

General Certificate of Education  
June 2006  
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



**SOCIOLOGY**  
**Unit 2**

**SCY2**

Wednesday 24 May 2006 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 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 marked.

**Information**

- The maximum mark for this paper is 60.
- The marks for questions (or part questions) are shown in brackets.
- You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers. Part questions (e) and (f) should be answered in continuous prose. Quality of Written Communication will be assessed in these answers.

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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** and answer parts (a) to (f) which follow.

**Item 1A**

The 1988 Education Reform Act included a range of policies that aimed to introduce 'market forces' into education. Supporters of the Act argued that the 'marketisation' of education would bring many benefits, driving up standards in schools and making them more accountable to the 'consumers' – parents, local communities and employers – that they serve.

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However, critics argue that marketisation policies tend to benefit the more privileged groups, such as the middle class and whites. By contrast, less privileged groups, including the working class, some ethnic minorities and those with special educational needs, lose out. Some critics claim that marketisation also disadvantages boys, since schools often see them as under-achievers. As a result, some sociologists believe that marketisation has led to greater inequality of educational opportunity.

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**Item 1B**

According to one view, society could not continue to exist if its members were not integrated into a single shared culture or value system. Without this integration, social life and cooperation between individuals would be impossible, since there would be no consensus and society would cease to exist.

The family, although it plays a vital role in socialising individuals, is incapable of achieving this integration. This is because it operates on the basis of particularistic norms, whereas the education system, like society at large, operates on universalistic norms. In this view, therefore, only the school can equip individuals with a set of shared norms and values suitable for participating in the wider society. For this reason, the school is the 'focal socialising agency' in modern society.

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- (a) Explain what is meant by ‘universalistic norms’ (**Item 1B**, line 7). (2 marks)
- (b) Identify **two** policies that have ‘aimed to introduce “market forces” into education’ (**Item 1A**, lines 1 – 2). (4 marks)
- (c) Suggest **three** reasons, **apart from** those referred to in **Item 1A**, why boys tend to under-achieve in school compared with girls (**Item 1A**, lines 9 – 10). (6 marks)
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** reasons for ethnic differences in educational achievement, **apart from** marketisation policies (**Item 1A**). (8 marks)
- (e) Examine the ways in which factors and processes within the school help to create social class differences in educational achievement. (20 marks)
- (f) Using material from **Item 1B** and elsewhere, assess the view that the main function of education is to integrate individuals into society’s shared culture. (20 marks)

**Turn over for Section B**

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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** and answer parts (a) to (f) which follow.

**Item 2A**

Child benefit, which is paid to everyone who has children, and the National Health Service, which was intended to provide health care for all citizens free at the point of need, are examples of universal benefits and services. When the modern welfare state was created in the 1940s, many people saw a universal system of welfare, publicly funded and run by the state, as the most effective way of meeting people's needs. 5

In recent decades, however, there has been a trend away from a comprehensive state welfare system based on universal benefits and services. Instead, we have moved towards a more selective, means-tested system of state benefits and services, together with a greater role for non-state welfare providers. These include not only informal providers, but also voluntary organisations, which are mainly charities, and the private sector, which is made up of business organisations. 10

**Item 2B**

Poverty is an important and divisive social problem. To remedy it with appropriate policies, we first need to understand what poverty is and how much of it there is. Unfortunately, there are disagreements among researchers as to how to define poverty. For example, should we use an absolute or a relative definition? Should we define it purely in material terms, or as 'social exclusion'? And who should do the defining – the researcher, or the poor themselves? 5

There are further disagreements when it comes to measuring poverty. Researchers often draw up lists of items whose possession is considered essential to keep out of poverty. They then calculate the cost of these items in order to establish a poverty line. However, researchers disagree about which items should be included on such a list and even about who should draw it up in the first place. 10

- (a) Explain what is meant by ‘informal providers’ of welfare (**Item 2A**, line 9). (2 marks)
- (b) Suggest **two** advantages of ‘universal benefits and services’ (**Item 2A**, line 3). (4 marks)
- (c) Suggest **three** advantages of voluntary organisations as providers of welfare (**Item 2A**, line 10). (6 marks)
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** criticisms made of the private sector of welfare providers (**Item 2A**, lines 10 – 11). (8 marks)
- (e) Examine the reasons for the continued existence of poverty in society today. (20 marks)
- (f) Using material from **Item 2B** and elsewhere, assess the problems involved in defining and measuring poverty. (20 marks)

**Turn over for Section C**

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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** and answer parts (a) to (f) which follow.

**Item 3A**

There are important ethnic differences in unemployment rates. According to official statistics, men and women from all ethnic minorities are less likely than whites to be in paid work. For example, unemployment among people of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin is about three times higher than among whites. Marxists argue that the reason for such differences is that ethnic minorities form part of the reserve army of labour. Others argue that technological change is an increasingly important cause of unemployment among all groups of workers. 5

However, it is not easy to establish exactly how many people are unemployed. For example, official unemployment statistics are widely used by researchers, but there are many problems involved in using these statistics to study unemployment. 10

**Item 3B**

Conflict at work can take many forms, ranging from lock-outs and strikes to absenteeism, voluntary resignations and even acts of sabotage. Some sociologists argue that the different types of conflict are interrelated. For example, a firm with a high level of strikes may have a low level of sabotage or vice versa.

Cully et al's (1999) survey of over 2000 workplaces found similar connections. For example, the smallest firms in the survey had the lowest level of absenteeism but the highest level of resignations. Cully et al argue that the level and form of conflict at work are linked to management's strategies of control. For example, in small workplaces it is generally easier for management to monitor absenteeism, so workers who are unhappy may find resignation is their only option. 5  
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- (a) Explain what is meant by the ‘reserve army of labour’ (**Item 3A**, line 5). (2 marks)
- (b) Identify **two** effects of ‘technological change’, **apart from** unemployment (**Item 3A**, line 6). (4 marks)
- (c) Suggest **three** reasons, **apart from** those referred to in **Item 3A**, why members of some ethnic minorities are less likely than whites to be in paid work. (6 marks)
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** problems involved in using official unemployment statistics to study unemployment (**Item 3A**, lines 9 – 10). (8 marks)
- (e) Examine the reasons for differences between workplaces in the ways that work is organised and managed. (20 marks)
- (f) Using material from **Item 3B** and elsewhere, assess the view that ‘the level and form of conflict at work are linked to management’s strategies of control’ (**Item 3B**, lines 7 – 8). (20 marks)

**END OF QUESTIONS**

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