

# Candidate 1 evidence

Word count: 1132

## Instructions for candidates

This assignment is worth a maximum of 30 marks. Your report should be between 800 and 1,200 words long, excluding references, footnotes, and appendices. You must provide the word count of your completed report, excluding references, footnotes, and appendices. Your report is marked by SQA. If the word count exceeds the maximum by 10%, a penalty will be applied.

Please note that you are not permitted to use the two sociological studies which are a mandatory part of the National 5 Sociology course: — Rosenthal R. and Jacobson L. 1968. *Pygmalion in the classroom*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston — Kingdon G. and Cassen R. 2007. *Understanding low achievement in English schools*. London School of Economics.

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

My social issue is going to be about poverty, this is a critical issue since about 14.5 million people in the UK are in poverty this was reported by the house of commons. The government thinks this number has most likely would have gone up to 15 million due to covid happening. Sociologists are interested in this topic because it affects everyone in society. People should not have to live in poverty, but it has always been a part of human society and may always be a part of it. Also, they are trying to find out if there is a way to make these people's lives easier and see if they can help correct the unequal world that we live in or at least a way to make their life a bit better.

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

One common-sense view to do with poverty is that it's their fault that they are in it and have no one to blame but themselves. This is a very frequent view that is seen in the media and today's society.

Common sense views are subjective and tend to be individualistic, thinking people just need to work harder to get out of poverty and they will be fine. Common sense blames individuals. Sociology is objective, research looks at the explanations of poverty and argues that people in poverty don't have the same life chances that everyone else has. If they are born into poverty, they are more likely to be in poverty when they grow up. Your life chances can change a lot depending on where you live, what school you attend and the opportunities you have.

One example of this is Priti Patel from the independent in 2019 who says that the government isn't to blame for poverty and says that it is part of society and that the local councils are to blame and not the government "it's not just on a national level, it's a local level"

Another one is, in an article that was published in the Daily Mail in 2013 Michael Gove said that people who use food banks have no one to blame but themselves for the bad decisions that they have made and said that they should be able to "manage their finances better"

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

For one of my sources, I will be using the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) study, 'Poverty 2022' <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/uk-poverty-2022>

Another one I will be using is from the commons library parliament which goes over statistics about poverty in the UK. <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn07096/>

D Organising and interpreting information in sociology — maximum of 10 marks available.

The JRF study, Poverty 2022 states that approximately 4.2 million people who are in private rentals are in poverty and about half of that number, 1.9 million, are pulled into poverty due to both high housing costs and low incomes. As well as private renters some people live in local authority housing who are less likely to be pulled into poverty as it is cheaper than private renting. Housing cost is a massive factor to consider when looking at poverty. High housing costs and low income are two main reasons why renters fall into poverty. Also, 68% of working adults are in poverty and live in a house where only one of the adults are working.

The weekly cost of living in 2019/20 in the UK was an average of £588 a week. Low-income households only spent £329 a week which is 40% of the households which are in the richest quintile had £937 to spend. Since 2018/19 and 2019/20 the prices that families will spend on housing have gone up by £3 and the amount, they spend on food a week has gone up by £1.

The Commons Parliamentary report highlights that there are two types of poverty relative poverty and absolute poverty. Before people have paid the cost of where they are living of people are in relative poverty it is 16% and after the housing cost of housing that percentage goes up to 20%. Absolute poverty before housing cost is 13% that is 5.1 million and that goes up to 17% which is 6.8 million. These numbers will only rise if the problem is not tackled.

Some factors that cause poverty stated by the Commons Library Parliament can come under different sections which are long-term worklessness, family instability, family size, drug or alcohol problems housing and debt these are just a few reasons why people can fall into poverty.

The information is important because more people will go into poverty due to the rise of the cost of living. Most recently, this includes a surge in energy prices and buying food. The information is relative as it shows the cost of living and the number of people that are in poverty. Michael Gove has said that people are to blame for their poverty and Priti Patel has said the government isn't to blame. It shows sociologists how much the cost of living is and then they can estimate how much it will go up in the future and it will give them information so they can work towards further helping people to get out of poverty.

E Communicating sociologically informed views – maximum of 10 marks available.

Poverty in sociology is looking at how resources and wealth are unevenly distributed as well as looking at the inequality of life that people live in. Marxism is a structural theory that looks at society as a whole which is called a Macro theory also known as a top-down approach.

To relate to this my topic when companies are paying low wages just to get bigger profits this will be a significant factor of people being the bourgeoisie (CEO) get richer and proletariat (workers) get poorer. Marxism looks to help the worker not be exploited but also help them get an equal wage so they can afford to live a somewhat comfortable life as well as giving people equal opportunities. Also, they are taken advantage of due to people working zero-hours contracts where sometimes they can go weeks without work or temporary jobs where they need to look for a new job every 6 to 12 months not having a secure job is another main reason that people will fall into poverty also with the energy prices going up by over 50% this will have a knock-on effect that will increase the number of people in poverty in the next year.

The evidence shown in this report disproves the common sense statement that 'all people are lazy' as there are so many factors to consider when talking about poverty. The government should not just blame the people and the mismanagement of their finances as this is an individualistic approach. The evidence I have shown shows that more needs to be done to help people in poverty also since the Government makes the policies that are meant to help those who are in poverty rather than cut support from them.