



General Certificate of Education
Advanced Subsidiary Examination
June 2012

Sociology

SCLY2

Unit 2

Friday 25 May 2012 1.30 pm to 3.30 pm

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 12-page answer book.

Time allowed

- 2 hours

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Examining Body** for this paper is AQA. The **Paper Reference** is SCLY2.
- This paper is divided into **two** sections.
- Choose **one** section and answer **all** the questions in that section.
- Do **not** answer questions from more than one section.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 90.
- Questions carrying 12 marks or more should be answered in continuous prose. In these questions you will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Choose **either** Section A **or** Section B and answer **all** the questions in that section.

Section A: Education with Research Methods

You are advised to spend approximately 50 minutes on questions

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You are advised to spend approximately 30 minutes on question

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You are advised to spend approximately 40 minutes on questions

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Total for this section: 90 marks

Education

Read **Item A** below and answer questions

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 that follow.

Item A

There are important differences in the educational achievement of pupils from different ethnic groups. For example, at GCSE, on average, Chinese and Indian pupils perform better than White, Bangladeshi, Pakistani or Black pupils.

Within all ethnic groups, girls out-perform boys – but not to the same extent. For example, gender differences have more impact on the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils than on the achievement of Chinese pupils. Similarly, class differences have more impact on achievement among White pupils than among Black pupils.

One possible reason for ethnic differences in achievement lies in the school system. For example, Black Caribbean boys are far more likely to be permanently excluded than any other group. However, many sociologists also draw attention to the importance of factors outside school.

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 Explain what is meant by the 'correspondence principle'. *(2 marks)*
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 Suggest **three** criticisms that other sociologists may make of the functionalist view of the education system. *(6 marks)*
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 Outline some of the ways in which government educational policies may have affected social class differences in educational achievement. *(12 marks)*
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 Using material from **Item A** and elsewhere, assess sociological explanations for ethnic differences in educational achievement. *(20 marks)*

Methods in Context

This question requires you to **apply** your knowledge and understanding of sociological research methods to the study of this **particular** issue in **education**.

Read **Item B** below and answer the question that follows.

Item B

Investigating the effects of streaming

Streaming involves allocating pupils of similar ability to the same class for all or most lessons. This may create a self-fulfilling prophecy, in which the achievement of those placed in higher ability streams improves, while that of pupils placed in lower streams deteriorates. As a result, those in lower streams may develop a negative self-image, give up trying and even join an anti-school subculture.

Some sociologists may use field experiments to study the effects of streaming. One advantage of this is that the researcher can allocate pupils into high streams and low streams and measure the effect. However, there are ethical objections to the use of field experiments because of the harm they may do to pupils. There are also practical problems in organising such experiments in a school setting.

Other sociologists may use unstructured interviews to study the effects of streaming. One advantage of this is that the researcher can explore pupils' feelings and reactions. However, one problem with this method is that some pupils – especially those in lower streams – may refuse to be interviewed. There are also practical problems in arranging and carrying out a large enough number of unstructured interviews.

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Using material from **Item B** and elsewhere, assess the strengths and limitations of **one** of the following methods for investigating the effects of streaming:

EITHER field experiments

OR unstructured interviews.

(20 marks)

Research Methods

These questions permit you to draw examples from **any areas** of sociology with which you are familiar.

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Explain what is meant by the 'operationalisation' of sociological concepts. (2 marks)

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Suggest **two** reasons why the results obtained from a postal questionnaire may not be representative of the population that it aims to study. (4 marks)

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Suggest **two** factors that may influence a sociologist's choice of research topic. (4 marks)

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Examine the advantages for sociologists of using official statistics in their research. (20 marks)

Turn over ►

Section B: Health with Research Methods

You are advised to spend approximately 50 minutes on questions **1 0** to **1 3**.

You are advised to spend approximately 30 minutes on question **1 4**.

You are advised to spend approximately 40 minutes on questions **1 5** to **1 8**.

Total for this section: 90 marks

Health

Read **Item C** below and answer questions **1 0** to **1 3** that follow.

Item C

To understand mental illness, interactionists focus on the meanings that we attach to people and their behaviour. They use ideas such as societal reaction and self-concept to explain why and how we attach the label 'mentally ill' to others. For example, Szasz argues that 'mental illness' is just a label for behaviour that others find objectionable.

Interactionists are interested in the power that psychiatrists have to label patients and how this can affect the patient. For example, psychiatric hospitals often re-shape the patient's identity and behaviour to conform to the needs of the institution.

Interactionists also note how some groups in society, such as women, ethnic minorities or the poor, are more likely to be labelled as suffering from serious mental illness. However, critics argue that interactionists neglect the wider social causes of mental illness.

- 1 0** Explain what is meant by the 'medicalisation' of childbirth. (2 marks)
- 1 1** Identify **three** features of the functionalist view of the sick role. (6 marks)
- 1 2** Outline some of the reasons for international differences in the patterns of health and illness. (12 marks)
- 1 3** Using material from **Item C** and elsewhere, assess the usefulness of interactionist contributions to our understanding of mental illness. (20 marks)

Methods in Context

This question requires you to **apply** your knowledge and understanding of sociological research methods to the study of this **particular** issue in **health**.

Read **Item D** below and answer the question that follows.

Item D

Patients' experiences of Accident and Emergency services

Accident and Emergency (A & E) services operate round the clock, dealing with a wide variety of acute cases, including accidents in the home, cardiac arrests, alcohol abuse and stabbings. Some patients arrive by emergency ambulance, while others walk in off the street. Some may be distressed, confused or violent. A & E departments can suddenly become intensely busy. These settings have hierarchies of authority and may have targets for things such as waiting times.

Some sociologists may use non-participant observation to study patients' experiences of A & E services. One advantage of this is that they can see how staff treat different types of patient. Because A & E departments are more open than many healthcare settings, the observer may gain access relatively easily. However, for both practical and ethical reasons, they may see only a small fraction of what goes on.

Other sociologists may use structured interviews to study patients' experiences of A & E services. One advantage of this is that the interviewer can record answers for patients who cannot do so themselves. It also allows the researcher to gather basic, standardised data on patients relatively quickly. However, hospital staff may not permit the researcher to interview all the patients that they wish to.

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Using material from **Item D** and elsewhere, assess the strengths and limitations of **one** of the following methods for investigating patients' experiences of Accident and Emergency services:

EITHER non-participant observation

OR structured interviews.

(20 marks)

Section B continues on the next page

Turn over ►

Research Methods

These questions permit you to draw examples from **any areas** of sociology with which you are familiar.

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 Explain what is meant by the 'operationalisation' of sociological concepts. (2 marks)
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 Suggest **two** reasons why the results obtained from a postal questionnaire may not be representative of the population that it aims to study. (4 marks)
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 Suggest **two** factors that may influence a sociologist's choice of research topic. (4 marks)
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 Examine the advantages for sociologists of using official statistics in their research. (20 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS

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