

**OXFORD CAMBRIDGE AND RSA EXAMINATIONS**

**A2 GCE**

**G674/01**

**SOCIOLOGY**

**Exploring Social Inequality  
and Difference**

**THURSDAY 18 JUNE 2015: Morning**

**DURATION: 2 hours**

**plus your additional time allowance**

**MODIFIED ENLARGED**

**OCR SUPPLIED MATERIALS:**

**12 page Answer Booklet (OCR12)  
(sent with general stationery)**

**OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED:**

**None**

**READ INSTRUCTIONS OVERLEAF**

## **INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

**Write your name, centre number and candidate number in the spaces provided on the front of the Answer Booklet. Please write clearly and in capital letters.**

**Use black ink. HB pencil may be used for graphs and diagrams only.**

**Answer questions 1 and 2 and EITHER Question 3 OR Question 4.**

**Read each question carefully. Make sure you know what you have to do before starting your answer.**

## **INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES**

**The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.**

**The total number of marks for this paper is 100.**

**Any blank pages are indicated.**

## **INSTRUCTION TO EXAMS OFFICER/INVIGILATOR**

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**You will be assessed on your understanding of the connections between sociological thought and methods of sociological enquiry as they apply to the study of social inequality and difference. This is linked to the core themes of power, social inequality, socialisation, culture and identity. In your answers to questions you are therefore encouraged to draw upon aspects of social inequality and difference studied throughout your course.**

**Read the source material. Answer questions 1 and 2 and EITHER questions 3(a) and 3(b) OR questions 4(a) and 4(b).**

## **SOURCE MATERIAL**

### **Investigating Working-Class Boys and Educational Success**

**Nicola Ingram investigated the reasons why some working-class boys are successful in education. She was interested in how working-class boys, who are successful in school, cope with potential conflict between their working-class culture and the culture of the school.** 5

**In her study, she notes that previous sociological research into working-class boys in school has focused upon failure and lack of ambition. This failure is usually explained by suggesting that male working-class culture creates barriers to success. For example, working-class backgrounds may promote values that do not fit with the educational culture of schools. This type of explanation often assumes that working-class culture is inferior or lacking and Ingram wanted to challenge this assumption.** 10 15

**The research took place in a Catholic grammar school in a working-class neighbourhood of Belfast, Northern Ireland. The grammar school uses an entrance examination to select high ability students at the age of 11.** 20

**The first phase of the research included classroom observation of three school classes of 15–16 year-old boys, following them from lesson to lesson. The second phase involved asking six volunteers from each school class to participate in a one-hour focus group interview to help the researcher to get to know the boys.** 25

**The third phase of research involved further focus group interviews using open-ended questions. The boys were asked about their lives and identities in the school and wider community. With the boys' permission, the group discussions were recorded.** 30

**Finally, each boy was interviewed individually about his experience of being working class and attending a selective grammar school.** 35

**The researcher used respondent validation during the research process to check the data with the participants.** 40

**Ingram found that the successful working-class boys felt some conflict between their identities as working-class boys and as successful learners in school. For example, one of the boys explained that it was necessary to keep some aspects of his school life hidden from his friends on the council estate, and some aspects of his social life hidden from people in school, to prevent being 'made fun of' in both places. Combining a working-class identity** 45

**with that of a successful learner created conflict in their lives. Unless they were able to operate successfully in both cultures, they experienced high levels of emotional stress. 50**

**Ingram suggests that schools need to recognise this conflict if they are to help working-class boys succeed educationally. 55**

**Adapted from ‘Within School and Beyond the Gate: the Complexities of Being Educationally Successful and Working Class’, by Nicola Ingram, in Sociology, Volume 45, Issue 2, 2011.**

**Use the source material AND your wider sociological knowledge to answer BOTH questions 1 and 2.**

- 1 Outline and explain why respondent validation is used in sociological research. [15]**
- 2 Outline and assess the view that focus group interviews are the best way to research working class boys and educational success. [25]**

**Using your wider sociological knowledge answer EITHER questions 3(a) and 3(b) OR questions 4(a) and 4(b).**

**3 (a) Outline the evidence that social class inequality still exists in the UK. [20]**

**(b) Outline and assess the view that social class inequality is functional for society. [40]**

**OR**

**4 (a) Outline the evidence that males and females continue to be unequal in the contemporary UK. [20]**

**(b) Outline and assess the view that gender is the most important form of social inequality. [40]**

**END OF QUESTION PAPER**

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