s) have not been fully identified, no more than 8 marks will be awarded.</i></p>
9-10	<p>There is a clear understanding of the big anthropological question in different cultural contexts.</p> <p>The response presents detailed comparative ethnographic material and establishes its relevance to the question.</p> <p>Analysis and interpretation support a reasoned argument; any minor inconsistencies do not hinder the strength of the overall argument.</p> <p>There is critical evaluation.</p> <p>The identification of material in terms of fieldwork location(s), historical context(s), group(s) studied, and ethnographer(s) is complete.</p>