

General Certificate of Education
June 2005
Advanced Subsidiary Examination

SOCIOLOGY
Unit 3

SC3W



Tuesday 17 May 2005 1.30 pm to 2.30 pm

In addition to this paper you will require:
an 8-page answer book.

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**

Self-completion questionnaires posted to potential respondents need to be straightforward enough to be completed by people who are inexperienced at filling in forms.

The biggest problem with postal questionnaires is gaining a high enough response rate to ensure the results of the survey are sufficiently representative of the target research population. The response rate to a questionnaire posted to potential respondents often falls below 50 per cent. 5

Another consideration is question design. This is even more important in self-completion because no researcher is present to help clarify the meaning of particular questions when the questionnaire is filled in. Pre-testing questions is crucial with postal questionnaires in order to reduce the chance of including a leading question and to reduce any possible misinterpretation of questions. 10

Finally, there is also the issue of sampling procedure. Usually, researchers aim for a representative sample, often through developing a stratified sample reflecting characteristics such as age, gender and social class.

Item B

Item B has been excluded due to copyright constraints. The item consists of advice offered to researchers, regarding the informal unstructured interview methodology.

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- (a) Explain what is meant by a “leading question” (**Item A**, line 10). (2 marks)
- (b) Suggest **two** types of “sampling procedure” (**Item A**, line 12) **apart from** those mentioned in **Item A**. (4 marks)
- (c) Suggest **three** ways in which a researcher could increase the “response rate to a questionnaire posted to potential respondents” (**Item A**, line 5). (6 marks)
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** advantages of using postal questionnaires. (8 marks)
- (e) Examine some of the practical, ethical and theoretical problems of using experiments in sociological research. (20 marks)
- (f) Using material from **Item B** and elsewhere, assess the usefulness of unstructured interviews in sociological research. (20 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS

THERE ARE NO QUESTIONS PRINTED ON THIS PAGE

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