

General Certificate of Education
June 2007
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



SOCIOLOGY
Unit 2

SCY2

Wednesday 23 May 2007 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 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) which follow.

Item 1A

Functionalist writers such as Durkheim have seen one of the major functions of the school as helping to create a sense of social solidarity. For example, the American education system provides a shared language and a shared history for all American citizens regardless of origin, as well as the daily ritual of an oath of loyalty.

Other functionalists have seen the role of the school as a bridge between family and society, with school preparing pupils to enter the adult world, in particular the world of work. In this view, both school and modern society are based on meritocratic principles, where status is achieved on merit or worth. 5

Item 1B

Writers from a New Right perspective have suggested that giving more power to schools and to parents will help drive up standards as schools compete to provide a better service. This means allowing schools to decide their spending priorities and allowing them more control over what type of pupils they admit. They propose giving more power to parents so that they can force schools to be more responsive to parents' wishes. They point to the academic success of many private schools and suggest that this is due to the fact that they are answerable to their customers, the parents. 5

Alternatively, Gewirtz (1995) suggests that increased competition between schools has mainly benefited middle-class pupils and parents because they have the means to gain access to the best schools. This means that the more academically successful schools attract middle-class parents and pupils who have cultural and material advantages. 10

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- (a) Explain what is meant by ‘social solidarity’ (**Item 1A**, line 2). *(2 marks)*
- (b) Suggest **two** ways in which schools are ‘based on meritocratic principles’ (**Item 1A**, line 7). *(4 marks)*
- (c) Suggest **three** ways in which school prepares pupils for work **apart from** those identified in **Item 1A**. *(6 marks)*
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** criticisms that may be made of the functionalist view of the role of the education system (**Item 1A**). *(8 marks)*
- (e) Examine the ways in which boys’ and girls’ experiences in school shape their identities and achievements. *(20 marks)*
- (f) Using material from **Item 1B** and elsewhere, assess the extent to which policies of encouraging competition between schools and increasing parental choice have improved the achievement of working-class pupils. *(20 marks)*

Turn over for Section B

SECTION B: WEALTH, POVERTY AND WELFARE

Total for this section: 60 marks

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

Item 2A

Researchers have struggled to come up with an agreed way of measuring poverty, or indeed an agreed definition. The concept of absolute poverty has appealed to many on the basis of simplicity, whilst others have adopted a more relative concept involving differences in income, wealth or other measures of deprivation. The idea of relative poverty means that poverty is not just about the living standards of the poor but about the differences in living standards between rich and poor. 5

More recently, the government has begun to use the term ‘social exclusion’ when discussing poverty. This is a broader concept and involves looking at a wider range of indicators.

Item 2B

The modern welfare state emerged in Britain during the period 1945–1950. It was designed to eradicate poverty in a systematic way by tackling low incomes directly through a national insurance and benefit system, and by tackling other dimensions of deprivation through housing, health, education and employment policies.

Sixty years on, many from a New Right or market liberal viewpoint would suggest that, far from eradicating poverty, the modern welfare state is responsible for the continuation of poverty. Marsland (1989) argues that, instead of reducing poverty, the existence of universal welfare benefits has in fact created a culture of dependency that discourages people from lifting themselves out of their situation. 5

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- (a) Explain what is meant by ‘social exclusion’ (**Item 2A**, line 7). (2 marks)
- (b) Suggest **two** problems of measuring wealth (**Item 2A**, lines 3–4). (4 marks)
- (c) Suggest **three** policies that government might use to reduce ‘differences in living standards between rich and poor’ (**Item 2A**, line 6). (6 marks)
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** difficulties in defining and/or measuring ‘absolute poverty’ (**Item 2A**, line 2). (8 marks)
- (e) Examine the reasons why minority ethnic groups are more likely to experience poverty. (20 marks)
- (f) Using material from **Item 2B** and elsewhere, assess the view that ‘the modern welfare state is responsible for the continuation of poverty’ (**Item 2B**, lines 6–7). (20 marks)

Turn over for Section C

SECTION C: WORK AND LEISURE

Total for this section: 60 marks

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

Item 3A

Work in industrial society has often been organised by a system of specialised division of labour. An extreme example of this was the assembly line used by manufacturers such as Henry Ford in his car factories in the early part of the 20th century. This system of organisation had the potential for enormous conflict between workers and employers as it tended to deskill workers and dehumanise the work process.

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Piore (1986) argues that these traditional Fordist methods of organisation have given way to post-Fordist methods of production. Initially these principles were employed by Japanese companies but because of their success they are now found in other industrialised countries.

Item 3B

According to the Equal Opportunities Commission, women working full time in Britain earned 81 % of average full-time earnings of men in 2002, a difference of 19 %. The gender pay gap in weekly earnings was even wider, at 25 %; men tend to work longer hours than women and receive additional payments such as overtime.

There are numerous explanations for these and other differences in the gender pattern of paid employment. Hakim (1995) suggests that gender inequalities are the result of different behaviour and attitudes to work. She argues that women have less commitment to work. Other sociologists suggest that the pattern can be explained more effectively with reference to underlying structures and inequalities in wider society.

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- (a) Explain what is meant by the ‘division of labour’ (**Item 3A**, lines 1–2). (2 marks)
- (b) Suggest **two** ways in which assembly lines may ‘deskill workers and dehumanise the work process’ (**Item 3A**, line 5). (4 marks)
- (c) Identify **three** reasons for conflict between workers and management **apart from** those mentioned in **Item 3A**. (6 marks)
- (d) Identify and briefly describe **two** characteristics of post-Fordist methods of production (**Item 3A**, line 7). (8 marks)
- (e) Examine the ways in which leisure is linked to sources of social identity such as gender, age, social class and ethnicity. (20 marks)
- (f) Using material from **Item 3B** and elsewhere, assess the ways in which sociologists explain gender differences in patterns of paid employment. (20 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS

There are no questions printed on this page