

General Certificate of Education
June 2008
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



SOCIOLOGY
Unit 1

SCY1R

Monday 19 May 2008 9.00 am to 10.15 am

For this paper you must have:

- an 8-page answer book.

Time allowed: 1 hour 15 minutes

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 SCY1R.
- This paper is divided into **three** Sections.
Choose **one** Section and answer **all** parts of the question from that Section.
Do **not** answer questions from more than one Section.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 60.
- The marks for part questions are shown in brackets.
- Parts (e) and (f) of your chosen question should be answered in continuous prose. In these part questions you will be marked on your ability to use good English, to organise information clearly and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Choose **one** Section and answer **all** parts of the question from that Section.

SECTION A: FAMILIES AND HOUSEHOLDS

Total for this section: 60 marks

- 1** Read **Items 1A and 1B** and answer parts (a) to (f) that follow.

Item 1A

After changes in the divorce law came into effect in 1971, the annual number of divorces increased rapidly and continued to grow for some years. Although there has been a slight drop more recently, the divorce rate today means that, of every thousand couples who start the year married, 12 will have divorced by the end of the year.

Meanwhile, the average age at which people first marry has been rising and has now reached the late twenties. By the time the average couple reaches the age of 60, there is about a 35–40 per cent chance that they will have divorced. One result of the rising divorce rate is the great increase in the number of reconstituted families compared with a few decades ago. Another effect is the growth of lone-parent families headed by mothers.

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Item 1B

‘March of progress’ sociologists argue that we have moved from the patriarchal, male-dominated family to the egalitarian or democratic family, in which husbands and wives now have a relationship based on equality. For example, men are no longer the sole wage-earners, while there is some evidence that husbands whose wives work full-time perform more domestic labour than other men. In this view, the trend towards equality is the result of many factors, including changes in the labour market and housing patterns, access to contraception, rising living standards and increased mobility.

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However, critics argue that the extent of such changes has been exaggerated. For example, men still generally earn more than women, and there is still a cultural expectation that women ought to have the main responsibility for childcare.

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- (a) Explain what is meant by a 'reconstituted' family (**Item 1A**, line 8). (2 marks)
- (b) Suggest **two** reasons why lone-parent families are likely to be headed by mothers rather than fathers (**Item 1A**, line 9). (4 marks)
- (c) Suggest **three** reasons why 'the average age at which people first marry has been rising' (**Item 1A**, line 5). (6 marks)
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** reasons for the increase in divorce, **apart from** changes in the law (**Item 1A**, lines 1–2). (8 marks)
- (e) Examine the reasons for changes in the social position of children since industrialisation. (20 marks)
- (f) Using material from **Item 1B** and elsewhere, assess the extent to which 'husbands and wives now have a relationship based on equality' (**Item 1B**, lines 2–3). (20 marks)

Turn over for Section B

Turn over ►

SECTION B: HEALTH

Total for this section: 60 marks

- 2** Read **Items 2A and 2B** and answer parts (a) to (f) that follow.

Item 2A

There are striking differences in the health chances of different social groups. For example, health statistics show that life expectancy for those in Class I (the professional class) is higher than for those in Class V (the unskilled manual class). Some sociologists argue that this is mainly the result of cultural and behavioural differences between the two classes. Others account for the relationship between class and health in terms of the social selection explanation.

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Sociologists have generally focused on social, economic and cultural factors in their explanations of health, illness and disability. By contrast, health professionals such as doctors and surgeons have tended to favour the medical model (sometimes also called the bio-medical approach).

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Item 2B

Despite the existence of a National Health Service that is free at the point of use and in theory available to everyone who needs it, there are important differences in access to health care. For example, compared with the middle class, working-class people are more likely to visit the GP, but less likely to receive preventative treatment or be referred to a specialist. On average they also have a shorter consultation with the doctor.

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There are also gender and ethnic differences in access to health care. For example, women of child-bearing age see their GP more frequently, while members of some minority ethnic groups are less likely to make use of health services. Some sociologists suggest that this is because of institutional racism.

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- (a) Explain what is meant by the ‘social selection’ explanation of the relationship between class and health (**Item 2A**, lines 5–6). (2 marks)
- (b) Identify **two** features of the medical model of health and illness (**Item 2A**, line 9). (4 marks)
- (c) Suggest **three** cultural and/or behavioural factors that may result in class differences in life expectancy, **apart from** access to health care (**Item 2A**). (6 marks)
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** reasons why health statistics such as those referred to in **Item 2A** may not provide an accurate picture of the patterns of health and illness in society. (8 marks)
- (e) Examine the reasons for the patterns of mental illness found in society. (20 marks)
- (f) Using material from **Item 2B** and elsewhere, assess sociological explanations for differences in access to health care experienced by different social groups. (20 marks)

Turn over for Section C

Turn over ►

SECTION C: MASS MEDIA

Total for this section: 60 marks

- 3** Read **Items 3A and 3B** and answer parts (a) to (f) that follow.

Item 3A

Different groups and institutions influence the output of the mass media. These include media professionals such as editors, producers and journalists, owners (or governors in the case of public bodies such as the BBC), audiences, advertisers, government and the law.

When it comes to news production, some sociologists argue that it is the media professionals who have most influence over output, through their control of processes such as agenda-setting. Hegemonic Marxists argue that this leads to news output that serves the interests of the ruling class. For example, in the reporting of strikes, content analysis of the news has shown systematic bias against strikers and in favour of employers. Marxists argue that this is because media professionals generally share the same outlook as media owners.

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Item 3B

Sociologists have developed a wide range of different models and theories, all claiming to explain the relationship between the mass media and their audiences. At one extreme lies the hypodermic syringe model. This model claims that audiences are unable to resist the power of the media to 'inject' them with messages. In this view, these messages shape audiences' spending patterns, political attitudes and even their willingness to engage in deviant behaviour.

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At the other extreme are approaches such as the uses and gratifications model. This model emphasises the ability of audiences to make choices and use the media for their own purposes, taking whatever meets their needs and, presumably, ignoring or filtering out all the other messages.

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- (a) Explain what is meant by ‘agenda-setting’ (**Item 3A**, line 6). *(2 marks)*
- (b) Suggest **two** reasons why media professionals may ‘share the same outlook as media owners’ (**Item 3A**, lines 9–10). *(4 marks)*
- (c) Suggest **three** ways in which government and/or the law may influence the output of the mass media (**Item 3A**, lines 1–3). *(6 marks)*
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **one** strength and **one** limitation of using content analysis to study news coverage (**Item 3A**, line 8). *(8 marks)*
- (e) Examine the ways in which the mass media portray **two** of the following: social class; disability; age; gender. *(20 marks)*
- (f) Using material from **Item 3B** and elsewhere, assess the view that audiences are easily manipulated by the mass media. *(20 marks)*

END OF QUESTIONS

There are no questions printed on this page