

General Certificate of Education  
January 2008  
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



**SOCIOLOGY**  
**Unit 2**

**SCY2**

Wednesday 9 January 2008 1.30 pm to 2.45 pm

**For this paper you must have:**

- an 8-page answer book.

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 SCY2.
- 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.

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

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**SECTION A: EDUCATION**

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**Total for this section: 60 marks**

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

**Item 1A**

Many sociologists see anti-school subcultures within the school as a major cause of under-achievement, particularly among boys. Mac an Ghaill (1994) found that working-class boys developed a strong ‘macho culture’ in school. School became an extension of life on the streets, where fighting, football and tribal loyalties were what really mattered. These boys were not interested in school work and were likely to be in one of the lower sets. The schools objected to the boys’ ‘macho’ clothing and hairstyles, which Mac an Ghaill saw as symbolic displays of working-class masculinity. 5

However, Feinstein (2003) argues that factors in the home are more important in determining a pupil’s chance of success at school.

**Item 1B**

Marxist sociologists believe that one of the purposes of education in a capitalist society is to produce a passive, obedient workforce who will work to the benefit of the capitalist class. In school, students learn to accept hierarchy. They have very little control over what they are taught and power lies with teachers. This prepares students for the workplace, where they will be expected to obey supervisors and managers. Marxists reject the idea that the education system is meritocratic and argue that social class is the main factor influencing academic achievement. 5

Reynolds (1984) has criticised the Marxist view, claiming that the curriculum in British schools does not promote the values of capitalism, nor does it encourage uncritical or passive behaviour. Instead, schools emphasise academic rather than vocational studies and encourage a liberal view of education, with the arts and humanities playing a major part in the curriculum. 10

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- (a) Explain what is meant by ‘vocational’ studies (**Item 1B**, line 10). *(2 marks)*
- (b) Suggest **two** possible effects of being placed in the lower sets, **apart from** those referred to in **Item 1A**. *(4 marks)*
- (c) Suggest **three** ways in which factors in the home can contribute to the under-achievement of working-class pupils (**Item 1A**, lines 8–9). *(6 marks)*
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** reasons why girls may be less likely than boys to be affected by anti-school subcultures, **apart from** those referred to in **Item 1A** (**Item 1A**, lines 1–2). *(8 marks)*
- (e) Examine the ways in which processes within schools may contribute to educational under-achievement among some ethnic groups. *(20 marks)*
- (f) Using material from **Item 1B** and elsewhere, assess the Marxist view of the role of education. *(20 marks)*

**Turn over for Section B**

**Turn over ►**

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**SECTION B: WEALTH, POVERTY AND WELFARE**

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**Total for this section: 60 marks**

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

**Item 2A**

Poverty affects some groups in society more than others. The elderly, the disabled and those who lack skills and qualifications are all potentially vulnerable groups. Minority ethnic groups in the UK are particularly disadvantaged. Berthoud (1998) found that 60% of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi community were living in poverty. However, not all ethnic groups experienced such high levels of poverty: only 20% of Caribbean and 16% of white households were living in poverty. 5

Age and gender may also be factors. Sinclair (2003) suggests that women are more likely than men to live in poverty. Like Berthoud, he claims that the main causes of poverty are structural, although cultural factors such as family forms are also relevant.

**Item 2B**

Adonis and Pollard (1998) suggest that in recent years inequality of wealth and income has been increasing, largely due to the emergence of the 'Super Class'. This class is made up of highly paid workers in professions such as the law or financial services, who have seen their salaries rise significantly over the past twenty years. The majority of these professional workers live in the south-east of England, suggesting that there may be a north/south divide in wealth and income. 5

Government taxation and benefit policies provide the opportunity to distribute wealth and income more equally. However, the Sunday Times Rich List (2006) shows that there are now significantly more multi-millionaires in Britain than there were ten years ago, although wealth is notoriously difficult to measure and data are often unreliable. 10

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- (a) Explain what is meant by ‘structural’ causes of poverty (**Item 2A**, line 9). (2 marks)
- (b) Suggest **two** reasons why women are more likely than men to live in poverty (**Item 2A**, lines 7–8). (4 marks)
- (c) Suggest **three** reasons why members of some minority ethnic groups are more likely to experience poverty (**Item 2A**, lines 2–4). (6 marks)
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** problems of measuring wealth (**Item 2B**, line 10). (8 marks)
- (e) Examine the reasons why the welfare state has not eliminated poverty in Britain. (20 marks)
- (f) Using material from **Item 2B** and elsewhere, assess sociological explanations of the increase in inequality of wealth and income in recent years. (20 marks)

**Turn over for Section C**

**Turn over ►**

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**SECTION C: WORK AND LEISURE**

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**Total for this section: 60 marks**

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

**Item 3A**

In 2006, the official rate of unemployment in the UK was just over 5% of the labour force. However, rates vary significantly between different areas. Data produced by the TUC (2002) show that unemployment was highest in the London Borough of Hackney, where the rate was 16.4%. Other inner-city areas with high rates of unemployment included Dundee and Middlesbrough, both with unemployment rates of over 12%. Unemployment was lowest in the south-west of England, with a rate of 3.5%, and rates were generally lower in rural areas than in urban areas. 5

Unemployment affects not only those individuals who are without work, but also the communities they live in. Lea and Young (1984) suggested that high rates of unemployment have created a ‘culture of despair’ in some inner-city areas. Many young people in these areas have never had a job and as a result they feel alienated from society. 10

**Item 3B**

Neo-Marxists Clarke and Critcher (1985) argued that leisure serves the interests of the capitalist class. They concluded that the dominant class has the power to shape our leisure habits to their advantage. They argued that leisure can be used as a form of social control. They also suggested that leisure has become increasingly commercialised and has become a major source of profit for big business. They used the example of the brewing industry, which is dominated by a handful of large companies who have reduced the range of beers available and have changed pubs by installing profitable juke boxes and fruit machines. 5

By contrast, post-modernists Lash and Urry (1994) argued that contemporary leisure is about the consumption of ‘signs’, socially constructed images that are created by the media. They suggested that this has been particularly important in the growth of the tourist industry, for example. 10

- (a) Explain what is meant by ‘alienated’ (**Item 3A**, line 11). *(2 marks)*
- (b) Suggest **two** reasons why rates of unemployment ‘vary significantly between different areas’ (**Item 3A**, line 2). *(4 marks)*
- (c) Identify **three** effects that high unemployment may have on individuals and/or society, **apart from** those referred to in **Item 3A** (**Item 3A**, lines 8–12). *(6 marks)*
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** problems involved in measuring unemployment (**Item 3A**). *(8 marks)*
- (e) Examine the causes of conflict at work. *(20 marks)*
- (f) Using material from **Item 3B** and elsewhere, assess the view that leisure serves the interests of the capitalist class. *(20 marks)*

**END OF QUESTIONS**

**There are no questions printed on this page**