

General Certificate of Education
January 2008
Advanced Level Examination



SOCIOLOGY
Unit 5

SC5W

Monday 21 January 2008 9.00 am to 10.30 am

For this paper you must have:

- a 12-page answer book.

Time allowed: 1 hour 30 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 SC5W.
- This paper contains **two** Sections. Answer the question in **Section A** and **one** question from **Section B**.
- 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 questions (or part questions) are shown in brackets.
- Questions 2 and 3 should be answered in continuous prose. In this section you will be marked on your ability to use good English, to organise information clearly and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

SECTION A: THEORY AND METHODS

Answer **all** parts of this Section.

Total for this section: 20 marks

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

Item A

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Item B

Post-modernists such as Lyotard (1984) make two major claims. Firstly, they claim that we no longer live in a ‘modern’ society and argue instead that we have moved into a new era, that of ‘post-modernity’. Secondly, they claim that all knowledge is relative to those who hold it and that absolute truth is unattainable. If so, this means that there is no way in which sociologists (or any other ‘experts’) can obtain objective knowledge about society. Sociological perspectives are simply meta-narratives and there is no objective way of choosing between them. 5

- (a) Briefly explain what is meant by ‘meta-narratives’ (**Item B**, line 6). (2 marks)
- (b) Identify and briefly explain **two** disadvantages of using quantitative methods (**Item A**). (4 marks)
- (c) Identify and briefly explain **two** factors that researchers must consider in the wording of questionnaires. (4 marks)
- (d) Briefly examine the contribution of post-modernism to our understanding of society today. (10 marks)

SECTION B: THEORY AND METHODS

Answer **one** question from this Section.

Total for this section: 40 marks

EITHER

- 2 Assess the view that sociological research cannot and should not be objective and value-free. *(40 marks)*

OR

- 3 'Participant observation should always be conducted overtly.'
To what extent do sociological arguments and evidence support this view? *(40 marks)*

END OF QUESTIONS

There are no questions printed on this page

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Question 1 Item A: adapted from A N OPPENHEIM, 'The Quantification of Questionnaire Data' in *Social Research Methods: A Reader*, edited by C SEAL, Routledge, 2004

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