OCR
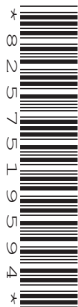Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Tuesday 13 October 2020 – Morning

A Level Sociology

H580/02 Researching and understanding social inequalities

Time allowed: 2 hours 15 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS
• Use black ink.
• Write your answer to each question in the Answer Booklet. The question numbers must be clearly shown.
• Fill in the boxes on the front of the Answer Booklet.
• Answer **all** the questions.

INFORMATION
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• This document has **4** pages.

ADVICE
• Read each question carefully before you start your answer.

SECTION A

Source A

> **Qualitative research on the impact of poverty.**
>
> This study aimed to investigate similarities and differences in the impact of poverty on different social groups. Semi structured interviews were conducted with sixty-two participants in Gloucestershire and Birmingham between 2012 and 2013. The five quotations below are from respondents in the interviews discussing their experience of living in poverty.
>
> 'I don't go out...the last time was probably eight years ago, that I went out socially'. (Lone Parent, Female, Birmingham)
>
> '….when you have no job and obviously you have very little money in your pocket it affects you in every field. When I was working I would go down the pub and have a couple of pints and a laugh with my mates. You would feel happy in the morning and you go to work. Now, I can't do that anymore, so I have lost all of my mates. I can't afford to go to the pub'. (Unemployed Male, Birmingham)
>
> 'I used to like going down the football …. but I can't do it on jobseekers [jobseeker's benefit]. I need to keep away from thinking about going to watch the football and think about other stuff.... and there are other things when my mates phone me up and ask whether I am going up Broad Street and I can't afford it... I probably last went out 4 months ago'. (Young Unemployed Male, Birmingham)
>
> 'I don't get to take him to the cinema or out bowling or anything like that because I don't have the money. Wilfie's [my son's] life is pretty much stuck in; we play games and things like that. But when he hears what his friends have done, they have gone to the cinema last night or they have done this or that, it's like "sorry son we can't"'. (Lone Parent, Female, Birmingham)
>
> 'My daughter has never been on holiday, in fact she has only had two day trips to Weston'. (Lone Parent, Female, Gloucestershire)

Adapted from: Simon Pemberton, Eileen Sutton, Eldin Fahmy and Karen Bell (2014) *Life on a Low Income in Austere Times*, Poverty and Social Exclusion UK.

Source B

> **A quantitative study of the relationship between type of school, place and entry into top universities.**
>
> In 2018 Rebecca Montacute completed research for the Sutton Trust investigating links between where young people live, what type of school or college they attend and their chances of success in applying to university. Montacute was particularly interested in how students did in applying to the Russell Group universities (usually regarded as the highest status universities including Oxford and Cambridge (Oxbridge)) but also other top universities such as London School of Economics, Imperial College, Bristol University and Durham University.
>
> Montacute based her research on statistical data provided by UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service). This is a centralised service through which virtually all applications for undergraduate courses in the UK are processed. UCAS provided considerable assistance in collecting and analysing the data which was used in the report. The report looked at schools and colleges in England only and data covered the UCAS application cycles 2014–15, 2015–16 and 2016–17. The total applications and acceptances from these three cycles were combined in order to calculate acceptance rates for different groups of students.
>
> UCAS provided a list of apply centres (schools, colleges or other institutions through which students make their applications) which had recorded HE applications in the three cycles covered in the report. UCAS then used this data to calculate the following:
> * Percentage of students from different types of schools and areas applying for different types of universities.
> * Acceptance rates of students from each group.
> * Average A Level points scores of different groups of students.
> * Average A Level point scores for Russell Group facilitating subjects (these are more traditional academic A Level subjects, such as Maths, Physics, History or English Literature which are often looked on more favourably by Russell Group universities).
>
> The apply centres were broken down into six types: state comprehensive schools, state selective schools (e.g. grammar schools), independent schools, general FE colleges, sixth form colleges and other (mainly private colleges).
>
> Some of Montacute's findings included the following:
> * 60% of those from independent schools in higher education attend a Russell Group university, compared to just under a quarter of those from comprehensives and sixth form colleges.
> * The proportion of HE applicants from state schools in England who gain a place at Oxbridge differs substantially by region, with differences between the South and East of England compared to the rest of the country. Around 1.5% of HE applicants from the South East, South West, London and East of England went to Oxbridge, but only around 0.8% of those from the North or the Midlands.
> * Schools with similar exam results had very different rates of progression to top universities, and especially to Oxbridge. Almost a quarter (23%) of students in independent schools in the top fifth of all schools for exam results applied to Oxbridge, but only 11% of students in comprehensives in the same high achieving group of schools did so.
>
> The report concludes by making a number of recommendations as to how universities might improve access for groups who are disadvantaged in the current system.

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Adapted from: Rebecca Montacute (2018) *Access to Advantage: The influence of schools and place on admissions to top universities*, Sutton Trust.

Answer **all** the questions in Section A.

1   Using data from **Source A**, outline **two** conclusions which could be drawn about the effects of poverty on people living on low incomes.   **[4]**

2*   With reference to **Source B**, explain **two** ways in which the government, universities or schools and colleges might make use of the findings of this study.   **[6]**

3*   With reference to **Source A**, explain **one** advantage and **one** disadvantage of sociologists using semi structured interviews to study the effects of poverty.   **[10]**

4*   Using **Source B** and your wider sociological knowledge, explain and evaluate the use of secondary quantitative data to investigate the influence of type and location of school on entry into top universities.   **[25]**

SECTION B

Answer **all** the questions in Section B.

5*   Outline ways in which discrimination can affect the opportunities of different social groups in work and employment.   **[20]**

6*   Evaluate different sociological explanations of age inequalities.   **[40]**

END OF QUESTION PAPER

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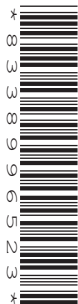Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Tuesday 12 October 2021 – Morning

A Level Sociology

H580/02 Researching and understanding social inequalities

Time allowed: 2 hours 15 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS
• Use black ink.
• Write your answer to each question in the Answer Booklet. The question numbers must be clearly shown.
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INFORMATION
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ADVICE
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SECTION A

Source A

Average hourly pay by ethnicity over time (in pounds)					
	2013	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**
Ethnicity					
White*	10.52	10.74	10.84	11.05	11.34
Indian	11.29	12.18	11.58	12.29	13.14
Pakistani/Bangladeshi	8.27	7.88	9.15	9.33	9.52
Black	10.30	10.27	9.77	10.24	11.10
Mixed	11.57	11.11	10.85	11.06	11.26
Other including Chinese and Other Asian	9.77	9.81	9.88	10.78	11.05

* These figures include both White British and Other White groups

These figures were taken from official government statistics collected by the Labour Force Survey.

Adapted from: GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and figures (2018).

Source B

> **Qualitative research on young offenders using mixed methods.**
>
> Nalita James was part of a group of researchers who undertook a project to research young men in a YOI in the East Midlands (a YOI is a Young Offender Institution, a form of prison for young people aged 16–21). James and her colleagues wanted to explore the world of the young offenders from their own viewpoint 'in order to give them a voice'.
>
> The methods included two focus group interviews, observation and field notes, as well as individual interviews to gain insight into the young men's experiences. An initial problem with the project was gaining access; the researchers had to obtain permission from the management of the YOI. They eventually convinced them of the value of the project after some negotiation. *5*
>
> To collect their sample the researchers put up posters in the education wing asking for volunteers. 18 young offenders signed up to take part, though only 14 completed the project as some were released or transferred to other institutions during the research. All of the prisoners had negative life experiences and some had a range of problems such as mental health issues and learning difficulties. All of the young men had left compulsory education before the age of 16, with some saying they had never attended school. *10*
>
> The researchers tried hard to create an atmosphere where participants could freely say what they liked without being judged, in contrast to the generally restrictive nature of prison life. Some participants were initially reluctant to open up to the researchers but it was made clear that they were free to say nothing or even to withdraw from the research at any time. *15*
>
> All the participants were assured of confidentiality during the research. However, the researchers warned those involved that if they informed them of something that would put others in danger, the research team would have to inform the authorities. The team introduced themselves as researchers who were independent from the prison authorities and interested in finding out about the young offenders' lives both inside and outside prison. James describes the researchers as adopting the role of 'semi-participant observers'. *20*
>
> The researchers felt that to achieve the aims of the project it was important to ensure the difference in power between researchers and the young offenders was reduced. For example, the researchers tried not to judge the young offenders (unlike many of the prison officers) and early on agreed that they would call one another by their first names (while the prison officers used surnames). *25*
>
> The researchers found finishing the project difficult. Whilst the research team had always been honest in explaining exactly how long they would be working with the young offenders, when leaving the project some of the offenders were upset to see them go. The researchers also felt some guilt and unease about leaving the YOI, not knowing what would happen to the young offenders after their departure. James admits that sometimes she and her colleagues reacted emotionally to the stories they heard. At times it became difficult to maintain a sense of distance and detachment, particularly during the interviews. This affected their interpretations and representations of the young men's stories. The researchers tried to overcome these problems by being reflexive about their own role in the research and concluded that they had achieved some success in allowing a marginalised group of young men to open up about their lives and experiences and to reflect on different paths, which they might take in their lives. *30 35 40*

Nalita James (2013) 'Research on the 'Inside': The Challenges of Conducting Research with Young Offenders', Sociological Research Online, *18 (4) 14*

Answer **all** the questions.

1   Summarise **two** patterns or trends in the data shown in **Source A**.   **[4]**

2* With reference to **Source B**, explain **two** ethical issues which sociologists studying young offenders in a Young Offender Institution would need to consider in their research.   **[6]**

3* With reference to **Source A**, explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of using official statistics to study ethnic differences in pay.   **[10]**

4* Using **Source B** and your wider sociological knowledge, explain and evaluate the use of qualitative methods to research young people in a Young Offender Institution.   **[25]**

SECTION B

Answer **all** the questions.

5* Outline ways in which gender can influence a person's life chances.   **[20]**

6* Assess Weber's view that inequalities in society are explained by differences in class, status and party.   **[40]**
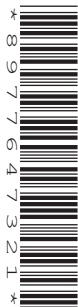
END OF QUESTION PAPER

OCR

Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Tuesday 7 June 2022 – Afternoon

A Level Sociology

H580/02 Researching and understanding social inequalities

Time allowed: 2 hours 15 minutes

You must have:
• the OCR 12-page Answer Booklet

INSTRUCTIONS
• Use black ink.
• Write your answer to each question in the Answer Booklet. The question numbers must be clearly shown.
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INFORMATION
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ADVICE
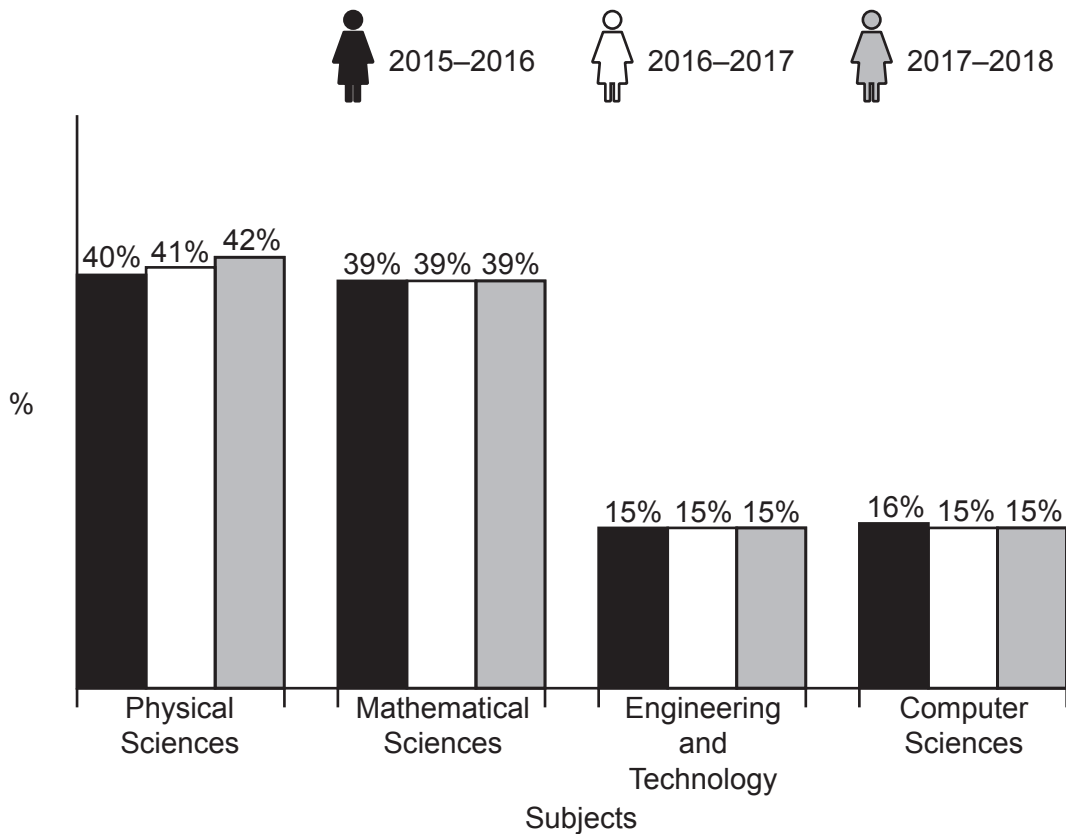• Read each question carefully before you start your answer.

SECTION A

Read the source material and answer **all** the questions.

Source A

Percentage of graduates in STEM subjects who are female

The statistics above show the percentage of graduates who were female from UK universities in STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). The figures were compiled for the website STEM Women from data provided by UCAS (Universities Central Admissions Service).

Adapted from: https://www.stemwomen.co.uk/blog/2019/09/women-in-stem-percentages-of-women-in-stem-statistics

Source B

A longitudinal study of unemployment and earnings among different ethnic groups

Li and Heath carried out a longitudinal study of the disadvantages faced by ethnic minorities in the UK in relation to unemployment and earnings. They used secondary quantitative data from the United Kingdom Longitudinal Household Study (UKLHS), a large scale survey carried out by the University of Essex. This collected data from the same sample of people, once a year for six years, between 2009 and 2015. People in the sample were classified into one of ten ethnic categories with sample sizes as follows:

41 656 White British
 1 149 White Irish
 2 382 White Other
 1 328 Black Caribbean
 1 947 Black African
 2 551 Indian
 2 220 Pakistani
 1 433 Bangladeshi
   329 Chinese
 2 810 Other.

One area the study focused on was the extent of ethnic disadvantage in relation to unemployment. The data showed that most ethnic minority groups were more, and some much more, likely than white British to be unemployed. Thus while the overall unemployment rates for men and women across the six years were 10% and 8% respectively, nearly a quarter (24%) of black Caribbean men and over a quarter of Pakistani women (26%) were unemployed.

By using a longitudinal study, researchers could investigate how events in an individual's life affect them at later stages. They could also research how far ethnic minorities were likely to remain stuck in unemployment for long periods of time. During the research there was a recession in 2008–2010 during which unemployment rose for all ethnic groups. When the economic situation began to improve, white British unemployment rates began to fall, yet ethnic minority groups found their unemployment rates unchanged or even rising. This supports the findings of studies of earlier recessions in the mid-1980s and early 1990s, which showed that during those recessions, people of ethnic minority backgrounds, particularly black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi minorities, bore the brunt of recession, being the first to face job cuts and the last to find re-employment.

Adapted from: Yaojun Li and Anthony Heath (2018) 'Persisting disadvantages: a study of labour market dynamics of ethnic unemployment and earnings in the UK (2009–2015)' Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies.

---

1 Summarise **two** conclusions which sociologists might reach about patterns and trends in women graduating in STEM subjects from the data shown in **Source A**. **[4]**

2 With reference to **Source B**, explain **two** reasons sociologists need to consider representativeness in a large-scale study of unemployment in Britain. **[6]**

3 With reference to **Source A**, explain **two** advantages of using quantitative data to study gender inequalities. **[10]**

4* Using **Source B** and your wider sociological knowledge, explain and evaluate the use of longitudinal research for researching ethnic inequalities in relation to earnings and unemployment. **[25]**

SECTION B

Answer **all** the questions.

5* Outline ways that a person's age may affect their opportunities in work and employment. **[20]**

6* Assess the view that Marx's theory of social class is still relevant for understanding class inequalities in the UK today. **[40]**

END OF QUESTION PAPER

OCR
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Friday 9 June 2023 – Morning

A Level Sociology

H580/02 Researching and understanding social inequalities

Time allowed: 2 hours 15 minutes

> **You must have:**
> • the OCR 12-page Answer Booklet

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ADVICE
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OCR is an exempt Charity

Turn over

Section A

Source A

The UK gender pay gap, 2019

Occupation	Average hourly earnings for women and men (£)	Gender pay gap by percentage points	Change from 2018
Managers, directors and senior officials	22.07	15.9%	+2.0%
Professional occupations	21.11	10.1%	−1.6%
Associate professional and technical occupations	16.28	11.0%	−0.9%
Skilled trades occupations	12.79	22.4%	−1.8%
Administrative and secretarial occupations	12.03	4.9%	−1.6%
Process, plant and machine operatives	11.22	18.1%	−0.8%
Sales and customer service occupations	10.07	4.4%	−0.3%
Caring, leisure and other service occupations	10.00	8.0%	+0.1%
Elementary occupations*	9.53	11.0%	−0.2%

Adapted from ONS (2019)

The table shows the UK gender pay gap for median (average) gross hourly earnings (excluding overtime) for full-time employees by occupation group for the year ending April 2019.

The gender pay gap is the percentage difference between average earnings for men and those for women. For example, a 10% gender pay gap would mean that men in an occupational area earn on average 10% more per hour than women.

Where it is a negative figure, the figure for the change from 2018 shows by how many percentage points the gender pay gap narrowed between 2018 and 2019. There are two occupational areas where the change is a positive figure and this shows that the gender pay gap actually widened in these occupations.

*Elementary occupations are roughly equivalent to what used to be called unskilled occupations.

Source B

Qualitative research by a female academic on football hooliganism

Emma Poulton carried out fieldwork using a range of qualitative data collection methods (including in-depth interviews, informal interviews and participant observation) with a group of 'retired' football hooligans, who were 'active' during the late 1970s to early 1990s. 'Football hooliganism' is a term referring to the behaviour of predominantly young men who engage in behaviour ranging from verbal abuse and aggressive body language, through to more violent *5* actions, such as fighting and rioting in and around football matches. They are often involved in organised gangs who follow a particular football club, known as 'firms'.

Poulton had two main subjects, who acted as gatekeepers. For the purpose of anonymity, she gave them the pseudonyms of Chris and Dave. Chris and Dave were both in their late forties/early fifties and were recognised 'top boys' (leading figures) in their respective hooligan *10* 'firms'. The interviews with Dave were face-to-face in pubs and bars, whereas the interviews with Chris mainly took place over the phone. Participant observation was also undertaken with Chris's 'firm' (including hooligans active today and those retired) at a pre-screening of a hooligan-related film, in which they acted as extras.

Poulton kept a research diary throughout her fieldwork which she drew upon in discussing *15* her research. Reflexivity involves researchers reflecting upon the research process in order to assess the effect of their presence and their research techniques on the nature and extent of the data collected. For example, one of the issues which Poulton reflects on throughout her research is the difficulties she faced as a female researcher in a hyper-masculine subculture and the techniques she used to overcome these difficulties. *20*

Poulton had initially thought that the world of football hooliganism would be impossible for her to research as a female academic but after responding to an email she received promoting a series of events ('The Real Football Factories Live') involving retired hooligans, she made contact with Chris who became one of her key informants. Poulton describes in her research diary how she worried about what to wear at her first meeting with the hooligans. She did not *25* wish to appear to be too masculine by dressing like one of them, but she also did not want to dress in a way which would attract unwanted male attention. In the end, she opted for a fitted, short-sleeved, navy and white, designer checked blouse, a pair of smart boot-cut jeans and a pair of sandals, which revealed her painted toenails. This seemed to work as Dave, one of the key informants, congratulated her on her good taste in clothes, pointing out they were *30* wearing very similar shirts.

Poulton acknowledges that there were difficulties as a female researcher in first gaining access to a hyper-masculine subculture; second, entering and developing rapport in the subculture; and third, in presenting herself as a woman in the hyper-masculine field. She had to continuously consider how she presented herself and manage her image. However, she *35* also suggests that her statuses of being an academic and female were sometimes actually useful research tools that helped her to develop a form of rapport with some of her hooligan subjects and encouraged more open discussions than she would have experienced if she had been a male researcher.

Adapted from: Emma Poulton (2012) Doing Gendered Research: Methodological Reflections on Being a Female Academic Researcher in the Hyper-Masculine Subculture of 'Football Hooliganism', *Sociological Research Online*, 17 (4) 4

1   Using data from Source A, summarise **two** patterns or trends in the gender pay gap in the UK workforce.   **[4]**

2   With reference to **Source B**, explain **two** reasons why reflexivity might be important to sociologists in their research.   **[6]**

3   With reference to **Source A**, explain **two** limitations of using quantitative data on the UK gender pay gap for measuring the extent of progress towards gender equality.   **[10]**

4*   Using **Source B** and your wider sociological knowledge, explain and evaluate the use of qualitative methods for researching football hooliganism.   **[25]**

Section B

5*   Outline ways in which ethnic inequalities still exist in the UK today.   **[20]**

6*   Assess the sociological view that social inequalities are functional for society.   **[40]**

END OF QUESTION PAPER