

# Markscheme

**May 2025**

**Social and cultural anthropology**

**Higher level**

**Paper 1**

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The following interpretation of the markscheme is offered as an example of the types of responses we may expect, however it is not prescriptive or exhaustive, and other possible answers should be appropriately rewarded if relevant.

### Section A

1. Define the term **community** and describe how it can be understood and applied in the context of the passage.

[4]

This question requires candidates to demonstrate conceptual knowledge and understanding of the term **community** and apply it in relation to the text. Candidates may write in terms of any of the following guidelines, but other definitions or applications will also be acceptable if made relevant to the context of the passage.

**Possible ways of defining the term:**

- A group of people who share a common interest, or a common ecology and locality, or a common social system or structure.
- A particularly constituted set of social relations.
- A group of people with strong and frequent bonds and interactions.

Other appropriate definitions should be credited.

**Possible examples of description and application:**

- The museum staff’s defensiveness regarding criticisms of the guru
- The museum staff’s requests for censorship
- The shared participation in rituals (e.g., Pithora paintings, guru's teaching)
- The relationship between the museum staff, the guru, and other Rathavas
- Acts that emphasize continuity and agreement (e.g., Rathava ancestor worship, rituals that propitiate the gods, rituals in people's homes, museum staff’s discourses)
- Disagreements between Dakxin and museum staff

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; the concept is described in detail. The concept is clearly applied in relation to the text.

2. Analyse the ethnographic data presented in the passage using the concept of **social relations**. [6]

This question requires candidates to develop an analysis and explanation of this ethnographic text using the key concept of **social relations** 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 of the passage, developing an analysis with reference to the ethnographic data of the extract.

**Possible ways of defining the key concept:**

- Relationships between two or more people in a network of relationships
- Involve an element of agency and group expectations, and form the basis of social structure
- Connections between people (and/or objects, groups, non-human persons, animals, supernatural beings, etc.) with recurring interactions
- Interactions structured by expected rights and duties.

Other appropriate definitions should be credited.

**Possible examples and ways of analyzing:**

- Dakxin's interest in revitalizing indigenous practices and rejecting Hinduism
- The museum staff's maintenance of a community museum
- Voluntary participation in a collaborative ethnographic film
- Participation in rituals and guru's teachings
- Disagreements between Dakxin and museum staff
- Interactions between filmmakers, fieldworkers and community members
- Discussion about agreements, disagreements, exchanges, identities, etc.

Other appropriate examples and ways of analysing should be credited.

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 **change** or **materiality** is evident in the passage with how it is evident in **one** other ethnographic example you have studied. Make reference to theory in your answer.

[10]

Candidates are expected to show an ability to think about the text in relation to other contexts and to draw explicit comparisons. In order to do this, responses must demonstrate an understanding of how either the key concept of **change** or **materiality** relates to this ethnographic context. Either of the key concepts on which such comparison may be drawn should be made explicit and clearly linked to any anthropological issues raised by the text.

The target societies for this comparative question are varied and many. Candidates should be able to establish a relevant comparison with any other group or society based on either of these concepts. The response should be structured as a comparison, highlighting similarities and differences. Candidates must situate the comparative case in terms of place, author and fieldwork context.

**For change, possible ways of defining the key concept include:**

- the alteration or modification of cultural or social elements in a society
- change may be due to internal dynamics within a society, or the result of contact with another culture, or a consequence of globalization.

Other appropriate definitions should be given credit.

**Possible examples from the text about change may include:**

- Rathavas' conversion to Hinduism
- abandonment of animal sacrifice, ritual consumption of alcohol and meat, and spirit possession
- adopting vegetarianism and discourse of purity
- other acts related to religious conversion: painting over Pithora paintings, discarding clay figurines
- Dakxin's resistance to Rathavas' conversion to Hinduism
- acts of preservation of indigenous religiosity: recently finished Pithora painting, staging shamanic ceremony for the film
- attempts to justify religious conversion: guru's speech about himself, museum staff's defensiveness and discourses of religious sameness
- community participation in a film about themselves.

Any other relevant point of comparison used from the text should be credited.

**Possible examples of theory in relation to change may include:**

- symbolic theories
- globalization theories
- theories of nationalism
- colonialism and post-colonialism approaches
- discussion of post-colonial subjects' voice
- any other relevant theory.

Any other relevant theory.

**For materiality, possible ways of defining the key concept include:**

- objects, resources and belongings with cultural meaning
- described by Appadurai as 'the social life of things'
- material aspects of existence embedded within all kinds of social relations and practices
- social constitution of the object world
- exploration of situated experiences of material life.

Any other relevant point of comparison used from the text should be credited.

**Possible examples from the text about materiality may include:**

- maintenance of a community museum
- collaborative filmmaking
- painting over Pithora paintings and discarding clay figurines
- continuing to create Pithora paintings and to conduct shamanic ceremonies
- giving money to the guru in exchange for blessings
- changes in diet and religious rituals due to conversion
- film editing and censorship
- assembling the community for feedback on film
- assembling in people's houses for rituals
- ethnographic recording on film.

Any other relevant point of comparison used from the text should be credited.

**Possible examples of theory in relation to materiality may include:**

- globalization theories
- materialist theories (e.g., Marxism)
- structuralist theories (e.g., Mary Douglas)
- theories of representation, access, cultural preservation, etc.
- any other relevant theory.

Any other relevant theory.

**OR**

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

Here, candidates are expected to show an ability to think about the text with emphasis on the methodological and theoretical perspectives of the ethnographer as the focus on which such comparisons should be established.

By “approaches to research” the question essentially refers to the research methods used by the anthropologist to gather data. However, as theory is required for level 5–6 and above, it is expected that candidates will also discuss theory with reference to approaches.

**Possible comparative examples regarding approaches may include:**

- participant observation
- interviews
- collaborative filmmaking
- collaborative ethnography
- ethnofiction
- reflexivity
- power and epistemological issues.

Any other relevant point of comparison used from the text should be credited.

**Possible examples of theory in relation to approaches may include:**

- globalization theories
- theories about power and social cohesion/conflict
- theories about religion or religious conversion
- theories of society/community

Any other relevant theory.

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

5. What does it mean to live in society? 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 that is built on an understanding of the following “big anthropological question”: **What does it mean to live in society?** This response should include argumentative discussion and analysis and should be supported by making reference to the passage and 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.

In the development of their response, candidates may make reference to a number of ideas or propositions connected to the question. For this reason, below are some ideas that may appear in candidates’ responses. However, any other relevant lines of thought should be rewarded.

**Possible issues to develop an argument may be:**

There are many different ways that candidates can approach this question, and any valid discussion of the strengths and limitations of anthropological endeavor is acceptable. While it is not possible to predict how they will use any additional ethnographies, in relation to the passage they may focus on:

- tensions regarding social and cultural change, religious conversion, cultural erasure
- conflict and cohesion inherent to a community
- agency and resistance
- influence of external agents on internal social processes (e.g., religious conversion, cultural maintenance and/or resistance projects, rewriting narratives, self-reflection, defensiveness)
- adaptiveness to changing circumstances
- conflicts of values, power imbalances, decision making, inequalities
- multiple identities, citizenship, discrimination and bias, narrative and ideology, etc.

Other appropriate discussion and arguments should be credited.

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	There is limited understanding of the big anthropological question. The response refers to ethnographic material; relevance to the question is superficial or not established. There is no reference to the passage. The identification of ethnographic material is missing.
3–4	There is partial understanding of the big anthropological question. The response presents some ethnographic material and establishes its relevance to the question, but this lacks detail. There is no or limited reference to the passage. There is an attempt to analyse and interpret the ethnographic material in relation to the big anthropological question, but this lacks clarity and coherence. The identification of ethnographic material is partially complete.
5–6	There is an understanding of the big anthropological question. The response presents a range of relevant ethnographic material and establishes its relevance to the question. There is some reference to the passage. There is some analysis and interpretation of the ethnographic material and passage in relation to the big anthropological question but there is a limited or an undeveloped argument. The identification of ethnographic material is mostly complete.
7–8	There is clear understanding of the big anthropological question in different cultural contexts. The response presents detailed comparative ethnographic material and establishes its relevance to the question. There is clear reference to the passage. The analysis and interpretation of the ethnographic material and passage support the development of an argument; however minor inconsistencies hinder the strength of the overall argument. The identification of ethnographic material is mostly complete.
Capped marks	If fieldwork location(s), fieldwork context(s), group(s) studied and ethnographer(s) have not been fully identified, no more than 8 marks will be awarded.
9–10	There is clear understanding of the big anthropological question in different cultural contexts. The response presents detailed comparative ethnographic material and establishes its relevance to the question. There is clear reference to the passage. The analysis and interpretation of the ethnographic material and passage in relation to the big anthropological question support the development of a reasoned argument; any minor inconsistencies do not hinder from the strength of the overall argument. The identification of ethnographic material is complete.

## Section B

6. With reference to **either** stimulus A **or** stimulus B, **and** your own knowledge, discuss the defining features of anthropological ethics.

[10]

This question requires candidates to develop a response in which they demonstrate an understanding of the anthropological ethical issues raised by the stimulus material, and an ability to engage in a critical discussion applying their own knowledge.

### **If stimulus A is used:**

This extract is based on an academic paper in which an anthropologist, drawing from his photo-ethnographic fieldwork in a French working-class suburb, reflects on his field experiences. Candidates are expected to relate the stimulus to the ethical issues that may arise in fieldwork and production of ethnography. The stimulus allows for a wide range of responses.

### **Candidates may develop a discussion based on:**

- ethics of representation and voice
- the nature of the interaction, participation and collaboration of research participants
- positionality, reflexivity, power asymmetries, selectivity of data
- informed consent, credits/references, necessary permissions
- the dignity of the members of the group being studied
- the methodological and epistemological challenges that stem from specific ethical decisions made by the photographer/anthropologist.
- any relevant principle of anthropological codes of ethics (they may be informed by diverse professional national associations)
- local cultural sensibilities or other status differences between the researcher and participants.

Other possible relevant lines of thought should be credited.

### **If stimulus B is used:**

In this case, it is likely that candidates will discuss anthropological ethics stressing the importance of visual media. In this case, a photo of an anthropologist sharing gifts among research participants.

### **Candidates may develop a discussion based on:**

- the nature of interaction between fieldworkers and research participants
- reciprocity and gift exchange
- power asymmetries
- local cultural sensibilities or other status differences between the researcher and participants
- positionality and reflexivity
- informed consent, credits/references, necessary permissions
- the dignity of the members of the group being studied
- gender, age differences in relation to the anthropologist
- the reputation of anthropology as a discipline in the community studied.
- an analysis from any relevant principle of anthropological codes of ethics (they may be informed by diverse professional national associations).

Other possible relevant lines of thought should be credited.

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	The response identifies one or more ethical concerns but their relevance to anthropology is not established. There is little or no reference to the stimulus.
3–4	The response identifies one or more ethical concerns and partially establishes their relevance to anthropology. There is an attempt to engage with the stimulus, but understanding of the ethical issue presented is superficial or limited.
5–6	The response develops an analysis of one or more ethical concerns and establishes their relevance to anthropology. There is clear understanding of the ethical issues presented in the stimulus. An argument is presented that indicates the student’s perspective on the relative importance of the ethical issue(s) in relation to anthropological practice, but this is only partially developed.
7–8	The response discusses one or more ethical concerns, is anthropologically informed, and incorporates the student’s own knowledge of the defining features of anthropological ethics. There is clear and relevant engagement with the stimulus, and the ethical issues presented are explained demonstrating sound understanding. An argument is presented that indicates the student’s perspective on the relative importance of the ethical issue(s) in relation to anthropological practice; however, there are inconsistencies that hinder the overall strength of the argument.
9–10	The response critically discusses one or more ethical concerns, is anthropologically informed, and integrates the student’s own knowledge of the defining features of anthropological ethics. There is relevant and thorough engagement with the stimulus, and the ethical issue(s) presented are fully explained demonstrating excellent understanding. A reasoned argument is presented that indicates the student’s perspective on the relative importance of the ethical issue(s) in relation to anthropological practice; any minor inconsistencies do not hinder the overall strength of the argument.