

**ADVANCED GCE  
SOCIOLOGY**

Social Inequality and Difference

**THURSDAY 12 JUNE 2008**

**2539**

Afternoon  
Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

**Additional materials (enclosed):** Answer Booklet (12 page)

**Additional materials (required):**  
None



**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

- Write your name in capital letters, your Centre Number and Candidate Number in the spaces provided on the Answer Booklet.
- Read each question carefully and make sure you know what you have to do before starting your answer.
- Answer **one** question. Each question has **five** parts (a) to (e).
- Write your answer on the separate Answer Booklet provided.

**INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES**

- The number of marks for each question is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.
- The total number of marks for this paper is **90**.
- You will be awarded marks for the quality of written communication where an answer requires a piece of extended writing.

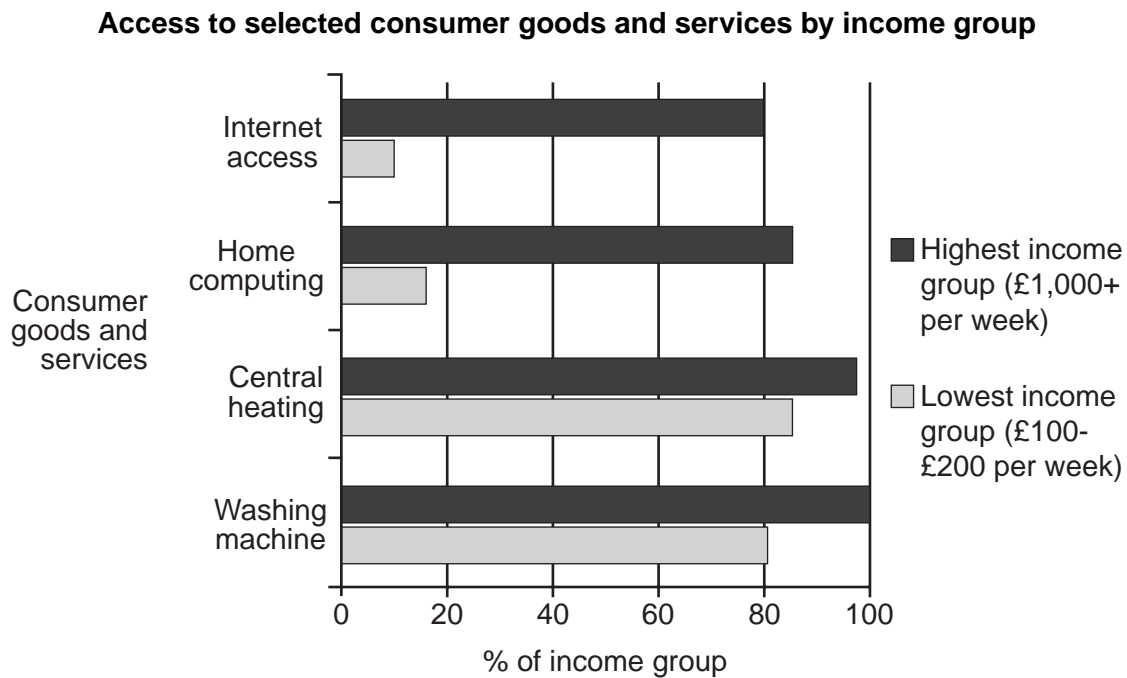
This document consists of **6** printed pages and **2** blank pages.

Answer question 1 **or** question 2. Each question has **five** parts.

*You will be assessed on your understanding of the connections between sociological thought and methods of enquiry as they apply to the study of social inequality and difference. You should therefore take every opportunity to include references to aspects of social inequality that you have studied throughout your course.*

**Question 1** Read the following data carefully and then answer parts (a) to (e).

### ITEM A



Source: Office for National Statistics, [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk)

### ITEM B

One important dimension of consumption is understanding how parents deal with children's requests. When children ask their parents to buy a particular consumer item, a complex negotiation process occurs between child and parent. Parents use the following criteria when considering whether or not to buy particular items: value for money, educational purpose and use-value (meaning that the parents want to be sure that the children will not get bored with the item quickly). One parent stated that 'it depends how badly they want it...the more educational the better'. Another parent commented that 'if computer games had an educational value I'd be much more likely to buy them than if they were just for fun'. Social class was not significant in terms of parents' ultimate decision to buy particular commodities, with parents who lived in more affluent areas giving the same reasons as those in less affluent areas, for buying certain items.

- (a) Using Item A identify the **two** consumer goods/services showing the largest percentage difference in access between the high and low income groups. [6]
- (b) Using Item B, identify **two** criteria parents use when deciding to buy children particular consumer items. [6]
- (c) Briefly explain **one** advantage and **one** disadvantage of using participant observation in shops to research the reasons why parents buy their children particular consumer items. [12]
- (d) Using your wider sociological knowledge outline the evidence that there is limited equality of opportunity in the contemporary UK. [22]
- (e) Outline and evaluate sociological explanations of the changing class structure in the UK. [44]

**[Total: 90 marks]**

*You will be assessed on your understanding of the connections between sociological thought and methods of enquiry as they apply to the study of social inequality and difference. You should therefore take every opportunity to include references to aspects of social inequality that you have studied throughout your course.*

**Question 2** Read the following data carefully and then answer parts (a) to (e).

### ITEM A

#### **Experiences of, and beliefs about, poverty (Percentages agreeing with each statement)**

	Men %	Women %
Has regularly experienced poverty	7	10
Feel dissatisfied with their living area	10	11
Believe poverty in the UK has increased in the last 10 years	40	48
Believe poverty in the UK will increase in the next 10 years	35	44
Believe poverty is the result of injustice in society	26	36

Source: Low Pay Commission Report 2005

### ITEM B

Amy is 15 years old and lives with her mother, father and brother in an inner city estate. Her mother is disabled and the family have received social security benefits for all of Amy's life. Amy has taken on a lot of responsibility within the family and she realises that as her family live on a low income it means they live in poverty. At school she has found it difficult to keep pace with her friends especially when they have received more gifts and opportunities than she did. Reflecting on this she said, 'the friends I used to hang around with were getting everything off their parents...I used to feel 'if they knew I can't go because I ain't got enough money it's going to be really embarrassing'. Amy went to great lengths to hide from her friends her inability to participate in social events or to buy the 'right' kinds of clothes. The dangers of feeling excluded and being singled out as different are very real for girls like Amy.

- (a) Using Item A identify **two** beliefs about poverty that show a difference between men and women. [6]
- (b) Using Item B identify **two** reasons why Amy may feel excluded or different in society. [6]
- (c) Briefly explain **one** advantage and **one** disadvantage of using structured questionnaires when researching experiences of poverty in the contemporary UK. [12]
- (d) Using your wider sociological knowledge outline the evidence that some social groups are more disadvantaged than others in the contemporary UK. [22]
- (e) Outline and evaluate sociological explanations of the existence of an underclass in the contemporary UK. [44]

**[Total: 90 marks]**

**BLANK PAGE**

**BLANK PAGE**

---

*Copyright Acknowledgements:*

- Q.1 ITEM A data      Source: Office for National Statistics, [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk). Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO and the Queen's Printer for Scotland.
- Q.1 ITEM B text      Adapted from J. Evans and J. Chandler, *To Buy or not to Buy: Family Dynamics and Children's Consumption*, Sociological Research Online, 2006, vol. 11(2), [www.socresonline.org.uk](http://www.socresonline.org.uk)
- Q.2 ITEM A data      Source: Low Pay Commission Report 2005, [www.lowpay.gov.uk](http://www.lowpay.gov.uk). Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO and the Queen's Printer for Scotland.
- Q.2 ITEM B text      Adapted from T. Abbas, *The Education of British South Asians*, 2004, Palgrave Macmillan. Reproduced by kind permission of Palgrave Macmillan.

Permission to reproduce items where third-party owned material protected by copyright is included has been sought and cleared where possible. Every reasonable effort has been made by the publisher (OCR) to trace copyright holders, but if any items requiring clearance have unwittingly been included, the publisher will be pleased to make amends at the earliest possible opportunity.

OCR is part of the Cambridge Assessment Group. Cambridge Assessment is the brand name of University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), which is itself a department of the University of Cambridge.