

What is Sociology?

Sociology is, in essence, the study of people in society. It examines the values, attitudes, culture and organisation of the society in which we live and explores how these influences impact on our social behaviour.

Sociologists are interested in how people interact in social situations from the very small-scale group to within large-scale institutions. This makes sociology a very large and complex, but ultimately fascinating, area of study. Sociology is an academic subject and has a strong theoretical content.

Why students choose this course

Sociology suits students that enjoyed history at GCSE and would enjoy applying some of the same skills to understand contemporary society. It appeals to those who spot patterns in society, such as men making up 95% of the prison population or certain ethnic groups underperforming at GCSE, and want to explore the reasons why they exist.

Sociology will also be of interest to students who want to explore which groups hold power in society and the methods that they use to maintain their dominance. It is a Social Science A level and is often taken alongside Psychology, English or History but can be taken with any combination of other subjects.

What the course covers

Students study 5 content topics over two years.

Topic 1 – Families and households

This topic will examine roles in families, demographic changes to families in UK society, and effects on health, work, poverty and welfare.

Topic 2 – Education and methods in context

This topic will examine how education shapes the society we inhabit, how education works, how culture impacts on outcomes in education and how government policy affects the way young people are educated.

Topic 3 – Theory and methods

This topic will examine consensus, conflict, structural and social action theories including the concepts of modernity and post-modernity in relation to sociological theory.

Topic 4 – Crime and deviance

This topic will analyse theories of crime and control, examine the demography of crime and interrogate the global nature of modern crime and crime prevention.

Topic 5 – Beliefs in society

This topic will investigate the ideas and organisations that shape the beliefs of UK society.

The complete specification can be viewed on the AQA website. www.aqa.org.uk

What students can do with this course

Sociology is an extremely popular subject that goes well with a range of different A Level combinations, particularly the other social sciences, history, politics or RE.

Students who have studied sociology have gone on to a vast variety of degree courses and have accessed a full range of top institutions including Russell Group universities.

Sociology can lead to a variety of careers such as:

- Counselling
- Crime scene investigator
- Solicitor
- Human resources officer
- Social worker
- Policy officer
- Social researcher
- Special educational needs coordinator

How this course is assessed

100% Examination; three exams at the end of the course.

Paper 1 - Education, methods in context and sociological theory and methods - 2 hours, 33.3%

Paper 2 - Families and households and beliefs in society - 2 hours, 33.3%

Paper 3 - Crime and deviance and theory and methods - 2 hours, 33.3%

Entry requirements

All our course entry requirements are detailed in the Entry Requirements document located in the admissions section of our website.

Further Reading

The British Sociological Association publish regular articles with sociology themed content and allow students to watch online academic lectures. They also have an online resource library for students carrying out research in Sociology.

<https://www.britisoc.co.uk/>

Student Profile:



Before Sixth Form, Nadia was a student at Bingley Grammar School. At Dixons Sixth Form, she studies A levels in Sociology, Law and English Literature.

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I've enjoyed learning the different theories in Sociology and about the way our society works as well as how people have explored it and studied it. I am exploring university courses for sociology and criminology which link to my experience in A-level Sociology. I hope to eventually do a masters in Human Rights which will open many career avenues.

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