



Sociology (A Level)

What will the course involve?

The **AQA A level** Sociology course is designed to introduce students to sociological theories, perspectives and methods, which means trying to understand how and why society and societies work. It is a two year linear course, with no coursework. Sociology is the science or study of human society. Sociology attempts to answer questions about why people choose to live or act in particular ways. Sociology looks at how people's behaviour is influenced by their different life circumstances: their families, schooling, the rules within society, work and the mass media; sociology focuses on looking at social behaviour; what people do rather than how they might think. For example, a sociologist might be employed by a major company to research people's buying habits before the launch of a new product; or they might look at patterns of crime across the country for the government. Basically, there is no area of 'social-life' that sociology has not looked at!

Sociology is accepted by most Universities including Oxbridge and is also a good gateway for more vocational courses; it is a growing area. Sociology is a really engaging subject for those who are interested in other people, who like to ask questions, who are interested in current affairs and have an interest in the changing social world.

The examined topics covered throughout the course are: education theory and research methods, Crime and Deviance, theory and research methods, the family and beliefs in society.

The topics are interesting and relevant to modern life. You will gain knowledge and insight into areas of life that may well prove useful in your future; whether that be going to university or a career working with people. Former Sociology students include Michelle Obama, Martin Luther King, Robin Williams, Jeremy Kyle, fat boy slim and James Blunt!

How will I be assessed?

You will be assessed by three 2 hour examinations in the summer term (usually from early June) in the second year of your course. The examinations are split into topic areas as follows: paper 1 –education and research methods, paper 2 – Topics in sociology: the family and the mass media, paper 3 – Crime and deviance with theory and methods. All papers are equally weighted.

What skills will I develop?

Sociology is an excellent subject to choose at A level. Within sociology, you will develop the skills of critical thinking because you will be expected to challenge accepted ideas by looking at the context in which things are written. You will strengthen your ability to think and write clearly, to present arguments that require a 'chain of reasoning'. Sociology enables you to develop your own thinking skills and self –reflection. Sociology develops academic skills within students, but also can help them develop their own personal qualities of understanding, listening and participation. You should become more organised in your written work and thinking skills.



Where can the study of Sociology lead?

People who study sociology go on to a variety of careers: social work, nursing, personnel management, law, journalism, the police, teaching, sports, and health or even stand-up comedy! Whatever you choose to do in the future a qualification in Sociology is a really useful one. Sociology is a respected subject at university including Oxbridge. People who study Sociology develop an insight into the world around them and develop an understanding of why people may behave the way they do. For example when studying concepts such as social inequality, educational outcomes or the criminal justice system you may develop more awareness and become more empathetic to those around you.

Students who study A level Sociology often do so in a variety of combinations: Sociology, Psychology and a Science or Sociology, English and History or Sociology, Health and Social care, R.E.

Where can I get more information?

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