

EDU015 — Gender patterns in attainment and choices

Exam Skills

Objective: Interpret gender patterns in achievement and subject choice without treating group averages as innate differences, and evaluate competing sociological explanations.

Command-word training

Analyse two ways means you must develop two distinct sociological mechanisms. Evaluate means you must weigh explanations and make a supported judgement.

Assessment success criteria

AO1: knowledge	AO2: application	AO3: analysis/evaluation
Use accurate concepts, studies and theorists.	Apply directly to the item, question wording and educational context.	Explain mechanisms, compare explanations and evaluate evidence.
Do not name-drop: explain the idea and mechanism.	Do not write a generic essay that could fit any question.	Do not bolt on “however”; show why the criticism changes the judgement.
High grade: precise and selective knowledge.	High grade: item use integrated into the paragraph.	High grade: qualified judgement about strength and limits.

From weak to strong

Weaker writing	Improved writing
Pupils have different attitudes.	Pupil attitudes can be socially produced through labels, setting and peer status, which makes the response sociological rather than individualistic.
This study shows inequality.	The study supports the mechanism because it shows how institutional expectations can shape opportunity; however, its strength depends on context and evidence quality.
However, some disagree.	A stronger evaluation explains why the alternative explanation changes the judgement, for example by showing that material resources may operate before school labelling begins.