IGCSE SOCIOLOGY PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

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How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

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Questions

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1. Disagreement between groups with different interests.

A. Causation

B. Conflict

C. Identity

D. Perspectives

2. A system in which individuals reach the social positions they deserve, based on educational achievement, talent and skills is called?

A. Post-compulsory education

B. Life Chances

C. Meritocracy

D. State Schools

3. Which code is associated with formal schooling and explicit instruction?

A. Restricted code

B. Cultural deprivation

C. Deferred gratification

D. Elaborate code

4. Which term describes language-related disadvantage for minority ethnic groups?

A. Bilingual

B. EAL

C. Dialect

D. Pidgin

5. When two variables are related to each other but causation cannot be proved; for example, ill-health is related to poverty.

A. Consensus

B. Correlation

C. Identity

D. Causation

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6. What describes the systematic collection of information from a sample, typically using a questionnaire or structured interview?

A. Field experiments

B. Case studies

C. Ethnography

D. Social surveys

7. A status that is given to individuals by their society or group, over which they have little or no control.

A. Age

B. Ascribed status

C. Status

D. Power

8. The concept that refers to the socially expected mannerisms and behaviors associated with being female is

A. Masculinity

B. Gender norms

C. Femininity

D. Social roles

9. Which statement accurately describes the link between ethnicity and class, particularly that ethnic minorities are more likely to be working class and suffer material disadvantages?

A. Ethnic majorities are more likely to be working class.

B. Ethnic minorities are more likely to be working class and suffer material disadvantages.

C. All ethnic groups have equal access to education.

D. Language barriers are the only barrier.

10. Which pairing describes the interaction of material conditions with ethnicity in educational outcomes?

A. Culture and Class

B. Linguistic and Ethnicity

C. Material and Ethnicity

D. Material and Gender

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Answers

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1. B
2. C
3. D
4. B
5. B
6. D
7. B
8. C
9. B
10. C

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Explanations

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1. Disagreement between groups with different interests.

A. Causation

B. Conflict

C. Identity

D. Perspectives

Disagreement between groups with different interests is described by conflict. When groups are pursuing incompatible goals or competing for scarce resources, tensions rise and actions to defend one side's interests against the other occur. This idea is central to how sociologists understand power struggles, inequality, and social change, since competing interests often shape how institutions, policies, and resources are distributed. Causation is about cause-and-effect relationships, not the presence of dispute over interests. Identity focuses on who people or groups are and their membership, rather than the active clash over goals. Perspectives refers to different viewpoints, which can underlie disagreements but doesn't by itself capture the element of ongoing competition between groups.

2. A system in which individuals reach the social positions they deserve, based on educational achievement, talent and skills is called?

A. Post-compulsory education

B. Life Chances

C. Meritocracy

D. State Schools

The idea being tested is meritocracy, a system in which social positions are earned through merit—educational achievement, talent and skills—rather than background or luck. Meritocracy is the view that rewards and status should go to those who demonstrate ability and effort, making advancement depend on actual performance rather than who you're born to or socioeconomic connections. This helps explain why education is seen as the key pathway to higher status in many societies, because it is supposed to measure merit and translate it into opportunity. The other options don't describe this mechanism. Post-compulsory education refers to levels of schooling after the minimum requirement, not how positions are allocated. Life chances describe the likelihood of obtaining opportunities in life, but it's about the potential to succeed rather than the rule that positions are assigned by merit. State schools are simply a type of school and do not define how social positions are distributed.

3. Which code is associated with formal schooling and explicit instruction?

A. Restricted code

B. Cultural deprivation

C. Deferred gratification

D. Elaborate code

Language codes and schooling: formal schooling relies on an elaborated code, a style of language that uses precise vocabulary, explicit connections between ideas, and full sentences so meaning is clear without needing shared context. This makes it well-suited for explicit instruction, where teachers present definitions, reasons, and explanations step by step and students are expected to articulate abstract ideas clearly. In contrast, a restricted code depends on context, shared knowledge, and fewer explicit details, which is typical of everyday talk and social interactions but not ideal for formal teaching. The other concepts describe different ideas—one about communication relying on context and implicit meaning, another about delaying rewards, and another about social factors affecting access to education—so they don't fit the role of a language style used in formal schooling.

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4. Which term describes language-related disadvantage for minority ethnic groups?

A. Bilingual

B. EAL

C. Dialect

D. Pidgin

The item tests understanding of terminology used to describe language-related disadvantages that some minority ethnic learners may face in education. The best term is English as an Additional Language. This label specifically refers to pupils whose home language isn't English and who may need extra support to access the curriculum in an English-speaking school system. It acknowledges that language barriers can influence learning experiences and outcomes, and it signals the kind of targeted support students might receive to develop their English proficiency. Being bilingual is simply having two languages and isn't inherently about disadvantage; many bilingual students thrive and use their language skills as an asset. A dialect is a regional or social variety of a language that can be stigmatized, but the term itself doesn't denote a school-based disadvantage category. Pidgin describes a simplified language that develops for contact between groups and isn't a label for educational disadvantage.

5. When two variables are related to each other but causation cannot be proved; for example, ill-health is related to poverty.

A. Consensus

B. Correlation

C. Identity

D. Causation

What this item tests is understanding that two things can be linked without proving one causes the other. When ill-health and poverty are related, it shows a correlation: the two tend to occur together more often than by coincidence. But correlation does not establish that poverty causes ill-health or that ill-health causes poverty. There could be a third factor influencing both, or the direction of influence could go either way. Other terms don't fit as well. Consensus is about agreement among people, not a statistical link between variables. Identity refers to sameness or equivalence, not a relationship between two different factors. Causation would mean one variable directly causes the other, which isn't established here. So correlation is the best description.

6. What describes the systematic collection of information from a sample, typically using a questionnaire or structured interview?

A. Field experiments

B. Case studies

C. Ethnography

D. Social surveys

The main idea here is gathering information from a subset of people in a consistent, planned way using a questionnaire or structured interview. This approach, a social survey, is designed to produce comparable data from many respondents so findings can be generalized to a larger population. It relies on sampling methods to choose participants and uses standardized questions to enable easy analysis and identification of patterns or trends. It differs from field experiments, which involve manipulating variables in real-world settings; from case studies, which look in depth at a few cases; and from ethnography, which involves long-term, immersive observation of cultures or groups. Social surveys are efficient for collecting broad, quantifiable data on attitudes, opinions, and behaviors, though they can face issues like response bias or social desirability effects.

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7. A status that is given to individuals by their society or group, over which they have little or no control.

A. Age

B. Ascribed status

C. Status

D. Power

This question is about how social positions are allocated in society. A status that is given to individuals by their society or group, over which they have little or no control is described as an ascribed status. This label fits because it captures positions you don't choose and can't easily change—things you're born into or placed into by social expectations, such as family background, ethnicity, gender, or age categories. The idea is that these statuses come with limited personal agency and are assigned rather than earned. The other ideas don't fit as neatly. Power is about the ability to influence others, not a position you're assigned. A general "status" is too vague to specify how it's allocated. Age is more a natural attribute or a categorical label rather than the formal sociological term for a socially assigned position, even though age can function as an ascribed factor in some contexts.

8. The concept that refers to the socially expected mannerisms and behaviors associated with being female is

A. Masculinity

B. Gender norms

C. Femininity

D. Social roles

Femininity denotes the socially expected mannerisms and behaviors associated with being female. It captures how societies teach and sanction women to act, dress, speak, and interact in ways deemed appropriate for women, beyond biology. Masculinity describes traits linked to men, while gender norms are the broader expectations for behavior across all genders, of which femininity is the female-specific expression. Social roles refer to the positions people occupy (like mother or caregiver) and the duties that come with them, not the particular behaviors themselves. So the term that best fits the prompt is femininity.

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9. Which statement accurately describes the link between ethnicity and class, particularly that ethnic minorities are more likely to be working class and suffer material disadvantages?

A. Ethnic majorities are more likely to be working class.

B. Ethnic minorities are more likely to be working class and suffer material disadvantages.

C. All ethnic groups have equal access to education.

D. Language barriers are the only barrier.

Ethnicity and social class are linked because ethnic minority status often comes with barriers that lead to lower paying work and less material wealth. Structural discrimination in hiring and wages, unequal access to quality education, and differences in housing and geographic opportunities mean that some ethnic minority groups are more likely to be concentrated in low paid, precarious jobs and experience greater material hardship. This pattern reflects systemic inequalities that shape economic outcomes across generations, even though individuals vary within groups. The other statements don't fit as well. Saying ethnic majorities are more likely to be working class contradicts observed patterns where minority groups face higher risk of low status and poverty. Claiming all ethnic groups have equal access to education ignores evidence of attainment gaps and differing outcomes. And attributing barriers only to language overlooks other crucial factors like discrimination, housing, and unequal investment in opportunities that also shape class outcomes.

10. Which pairing describes the interaction of material conditions with ethnicity in educational outcomes?

A. Culture and Class

B. Linguistic and Ethnicity

C. Material and Ethnicity

D. Material and Gender

The idea being tested is how material conditions interact with ethnicity to shape educational outcomes. Material conditions—things like family resources, school funding, housing, and neighborhood differences—affect what opportunities a student can access. Ethnicity relates to identity and potential experiences in school, including bias or cultural expectations. When you look at both together, you see that the impact of ethnicity on education isn't the same at every level of material resources. For example, in affluent settings, ethnic disparities in attainment may be smaller because resources buffer disadvantages, while in low-resource contexts, those disparities can widen because material constraints amplify obstacles. The other pairings don't capture this specific combination of economic resources with ethnic background, which is why this option is the best fit.

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Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

https://igcsesociology.examzify.com

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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