

Sociology

Course Type: A Level

Exam Board: AQA

Course Entry Requirements: Standard: Five GCSE subjects at a minimum grade 4 or the equivalent including Maths and English

Why Study Sociology?

Sociology is the study of society. It is about all kinds of social relationships that people share with each other in their families, schools and work. The methods developed by Sociologists are used in other academic areas such as market research and management studies.

You will study all varieties of human experience. Social theory is also important in Sociology. It teaches us that there are no right or wrong answers when it comes to studying the way people live together.

What is important for a Sociologist is the ability to evaluate evidence and choose between possible explanations. You will enjoy Sociology if you are the type of person who is not afraid to have new ideas and are willing to work at a demanding pace.

What Will I Study? Course Content

In the first year you will study:

Topic 1: 'Families and Households'. You will gain a clear sociological understanding of the nature of families and households in contemporary British society. You should also have knowledge and understanding of the main sociological perspectives of the family. The changes in family structure and the nature and extent of family diversity should become clear to you and you should understand the impact and effect of family arrangement on the individual.

Topic 2: 'Education with Research Methods'. You will examine the reasons why some pupils achieve more than others by thinking about factors such as race, ethnic group, gender and class. Sociologists try to explain these differences based on their own theories. Governments are very interested in education and you will look at the way in which sociological studies affect the laws and policies they make. Linked with education is the study of the research methods used by sociologists.

You will examine a range of methods and learn to do some of your own, such as collecting data through surveys.

In the second year you will in addition study

Beliefs in Society, Crime and Deviance and sociological theory. When studying crime and deviance you will look at patterns of crime linked to age, ethnicity, gender, locality and social class. You will also examine how crime is controlled through prevention and punishment and the role of the criminal justice system. You will also study state crimes, globalisation and suicide.

Also as part of this topic, you will study the decline of religion in some areas of the world and the rise of fundamentalism in other parts. You will examine the role of religion as a force for change as well as a different religious organisations such as cults and sects and study the relationship between different social groups and religious/ spiritual organisations and movements, beliefs and practices.

How will I be assessed?

Assessment is by examinations.