

General Certificate of Education
January 2005
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



SOCIOLOGY
Unit 3

SC3W

Friday 14 January 2005 9.00 am to 10.00 am

In addition to this paper you will require:

an 8-page answer book.

You may use a calculator.

Time allowed: 1 hour

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 SC3W.
- This paper consists of **one** question. Answer **all** parts of the question.
- 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.

SOCIOLOGICAL METHODS

Answer **all** parts of the Question.

1

Total for this question: 60 marks

Item A

Lynn Jamieson and her colleagues researched the partnership plans of young married and cohabiting couples in Scotland. In this extract they outline the research methods they used.

Our study is based on a stratified sample of men and women aged 20-29. This is an ideal age group for an investigation of 'couple behaviour' and attitudes to partnership as a large proportion of first marriages and cohabitation occurs with people in this age range. The sample was stratified equally between the 20-24 and 25-29 age groups and between men and women. We selected at random 200 research subjects from our sampling frame. 5

Because couple relationships are so personal and such a sensitive research issue, we could not actively join in with the research subjects in their everyday life. We therefore surveyed the sample using a structured questionnaire delivered by a trained interviewer. In the case of 41 people, the researchers followed this up with an intensive interview. Although time-consuming and comparatively costly, these unstructured intensive interviews yielded more in-depth information. 10

Source: adapted from L. JAMIESON ET AL, "Cohabitation and Commitment", *The Sociological Review*, Vol. 50 No. 3, (Blackwell Publishing Ltd.) August 2002

Item B

The British Sociological Association issues guidelines on important aspects of professional sociology. These include the following.

- Social researchers face a range of potential risks to their safety. Safety issues need to be considered in the design and conduct of social research projects, and procedures should be adopted to reduce the risk to researchers. 5
- There are serious ethical and legal issues in the use of covert methods but their use may be justified in certain circumstances. Researchers may also face problems when access to spheres of social life is closed to social scientists by powerful or secretive interests.
- Covert methods go against the principles of informed consent and may invade the privacy of those being studied. Covert researchers need to take into account the laws about the right to privacy. 10

Source: adapted from BRITISH SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION STATEMENT OF ETHICAL PRACTICE, www.britsoc.co.uk March 2002

- (a) Explain what is meant by a “sampling frame” (**Item A**, line 7). *(2 marks)*
- (b) Suggest **two** social factors **apart from** age and gender that could be used in the creation of a stratified sample for the study outlined in **Item A**. *(4 marks)*
- (c) Suggest **three** disadvantages of using intensive interviews **apart from** those mentioned in **Item A**. *(6 marks)*
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** advantages to sociologists of being able to “actively join in with the research subjects in their everyday life” (**Item A**, line 9). *(8 marks)*
- (e) Examine the problems some sociologists may find when using secondary data in their research. *(20 marks)*
- (f) Using material from **Item B** and elsewhere, assess the claim that a sociologist’s choice of research methods is based mainly on practical and ethical factors. *(20 marks)*

END OF QUESTIONS

THERE ARE NO QUESTIONS PRINTED ON THIS PAGE

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