

Question	Answer	Marks												
5	<p>Evaluate the view that qualitative methods are unsuitable for sociological research because they lack reliability.</p> <p>Indicative content</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>In support of the view</th> <th>Against the view</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Points</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative data cannot be easily replicated and so lacks reliability (positivist view). • The data from qualitative methods lack objectivity are value laden and subjective. • Respondents in qualitative research are likely to be influenced by the presence of the researcher as there is a closer connection between them. This is more likely to lead to researcher bias. • Researcher imposition. • The small numbers involved often leads to unrepresentative samples. • Practical considerations – time, money etc. • There are sometimes ethical problems linked to qualitative methods. </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The interpretivist view that qualitative methods are suitable for study of human behaviour as they allow you to understand the reasons behind behaviour. • Qualitative methods produce highly valid data that explores the subjective meanings actors hold from their point of view. • Variables in the social world cannot be controlled. • Give more control to the subjects / less imposition from the researcher. • Humans have free will and their behaviour cannot be measured (rebuttal of the scientific approach). • Some qualitative methods arguably lead to a measure of reliability in the data produced e.g. semi-structured interviews, structured observations. </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Research evidence</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Additional concepts</td> <td>Interpretivism</td> <td>Positivism</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The above content is indicative and other relevant approaches to the question should be rewarded appropriately.</p>		In support of the view	Against the view	Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative data cannot be easily replicated and so lacks reliability (positivist view). • The data from qualitative methods lack objectivity are value laden and subjective. • Respondents in qualitative research are likely to be influenced by the presence of the researcher as there is a closer connection between them. This is more likely to lead to researcher bias. • Researcher imposition. • The small numbers involved often leads to unrepresentative samples. • Practical considerations – time, money etc. • There are sometimes ethical problems linked to qualitative methods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The interpretivist view that qualitative methods are suitable for study of human behaviour as they allow you to understand the reasons behind behaviour. • Qualitative methods produce highly valid data that explores the subjective meanings actors hold from their point of view. • Variables in the social world cannot be controlled. • Give more control to the subjects / less imposition from the researcher. • Humans have free will and their behaviour cannot be measured (rebuttal of the scientific approach). • Some qualitative methods arguably lead to a measure of reliability in the data produced e.g. semi-structured interviews, structured observations. 	Research evidence			Additional concepts	Interpretivism	Positivism	26
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Levels of response for Question 5

The maximum mark for Question 5 is 26.

Examiners should award up to 8 marks for AO1, up to 8 marks for AO2, and up to 10 marks for AO3.

Level	AO1: Knowledge and Understanding	Marks
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good knowledge and understanding of the view that qualitative methods are unsuitable for sociological research because they lack reliability. • The response contains a range of detailed points with good use of concepts and theory / research evidence. 	7–8
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable knowledge and understanding of the view that qualitative methods are unsuitable for sociological research because they lack reliability. • The response contains a narrow range of detailed points or a wider range of underdeveloped points, with some use of concepts or theory or research evidence. 	5–6
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic knowledge and understanding of the view that qualitative methods are unsuitable for sociological research because they lack reliability. • The response contains a narrow range of underdeveloped points and may include basic references to concepts or theories or research evidence. 	3–4
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited knowledge and understanding of the view that qualitative methods are unsuitable for sociological research because they lack reliability. • The response contains only assertive points or common sense observations. 	1–2
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No knowledge and understanding worthy of credit. 	0

Level	AO2: Interpretation and Application	Marks
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The material selected will be accurately interpreted, well developed and consistently applied to answering the question. 	7–8
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The material selected will be accurate and relevant but lacks either some development or clear application to the question. 	5–6
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The material selected is relevant to the question but is not applied accurately or has limited development. 	3–4
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is some attempt to apply sociological material but this lacks focus on or relevance to the specific question. 	1–2
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No interpretation and application worthy of credit. 	0

Level	AO3: Analysis and Evaluation	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good analysis / evaluation of the view that qualitative methods are unsuitable for sociological research because they lack reliability. • The evaluation is clear, explicit and sustained. 	9–10
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good analysis / evaluation of the view that qualitative methods are unsuitable for sociological research because they lack reliability. • The evaluation is explicit and direct but not sustained or a more descriptive account of the strengths of qualitative methods in sociological research 	7–8
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some analysis / evaluation of the view that qualitative methods are unsuitable for sociological research because they lack reliability. • There is juxtaposition of different arguments and theories which are not clearly focused on the question or a few simple points about the strengths of qualitative methods in sociological research. 	5–6
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic analysis / evaluation of the view that qualitative methods are unsuitable for sociological research because they lack reliability. • There is an attempt to consider more than one side of the debate or one simple point about the benefits of qualitative methods in sociological research. 	3–4
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited analysis / evaluation of the view that qualitative methods are unsuitable for sociological research because they lack reliability. • Any analysis or evaluation is incidental, confused or simply assertive. 	1–2
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No analysis and evaluation worthy of credit. 	0