



General Certificate of Education
June 2005
Advanced Level Examination



SOCIOLOGY
Unit 5

SC5W

Friday 17 June 2005 Afternoon Session

In addition to this paper you will require:
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 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.

SECTION A – THEORY AND METHODS

Answer **all** parts of this Section.

Total for this Section: 20 marks

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

Item A

It has been said that pilot studies are likely to be under-discussed, under-used and under-reported. Full reports of pilot studies are rare in the research literature. When reported, they often only justify the research methods or particular research tool used. When pilot studies are mentioned in more detail in academic papers and reports, researchers regularly comment that they “had learned from the pilot study” and made the necessary changes, without offering the reader details about what exactly was learned. 5

Some of these processes and outcomes from both successful and failed pilot studies might be very useful to others embarking on projects using similar methods. This is particularly important because pilot studies can be time-consuming, frustrating, and full of unanticipated problems. 10

Source: adapted from E. R. VAN TEIJLINGEN AND V. HUNDLEY, “The importance of pilot studies”, Social Research Update, Issue 35 (© University of Surrey) 2001

Item B

Longitudinal research concerns the collection and analysis of data over time. This means: data are collected for each item or variable for two or more distinct periods; the subjects analysed are the same, or at least comparable, from one period to the next; and the analysis involves some comparison of data between or among periods.

Several types of data may be regarded as longitudinal and there are a number of different designs for the construction of longitudinal evidence. These could include repeated cross-sectional studies and studies such as household panel surveys. Because longitudinal research is long term, methods for the analysis of the data may also vary substantially. 5

Longitudinal research can potentially provide fuller information about individual behaviour. However, the use of such data poses crucial theoretical and methodological problems for the sociologist. 10

- (a) Explain briefly what is meant by the term “pilot studies” (**Item A**, line 1). (2 marks)
- (b) Identify and briefly explain **two** advantages for the researcher in using a pilot study. (4 marks)
- (c) Identify and briefly explain **two** problems that are specific to conducting longitudinal research. (4 marks)
- (d) Briefly examine the advantages of using longitudinal research in sociological investigations. (10 marks)

SECTION B – THEORY AND METHODS

Answer **one** question from this Section.

Total for this Section: 40 marks

EITHER

- 2** “Sociology is not, cannot be, and should not be a science.”

To what extent do sociological arguments and evidence support this view? *(40 marks)*

OR

- 3** Evaluate the usefulness of secondary data in sociological research. *(40 marks)*

END OF QUESTIONS

THERE ARE NO QUESTIONS PRINTED ON THIS PAGE

Question 1 Item A: Social Research Update is published by the Department of Sociology, University of Surrey, UK.
<http://www.soc.surrey.ac.uk/sru/>

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