

General Certificate of Education
June 2008
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



SOCIOLOGY
Unit 2

SCY2R

Monday 19 May 2008 9.00 am to 10.15 am

For this paper you must have:

- an 8-page answer book.

Time allowed: 1 hour 15 minutes

Instructions

- Use black ink or black 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 SCY2R.
- 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.

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

SECTION A: EDUCATION

Total for this section: 60 marks

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

Item 1A

In the past, governments introduced a number of educational policies and reforms aimed at promoting equality of opportunity in the education system, and in society as a whole. More recently, governments have been interested in trying to raise educational achievement. Some of these policies have targeted specific groups, while others have attempted to raise achievement in general. 5

Despite these efforts, the experience of education is not the same for all social groups. For example, while there has been a general improvement in girls' achievement, there are still gender differences in subject choice. These differences are particularly noticeable at 16 and again at 18, and have an impact on gender differences in pay and employment.

Item 1B

Functionalists see society as a system of interdependent parts held together by a shared value system. This means that there is agreement among members of society about what is important and worth having or striving for. A key role of the education system is to pass on these values and thus contribute to the smooth running of society.

Critics of the functionalist perspective suggest that the education system serves the interests of a minority rather than of society as a whole. They argue that the education system operates as an agent of social control and that schools help to reinforce existing social class inequalities. 5

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- (a) Explain what is meant by ‘equality of opportunity’ (**Item 1A**, line 2). *(2 marks)*
- (b) Suggest **two** ways in which schools may reinforce existing social class inequalities (**Item 1B**, lines 7–8). *(4 marks)*
- (c) Suggest **three** factors that may explain gender differences in subject choice (**Item 1A**, line 8). *(6 marks)*
- (d) Identify **two** policies or reforms aimed at raising educational achievement and briefly explain how each was meant to do so (**Item 1A**). *(8 marks)*
- (e) Examine the ways in which home factors may affect social class differences in educational achievement. *(20 marks)*
- (f) Using material from **Item 1B** and elsewhere, assess functionalist views of the role of education. *(20 marks)*

Turn over for Section B

Turn over ►

SECTION B: WEALTH, POVERTY AND WELFARE

Total for this section: 60 marks

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

Item 2A

Inequalities of wealth and income are a feature of modern society. These inequalities vary between different individuals and social groups. For example, certain ethnic groups are more likely to experience poverty than others, while rich individuals are often able to maintain their wealth. Some sociologists see the welfare state as an attempt to reduce the impact of these inequalities.

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There is now a range of welfare services that attempt to help those in need. This range includes not only services provided by the state, but also many welfare services provided by private and voluntary organisations.

Item 2B

For many conflict sociologists, poverty is related to the organisation of society as a whole; it is caused by the class structure of society. This can be seen in the way that social class is a key factor in the distribution of resources in society. Some argue that the key to poverty lies in the way the labour market works. Others point to features of modern societies such as the welfare state which help to maintain poverty for the benefit of the ruling class.

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However, writers from a New Right perspective suggest that the attitudes and culture of the poor themselves are an important cause of poverty.

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- (a) Explain what is meant by ‘wealth’ (**Item 2A**, line 1). *(2 marks)*
- (b) Suggest **two** reasons why ‘rich individuals are often able to maintain their wealth’ (**Item 2A**, lines 3–4). *(4 marks)*
- (c) Suggest **three** reasons why ‘certain ethnic groups are more likely to experience poverty than others’ (**Item 2A**, lines 2–3). *(6 marks)*
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** criticisms made of ‘welfare services provided by private and voluntary organisations’ (**Item 2A**, lines 7–8). *(8 marks)*
- (e) Examine the problems in defining and measuring poverty. *(20 marks)*
- (f) Using material from **Item 2B** and elsewhere, assess the view that poverty is caused by the class structure of society. *(20 marks)*

Turn over for Section C

Turn over ►

SECTION C: WORK AND LEISURE

Total for this section: 60 marks

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

Item 3A

Industrialisation helped to draw a clearer distinction between work and leisure. Work became more rigidly defined, with greater control over when and how it was to be done. Industrialisation also led to the emergence of the leisure industries. For Marxists such as Clarke and Critcher (1985), the commercialisation of leisure has had negative consequences. Leisure has become an important source of profit and leisure provision is dominated by large corporations. 5

More recently, rapid developments in technology have had an impact, opening up new opportunities for leisure. However, not all groups in society have equal access to these opportunities.

Item 3B

Marxist sociologists argue that in a capitalist society employers and workers have fundamentally different interests and conflict at work is therefore inevitable. To achieve maximum profit, workers need to be controlled in order to make them as productive as possible. Attempts by management to control workers can create the conditions that lead to conflict. 5

Other writers from a functionalist perspective argue that society is characterised by shared interests and that conflict damages those interests. If conflict at work does arise, it is because of failings in the system of industrial relations. Conflict can be resolved through reform rather than fundamental change in the structure of society.

- (a) Explain what is meant by ‘industrialisation’ (**Item 3A**, line 1). *(2 marks)*
- (b) Suggest **two** ways in which large corporations may influence people’s use of leisure time (**Item 3A**). *(4 marks)*
- (c) Identify **three** reasons why not all groups in society have equal access to leisure opportunities (**Item 3A**, lines 8–9). *(6 marks)*
- (d) Identify and briefly describe **two** examples of how technology has had an impact on leisure (**Item 3A**). *(8 marks)*
- (e) Examine explanations of ethnic group differences in patterns of employment and unemployment. *(20 marks)*
- (f) Using material from **Item 3B** and elsewhere, assess the view that conflict at work is an inevitable feature of capitalism. *(20 marks)*

END OF QUESTIONS

There are no questions printed on this page