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UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

GCE Ordinary Level

MARK SCHEME for the October/November 2011 question paper for the guidance of teachers

2251 SOCIOLOGY

2251/11 Paper 1, maximum raw mark 90

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes must be read in conjunction with the question papers and the report on the examination.

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Section A: Research Methods

1 Questionnaires and structured interviews are quantitative research methods. They are normally used by positivist sociologists who favour using scientific methods to collect data. Questionnaires can be conducted on a face-to-face basis, or can be sent by post. Researchers who use questionnaires often conduct a pilot study before they begin in order to identify any difficulties. They also need to select a suitable sampling frame in order for the results to be representative.

Closed questions are often used with questionnaires. They help to improve the reliability of the study. Sociologists who prefer to collect qualitative data say that questionnaires lack validity. They favour less formal research methods, such as unstructured interviews and participant observation.

(a) In sociological research, what is meant by the following terms:

(i) structured interviews [2]

Answers are likely to focus on a set of preset questions that are given to a respondent in a face-to-face exchange with an interviewer.

2 marks for an accurate definition, 1 mark for a partial definition.

(ii) pilot study [2]

Answers should refer to the idea that a pilot study is a trial run of the method to test the accuracy of questions and to identify any difficulties that may exist before the study is undertaken.

2 marks for an accurate definition, 1 mark for a partial definition.

(iii) closed questions [2]

Answers should refer to the idea that such questions require a limited amount of data which can normally be provided by the respondent identifying a particular option from a list of possible answers.

2 marks for an accurate definition, 1 mark for a partial definition.

(b) Describe <u>two</u> methods of selecting a sample when carrying out a postal questionnaire.

Answers should refer to: random, stratified random, cluster sample or any other relevant sampling procedure. Snowball does not work for postal questionnaires.

2 marks for identification and an explanation of each method. 1 mark for a partial response, which may be a correct identification with no description.

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(c) Describe <u>two</u> suitable sampling frames when using a questionnaire. [4]

Examples likely to be given: school registers, telephone directory, electoral roll, doctors' lists or any other relevant response.

2 marks for identification and a description of each example. 1 mark for a partial response identified but not described.

(d) Describe <u>two</u> problems of using a *postal* questionnaire. [4]

Problems likely to be identified: difficulty in distribution to an appropriate sample, non-response rate may be high, so damaging representativeness, inability to clarify the meanings of questions, and any other relevant limitation.

2 marks for identification and an explanation of each problem. 1 mark for a partial response, which may be the identification of a problem with no description.

(e) Describe <u>one</u> advantage and <u>one</u> disadvantage of using open-ended questions in a questionnaire. [4]

Likely advantages to be identified: provides greater detail and depth, provides qualitative data, allows respondents to introduce new areas for discussion because they can elaborate on ideas, and any other relevant response.

2 marks for identification and a description of each advantage. 1 mark for a partial response, such as identification only or a partial description.

Likely disadvantages: difficult to categorise and quantify material, open questions are unlikely to achieve greater depth as respondents may not wish to record the data themselves, and any other relevant response.

2 marks for identification and a description of each disadvantage. 1 mark for a partial response, such as identification only or a partial description.

(f) Describe <u>two</u> advantages and <u>two</u> disadvantages of using structured interviews in sociological research. [8]

Likely advantages identified: easy to quantify and categorise responses to produce quantitative data; questions can be clarified by the researcher; relatively large number can be undertaken, which improves representativeness; the interviews are undertaken in the same way, enhancing reliability, and any other relevant response.

2 marks for identification and a description of each advantage. 1 mark for a partial response, such as identification only or a partial description.

Likely disadvantages identified: there may be an interviewer effect; lacks flexibility; preset questions may prevent the respondent from responding on other areas; length of time compared with other methods; sampling issues damaging representativeness, and any other relevant response.

2 marks for identification and a description of each disadvantage. 1 mark for a partial response, such as identification only or a partial description.

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Section B: Culture and Socialisation

2 Cultural differences between societies are reproduced through the process of socialisation. It is also through socialisation that children learn their social roles.

(a) What is meant by the term *cultural differences*? [2]

Answers are likely to focus on different sets of norms/values/customs to be found.

2 marks for an accurate definition. 1 mark for a partial definition or naming of cultural differences with no explanation of the term.

(b) Describe <u>two</u> social roles an individual performs. [4]

Answers may discuss any social role, such as sibling, parent, friend.

2 marks for naming a social role and an accurate description of the role. 1 mark for a partial description or naming the role only.

(c) Explain how children learn their social roles. [6]

0–3: A few isolated comments about the way roles are developed, such as imitation of parents, with little or no direct link to the question as set may be worth up to 2 marks. The role of primary socialisation and language may be described. One issue well explained may achieve up to 3 marks.

4–6: A better answer will examine a range of ways young people learn social roles, which can include both primary and secondary socialisation as well as agencies of socialisation. Issues covered may include play, imitation, informal and formal learning at school. The greater the range of explanations, the higher in the band the answer should be placed.

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(d) To what extent is social order based on shared values in modern industrial societies? [8]

0–3: At this level there will be a few comments about aspects of socialisation or norms and values but there will be little attempt to address the question. Other answers may describe culture or assert in a general way that people do share the same values. Others may state that values are changing.

4–6: At this level there will be some attempt to address the question but answers may be descriptive, outlining in a basic way the importance of shared values and socialisation in producing social order. Answers may be supported by specific examples that may refer to such details as dress. At the top of the band, there may be a limited attempt to engage with the question, providing some form of elementary assessment by perhaps noting that shared values may be only one of a number of means through which social order is produced and may refer to sub-cultures by citing ethnicity, class, region, age or religion. One-sided answers that see society either sharing or not sharing values are unlikely to score more than 5 marks.

7–8: At this level there will be an attempt to address the question and to present some form of discussion. Answers are likely to question the consensus view of social order, perhaps by mentioning Marxist criticisms of functionalist theory. At the top of the band, an explicit conclusion will be evident about the extent to which shared values are the key to understanding social order or not.

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3 Various forms of social control are important in creating stability in society. Both formal and informal social controls play an important role in all societies.

(a) What is meant by the term *formal social control*? [2]

Answers are likely to refer to the role of the legal system and government sanctions in maintaining social order/controlling behaviour.

2 marks for an accurate definition, 1 mark for a partial definition.

(b) Describe <u>two</u> examples of informal social control. [4]

Answers are likely to refer to family, peer group, ostracism, adverse comment, withdrawal of cooperation, and other means of expressing social disapproval. Credit any other relevant response. 2 marks for each accurate description of the example, 1 mark for a partial description.

(c) Explain the role of government in maintaining social control. [6]

0–3: A few isolated comments about the way formal social control can be established, with little or no direct link to the question as set, may be worth up to 2 marks. One example of how government acts to maintain social control, such as through the police, well explained, may achieve up to 3 marks.

4–6: A better answer will examine a range of ways in which formal control is enforced. Reference is likely to be made to the legal (police, courts, prison) and law enforcement system and role of the armed forces in maintaining civil order, as well as religion in some societies. The greater the range of explanations, the higher in the band the answer should be placed.

(d) How far does social control benefit the wealthy and powerful members of society more than other members? [8]

0–3: Answers at this level will show little attempt to address the question and will limit themselves to a few general remarks about social control, such as the jobs the police do or which sorts of crimes may be committed by different groups or individuals.

4–6: One or two examples of how social control serves the interests of powerful groups in society will be advanced. For example, answers may discuss how the law protects property and how 'white-collar' crime has perhaps not been focused on by the police to the same extent as other crimes. Reference may be made to the way the police treat the more powerful members of society. One-sided answers that see social control as either benefiting or not benefiting the wealthy are unlikely to score more than 5 marks.

7–8: A range of benefits for different groups may be discussed, which may include reference to elite groups. Marxist explanations may be advanced and countered by functionalist views on the general importance of social control to the whole of society.

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Section C: Social Stratification and Inequality

4 In most societies people who are wealthy have a high status.

(a) What is meant by the term *high status*? [2]

Answers are likely to mention the idea that high status refers to high (upper class/wealthy) social standing, where an individual has the respect of their society.

2 marks for an accurate definition, 1 mark for a partial definition.

(b) Describe <u>one</u> example of ascribed status and <u>one</u> example of achieved status. [4]

For ascribed status, answers are likely to focus on social standing which an individual is born with, e.g. gender, titles.

1 mark for a relevant example and a further mark for development of the example.

For achieved status, answers are likely to focus on social standing which an individual earns through their own efforts, e.g. gained through education/hard work/luck.

1 mark for a relevant example and a further mark for development of the example.

(c) Explain why wealthy families often remain wealthy over many generations. [6]

0–3: A few isolated comments about the way the wealthy are able to keep their wealth through inheritance, with little or no direct link to the question as set, may be worth up to 2 marks. One issue well explained, for instance the ability to save, invest or pass on land, may achieve up to 3 marks.

4–6: A better answer will examine a range of ways the wealthy maintain their wealth. Answers may refer to the ability of the wealthy to seek financial advice, avoid taxation, invest in profitable business ventures, maintain a network of influential contacts, prestigious education etc. The greater the range of explanations, the higher in the band the answer should be placed.

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(d) How far does coming from a wealthy background affect a person's life chances? [8]

0–3: A few simple observations about the lifestyle of the wealthy or those without wealth, concentrating on the way in which money is spent, are likely to characterise answers in this band.

4–6: At this level there will be an attempt to answer the question directly. Answers are likely to give examples of the educational, leisure, wealth, health and employment opportunities of the wealthy. At the top of the band, some form of elementary assessment is likely to be present. Other answers may outline how an individual from a poor background may improve their life chances. One-sided answers that see wealth as the sole determinant of life chances or reject it as a sole determinant are unlikely to score more than 5 marks.

7–8: Answers at this level are likely to attempt to provide a clear assessment, perhaps commenting on the existence of social mobility. Furthermore, the range of factors identified is likely to be wide, focusing on issues such as: cultural capital, which enables them to forge links with other wealthy families; the ability to save and invest, thus increasing their wealth. In addition, other factors, such as access to borrowing for investment and the ownership of scarce goods which appreciate in value, may be discussed. Health advantages may also be mentioned. At the top of the band, answers may allude to the elite or Marxist theory.

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5 Ethnic minorities are often still discriminated against, even though governments have introduced policies to reduce social inequality.

(a) What is meant by the term *social inequality*? [2]

Answers are likely to focus on the way some people are treated unequally by others and seen to be inferior, or answers may relate to status.

2 marks for an accurate definition, 1 mark for a partial definition.

(b) Describe <u>two</u> forms of discrimination ethnic minorities may face. [4]

Likely answers: discrimination in housing, education, employment, racism etc. and any other relevant response.

2 marks for each accurate description of the example. 1 mark for a partial description or just naming the area of discrimination.

(c) Explain why ethnic minorities are likely to face discrimination. [6]

0–3: A few isolated comments about why ethnic minorities face discrimination, with little or no direct link to the question as set, may be worth up to 2 marks. One issue well explained, such as cultural (clothes/habits) difference or stereotyping, may achieve up to 3 marks.

4–6: A better answer will examine a range of ways ethnic minorities face disadvantage. Answers may refer to: discrimination, poor housing, lower levels of educational attainment, lower aspirations, lack of dominant culture etc. The greater the range of explanations, the higher in the band the answer should be placed.

(d) How far have life chances improved for ethnic minorities in modern industrial societies? [8]

0–3: A few simple observations about some improvements to the living conditions of ethnic minorities or how nothing has changed are likely to characterise answers in this band.

4–6: At this level there will be an attempt to answer the question but there will be a narrow range of explanations advanced. Answers are likely to give examples of greater educational, wealth and employment opportunities for ethnic minorities. At the top of the band, some form of elementary assessment is likely to be present, showing awareness that some improvement has been made but that disadvantages also are in existence. One-sided answers that see the life chances of ethnic minorities either changing or not are unlikely to score more than 5 marks.

7–8: Answers at this level are likely to attempt to provide a clear assessment, perhaps commenting on the existence of greater opportunities for ethnic minorities or some ethnic minorities. Answers are likely to be able to distinguish between the success of some minorities compared with others. At the top of the band, answers may allude to changes in the law, the growing diversity to be found in many societies and the effects that this has had, and Marxist theory, though this is not essential to achieve full marks.

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Section D: Power and Authority

6 In democratic systems, there are many ways in which people can participate in the political process. The opposite is true in authoritarian regimes.

(a) What is meant by the term *political participation*? [2]

Answers are likely to focus on the idea of involvement in the political process, which normally entails voting or joining a political party.

2 marks for an accurate definition, 1 mark for a partial definition, such as voting. Stating it is the way people participate in the political process alone should gain no mark.

(b) Describe <u>two</u> ways an individual can participate in the political system. [4]

Likely answers: voting, joining parties and pressure groups, campaigning, and any other relevant response.

2 marks for each accurate description of the way, 1 mark for a partial description.

(c) Explain the differences between democratic and authoritarian forms of political systems. [6]

0–3: A limited number of differences are likely to be characteristic of answers in this band, such as voting and not voting. Other answers may comment on differences in leadership or the legal system.

4–6: A better answer will examine a range of differences. Examples are likely to be given, such as the exercise of power and freedoms that are allowed/not allowed. The greater the range, the higher in the band the answer should be placed.

(d) How far are the powers of government limited in a democracy? [8]

0–3: Some isolated points about the decision-making powers of government would be characteristic of answers in this band. There will be little or no attempt to address the issues raised in the question.

4–6: At this level answers will outline a number of ways governments' powers are limited. Answers may refer to issues such as: the need to maintain the support of the electorate, the role of pressure groups to provide policy advice, the management of the media, the independence of the judiciary. At the top of the band, answers are likely to present some form of assessment but this is likely to be unsubstantiated and undeveloped. One-sided answers that see powers as limited or not are unlikely to score more than 5 marks.

7–8: Answers in this band are likely to provide a clear attempt to assess the powers of government. At this level answers are likely to discuss various theories of power, such as Marxist and pluralist theories, and may well consider the role of elites in the government of democratic societies.

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7 Political socialisation takes place in a number of ways in democracies.

(a) What is meant by the term *political socialisation*? [2]

Answers are likely to focus on the idea of learning about politics, political issues and beliefs from institutions such as the family, locality and peers.

2 marks for an accurate definition, 1 mark for a partial definition.

(b) Describe <u>two</u> ways in which people develop their political views. [4]

Likely answers: the family, workplace, school, media, personal experience, and any other valid response.

2 marks for each accurate description of the way views develop, 1 mark for a partial description.

(c) Explain why people may change their political views as they become older. [6]

0–3: A few basic points about the influence on political views generally, with no clear links to age factors, may be worth 1 or 2 marks. A simple explanation of one reason why people may change their political views as they get older due to life experience would merit 3 marks.

4–6: A better answer will examine two or more reasons why age may be a factor influencing political views. The greater the range of reasons, the higher in the band the answer should be placed. Changes in status and economic circumstances with age may be mentioned as relevant factors for discussion; movement away from family of origin and community of birth, changes in friendship networks and experience of different political regimes are among other factors that may be considered in answering the question.

(d) How far do the mass media influence the way people vote in elections? [8]

0–3: At this level there will be a few simple observations about the way the media is an important factor in voting behaviour. One factor such as propaganda well explained may achieve a mark of 3.

4–6: Answers at this level will be more developed, providing an account of how the media help to shape the political agenda. Towards the top of the band there is likely to be some form of assessment, which may focus on some understanding of the way the media is changing and/or an understanding that the media may not be the most important determinant of voting behaviour, and life experiences by comparison may have become a more important influence. Others may contrast the influence of the 'old' and 'new' media and support their answer with reference to contemporary events, such as the Arab Spring. A discussion of the importance of issue voting would also be relevant. One-sided answers that see the media as either influencing or not influencing voting are unlikely to score more than 5 marks.

7–8: At this level answers will make a direct attempt to engage with the question. Answers are likely to be developed and show a clear understanding of the changing nature of politics and voting behaviour. There will be a clear attempt to provide some form of assessment about the importance of the media as an influence on voting.

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