UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
General Certificate of Education Advanced Subsidiary Level and Advanced Level

CANDIDATE NAME	

CENTRE NUMBER						CANDIDATE NUMBER					

SOCIOLOGY **9699/21**

Paper 2 Principles and Methods 2 **October/November 2012**

1 hour 30 minutes

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.

No Additional Materials are required

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.
Write in dark blue or black pen.
You may use a soft pencil for any diagrams, graphs or rough working.
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.
DO **NOT** WRITE IN ANY BARCODES.

Answer **two** questions.

You may not need all the answer lines for your answer.
The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.

This document consists of **13** printed pages and **3** blank pages.

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Answer **two** questions.

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1 Social interaction is based on expectations about what types of behaviour are appropriate in particular situations. A person occupying a certain status or position, for example, will be expected to conform to a pattern of behaviour that is recognisable as typical of that role. Performing a role in society may be seen as similar to acting a part. We all play many roles in the course of our life, sometimes even in the same day. The different expectations associated with these multiple roles may conflict and cause tension and uncertainty. This is known as role strain.

The functionalist view of social roles focuses on the expectations associated with the positions people occupy within institutions such as the family, education and work. This approach assumes that there is a high degree of consensus about how roles should be performed and that people usually conform to these expectations. A different approach, which is associated with interpretive sociology, takes the view that individuals have considerable scope to negotiate and adapt their roles. Interpretivists are interested in studying the dynamics of how we acquire roles and how we learn to perform those roles through interaction with others. This perspective recognises that we may perform roles with different degrees of commitment, known as role-distance. Also, people may choose to challenge social expectations by engaging in *role-reversal* or by finding new ways to play a role.

(a) What is meant by the term *role-reversal*?

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(b) Describe **two** examples of role strain.

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(c) Explain why people usually conform to social expectations.

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.... [8]

(d) Assess the strengths and limitations of the functionalist view of social roles.

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.....[11]

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2 There is considerable disagreement about which methods produce the best results in sociological research. Positivists prefer to use quantitative methods, such as questionnaires and structured interviews. They may also use official statistics as a secondary source of data. One strength of quantitative methods is that they are reliable. They also allow the researcher to identify trends and patterns of behaviour and to make generalisations.

However, not all sociologists support the use of quantitative methods. Many feminist theorists, for example, favour qualitative methods, such as unstructured interviews and participant observation. They argue that these methods reveal more about feelings and thoughts and therefore produce data that is high in validity. But positivists claim that qualitative methods allow too much scope for the researcher to influence the behaviour and responses of the study group. They think this results in the collection of data that contains *interviewer bias*.

(a) What is meant by the term *interviewer bias*?

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(b) Describe **two** secondary sources of data other than official statistics.

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(c) Explain how the behaviour and responses of the study group may be influenced by the researcher when using qualitative methods.

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(d) Assess the view that qualitative methods produce data that is high in validity.

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3 Many changes have taken place over the last fifty years to address gender inequality in employment. These changes are partly linked to the introduction of anti-discrimination laws that require employers to pay male and female workers the same salary when they are doing the same work. Differences in pay and job conditions between males and females have narrowed over this period. However, evidence suggests that some employers fail to obey anti-discrimination laws designed to protect female workers.

Despite improvements in the position of female workers, feminist theorists argue that employment continues to be organised in ways that benefit males more than females. They point out that females, on average, still earn significantly less than males and tend to occupy lower positions in the workforce. It is males who hold most of the higher-grade and senior management positions. Feminist theorists claim that females are held back by a 'glass ceiling', an invisible barrier to promotion. Females are also more likely than males to experience downward *social mobility*.

(a) What is meant by the term *social mobility*?

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(b) Describe **two** problems in ensuring that employers obey anti-discrimination laws.

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(c) Explain why females are more likely than males to experience downward social mobility.

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(d) Assess the view that feminist theorists exaggerate the role of males when explaining the causes of gender inequality in employment.

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