



General Certificate of Secondary Education
June 2014

Sociology

41901

Unit 1 Studying Society; Education; Families

Wednesday 14 May 2014 1.30 pm to 3.00 pm

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 12-page answer book.

Time allowed

- 1 hour 30 minutes

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is 41901.
- The paper is divided into **three** Topic Areas.

Topic 1: Answer **all** questions.

Topic 2: Answer **all** questions in Section 1 **and one** question from Section 2.

Topic 3: Answer **all** questions in Section 3 **and one** question from Section 4.

- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 90.
- Questions carrying 12 marks should be answered in continuous prose. In these questions you will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- You are advised to spend about **30 minutes** answering each of the **three** topics.

Topic 1: Studying Society

You must answer **all** questions on this topic.

Total for this topic: 30 marks

Study **Items A, B and C** and answer the questions that follow.

Item A

A-Level Examination entries, by gender: United Kingdom, 2012

Subject	Boys	Girls
Computing	3 512	297
English	25 800	63 838
Performing Arts	388	2 764
Physics	27 148	7 361
Sociology	7 343	23 514

Item B

Investigating gender and attitudes to science

In 2006, Murphy and Whitelegg investigated why many girls do not want to study Physics. Through the use of questionnaires, they found that at the beginning of secondary school many girls had less interest in science than in other subjects, and their interest declined further as they went through secondary school. Boys were much more likely than girls to study Physics, particularly after age 16.

Item C

Challenging gender stereotypes at school

In 2011, just 20% of Physics A-level students were girls. Research by the Institute of Physics suggests that in many schools expectations of students are often gender stereotyped. The researchers believe gender stereotyping by teachers and students should be actively challenged both in and out of the classroom. For example, the attitude that 'Physics is for boys' should be discouraged among students and teachers.

- 0 1** From **Item A**, which subject had the largest entry from boys? **[1 mark]**
- 0 2** From **Item B**, identify the research method used by Murphy and Whitelegg. **[1 mark]**
- 0 3** Give **one** advantage **and one** disadvantage of using Murphy and Whitelegg's research method as referred to in **Item B**. **[2 marks]**
- 0 4** Describe how biologists may approach the study of gender identity of humans differently from sociologists. **[4 marks]**
- 0 5** Study **Item C**. Explain what sociologists mean by gender stereotypes. **[4 marks]**
- 0 6** Explain **one** way in which sociological research might help schools **and/or** the Government design policies that encourage more girls to study Physics. **[4 marks]**
- You have been asked as a sociologist to investigate the subject choices made by boys and girls in British schools.**
- 0 7** Identify what sociologists mean by a pilot study **and** explain why you might undertake a pilot study for this investigation. **[4 marks]**
- 0 8** Identify **one** secondary source of information that you would use **and** explain why this source might be useful for your investigation. **[4 marks]**
- 0 9** Identify **one** method of interviewing that you might use **and** explain why this method is better than using postal questionnaires for your investigation. **[6 marks]**

Turn over for the next topic

Turn over ►

Topic 2: Education

Answer **all** questions in **Section 1** and **one** question from **Section 2**.

Total for this topic: 30 marks

Study **Items D and E** and answer the questions that follow.

Item D

Percentage (%) of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs grades A*–C including English and mathematics in England 2012, by ethnic group

Ethnic group	% Boys	% Girls	% Total
Black Caribbean	43	57	50
Chinese	72	80	76
Indian	70	78	74
Mixed	55	65	60
Pakistani	50	58	54
White British	54	64	59

Item E

Children's educational achievement: how important are parental attitudes?

A recent study has found that social class is still the most important reason why some children achieve more than others in education. The study found that young people were more likely to do well at GCSE if their parents believed that their child would go to university, and if they provided resources towards education, for example private tuition. The study showed that many working-class parents had limited aspirations for their children and failed to encourage educational ambitions. Middle-class parents were more likely to want their child to go to university.

Section 1

- 1 0** From **Item D**, which ethnic group has the highest percentage of girls achieving 5 or more GCSE A*–C grades including English and mathematics?
[1 mark]
- 1 1** From **Item E**, parents from which social class were more likely to want their child to go to university?
[1 mark]
- 1 2** Identify **one** advantage **and one** disadvantage of streaming pupils.
[2 marks]
- 1 3** Explain what sociologists studying education mean by peer group pressure.
[4 marks]
- 1 4** Describe **one** function that education is expected to perform in today's society **and** explain how successful the education system has been in performing this function.
[5 marks]
- 1 5** Describe **one** way in which governments have attempted to encourage competition between schools in the past 30 years **and** explain why competition between schools may or may not be beneficial.
[5 marks]

Section 2**Either**

- 1 6** Discuss how far sociologists would agree that a pupil's ethnicity is the main reason for differences in educational achievement.
[12 marks]

or

- 1 7** Discuss how far sociologists would agree that parental attitudes have a significant effect on a child's educational success.
[12 marks]

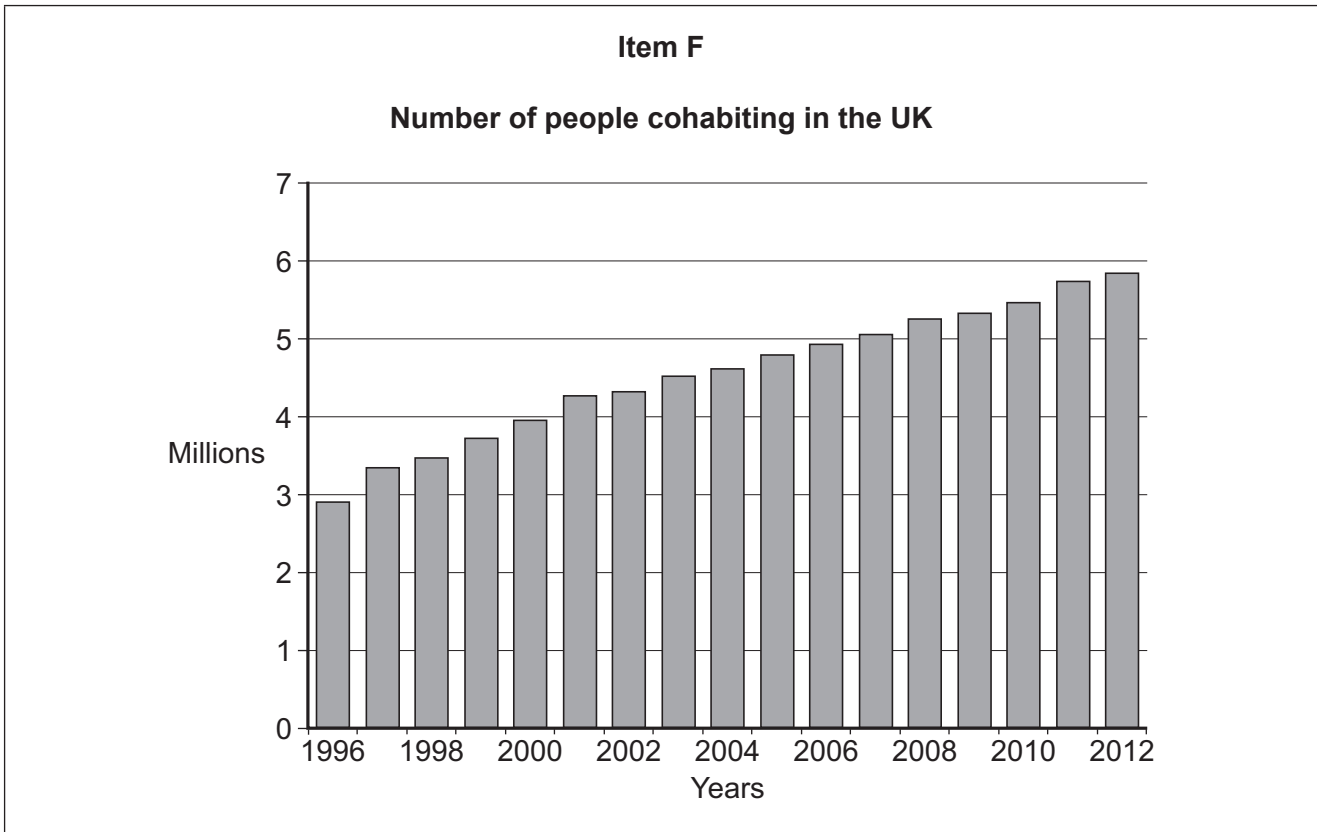
Turn over for the next topic**Turn over ►**

Topic 3: Families

Answer **all** questions in **Section 3** and **one** question from **Section 4**.

Total for this topic: 30 marks

Study **Items F and G** and answer the questions that follow.



Item G

Divorces in England and Wales between 1961 and 2011

Year	Number of divorces in England and Wales
1961	25 394
1971	74 437
1981	145 713
1991	158 745
2001	143 818
2011	117 558

Section 3

- 1 8** From **Item F**, what is the trend in cohabitation between 1996 and 2012? **[1 mark]**
- 1 9** From **Item G**, which year saw the most divorces in England and Wales? **[1 mark]**
- 2 0** Identify **two** reasons for the increase in single person households over the past 40 years. **[2 marks]**
- 2 1** Explain what sociologists mean by family diversity. **[4 marks]**
- 2 2** Describe **one** way in which grandparents can contribute to family life **and** explain how this may help other family members. **[5 marks]**
- 2 3** Describe **one** criticism of the traditional nuclear family made by some sociologists **and** explain why other sociologists might not agree. **[5 marks]**

Section 4**Either**

- 2 4** Discuss how far sociologists would agree that marriage is no longer seen as important in modern British society. **[12 marks]**

or

- 2 5** Discuss how far sociologists would agree that changing social attitudes are the main reason for changes in the divorce rate over the past 50 years. **[12 marks]**

END OF QUESTIONS

There are no questions printed on this page

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Item A: Reproduced by permission of JCQ.

Items B and C: Girls in the Physics Classroom: A Review of the Research on the Participation of Girls in Physics, Murphy & Whitelegg (2006), and Girls in the Physics Classroom: A Teachers' Guide for Action, Institute of Physics (2006).

Item D: Table adapted from www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-and-equivalent-attainment-by-pupil-characteristics-in-england. This contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v1.0.

Item F: www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/family-demography/families-and-households/2012/cohabitation-rpt.html. This contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v1.0.

Item G: Adapted from Number of marriages and divorces, 1931–2011, www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_291750.pdf. This contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v1.0.

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