

General Certificate of Education  
January 2005  
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



**SOCIOLOGY**  
**Unit 1**

**SCY1**

Monday 10 January 2005 Afternoon Session

**In addition to this paper you will require:**  
an 8-page answer book.  
You may use a calculator.

Time allowed: 1 hour 15 minutes

**Instructions**

- Use blue or black ink or 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 SCY1.
- This paper is divided into **three** Sections. Choose **one** Section and answer **all** parts of the question from that Section.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want marked.

**Information**

- The maximum mark for this paper is 60.
- Mark allocations are shown in brackets.
- You will be assessed on your ability to use an appropriate form and style of writing, to organise relevant information clearly and coherently, and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.
- The degree of legibility of your handwriting and the level of accuracy of your spelling, punctuation and grammar will also be taken into account.

**SCY1**

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

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**SECTION A – FAMILIES AND HOUSEHOLDS**

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**1**

**Total for this Section: 60 marks**

**Item 1A**

The last 30 or 40 years have seen major changes in family life in industrial and post-industrial countries. The formation and break-up of relationships is one area of change. In the UK, the number of first marriages has halved since the 1970s and the number of divorces has risen about six-fold since 1961. Meanwhile, cohabitation has been rising rapidly since the 1980s and is set to account for about half of all unmarried adults by 2021. 5

Childbearing and childrearing is another area of change. Forty per cent of all births now occur to unmarried women, while about three in ten children grow up in either a reconstituted family or a lone parent family (usually female-headed). Women are also now having fewer children than in the past.

However, changes such as the increased numbers of divorces, lone parent families or births outside marriage do not necessarily mean that the family is in decline. 10

**Item 1B**

About three-quarters of married or cohabiting women in the UK are now working, as against less than half in 1971. Some sociologists argue that this trend towards both partners working is leading to more equal relationships. For example, Jonathan Gershuny found that men whose wives worked full-time did significantly more domestic work than men whose wives did not. He explains this trend in terms of a gradual change in values and role models and argues that couples are adapting to more women working full-time by sharing domestic tasks more equally. However, he found that men and women still take responsibility for different tasks. 5

Gershuny's view is an optimistic one, similar to Willmott and Young's "march of progress" view that conjugal roles are becoming more symmetrical. Rosemary Crompton accepts Gershuny's findings. However, she explains them differently, in terms of women's earning power rather than changing values. 10

- (a) Explain what is meant by a "reconstituted" family (**Item 1A**, line 8). (2 marks)
- (b) Suggest **two** reasons why the number of first marriages has fallen (**Item 1A**, line 3). (4 marks)
- (c) Suggest **three** reasons why women are "now having fewer children than in the past" (**Item 1A**, lines 8 – 9). (6 marks)
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** reasons why "changes such as the increased numbers of divorces, lone parent families or births outside marriage do not necessarily mean that the family is in decline" (**Item 1A**, lines 10 – 11). (8 marks)
- (e) Examine the different functions performed by the family for individuals and for society. (20 marks)
- (f) Using material from **Item 1B** and elsewhere, assess the effect upon couples' relationships of women's involvement in paid work. (20 marks)

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**SECTION B – HEALTH**


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2

**Total for this Section: 60 marks****Item 2A**

Statistics consistently show a link between low social class and poor health chances. Sociologists have put forward several explanations of this link. Most favour either a materialist or a cultural/behavioural explanation, but two other explanations have also been put forward. These are the social selection explanation and the artefact explanation.

According to the social selection explanation, the link between low class and ill health is the reverse of the one normally thought to be the case. Rather than a person's social class determining their health, the selection explanation argues that a person's health determines their class position. For example, a child who is often sick may miss out on their education and leave school with few qualifications, become downwardly mobile and end up in a low-class job. By contrast, healthy individuals will have more energy, better school attendance records and examination results, and thus climb up the class ladder. 5

**Item 2B**

According to Nicky Hart, most people find it hard to separate their ideas about health from their ideas about medicine. She argues that this is because the medical profession has successfully persuaded us that our health depends on the medical care that doctors provide. As a result, the National Health Service has been designed as a national *medical* service. This is largely hospital and clinic based medicine, using modern technology to cure patients of their diseases. 5

However, many sociologists are critical of the effectiveness of modern medicine and the health professions. Some point to the problem of sickness brought about by the process of treatment itself, such as the so-called 'side effects' of many drugs. Others argue that medicine has failed to make much impact on the major causes of death and disability. 10

- (a) Explain what is meant by the "artefact explanation" of class and health (**Item 2A**, line 4). (2 marks)
- (b) Identify and briefly explain **one** criticism of the social selection explanation of class and health (**Item 2A**, lines 5 – 11). (4 marks)
- (c) Identify **three** cultural or behavioural factors that may affect a person's health chances (**Item 2A**, line 3). (6 marks)
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** criticisms of the cultural/behavioural explanation of the link between class and health (**Item 2A**, lines 2 – 3). (8 marks)
- (e) Examine the reasons for differences in access to health care by different social groups. (20 marks)
- (f) Using material from **Item 2B** and elsewhere, assess the "effectiveness of modern medicine and the health professions" (**Item 2B**, lines 7 – 8). (20 marks)

**Turn over ►**

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**SECTION C – MASS MEDIA**


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3

**Total for this Section: 60 marks****Item 3A**

Research shows that the mass media represent certain social groups negatively or suggest that they should conform to a particular image. For example, magazines often carry pictures of fashion models that imply that it is desirable for women to be excessively thin.

Some sociologists argue that such representations may have harmful effects on audiences. For example, media depictions of super-thin female models may encourage girls to become obsessed with losing weight to the extent that they become anorexic. Similarly, negative stereotyping of certain groups, such as asylum seekers or black youths, may provoke a moral panic and lead to audiences seeing such groups as folk devils.

However, there are many problems in trying to study the effects of the media. Furthermore, many sociologists argue that the media have at most only a limited influence on their audiences. Some argue that we should be trying to understand what audiences do **with** the media, rather than what the media do **to** their audiences.

**Item 3B**

According to the pluralist view, the media simply respond to demand, providing what their viewers, listeners and readers want. If the media have any influence over people, it is because they reflect and reinforce society's basic values, not because they impose their ideas on the public. In fact, any attempt to do this would be likely to fail: the audience would simply tune to another channel or buy a rival newspaper closer to their own views. Any publisher or broadcaster who persisted in producing unpopular output would risk going out of business.

Today's society is composed of a great diversity of groups, none of which is able to dominate society or the media. Pluralists argue that the media reflect this diversity in their output, catering for many tastes and giving the public a wide range of choice. In recent years, technological advances such as the internet and digital broadcasting have increased the choices available.

- (a) Explain what is meant by "folk devils" (**Item 3A**, line 8). (2 marks)
- (b) Suggest **two** reasons why some groups are represented negatively by the media (**Item 3A**, line 1). (4 marks)
- (c) Suggest **three** problems sociologists face in studying media effects (**Item 3A**, line 9). (6 marks)
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** reasons why the mass media may "have at most only a limited influence on their audiences" (**Item 3A**, lines 10 – 11). (8 marks)
- (e) Examine the processes by which the mass media produce 'news'. (20 marks)
- (f) Using material from **Item 3B** and elsewhere, assess the pluralist view of the mass media. (20 marks)

**END OF QUESTIONS**