

Sociology

Examination Board: AQA

Qualification: A level

Teacher Contact: Mr Fenwick

Entry Requirements: A grade 5 or above in either English Literature or a humanities subject. Students must have met the entrance requirements for the Sixth form.

What will I study?

Sociology is the study of human societies, in all sorts of contexts. It is a very broad discipline. It is classed as a social science. In Sociology there are a lot of theories that you have to learn and understand. You also have to learn how to apply them and criticise them. Once the main theories are understood (Feminist, Marxist, Functionalist, New Right, etc.) we apply them to the different topics. You will also study different ways of doing research and how to analyse results. You will look at advertisements and news stories in a completely new way! It is a very interesting subject and a lot of the theories and studies do have a common-sense factor behind them. Sociology is a mainly essay-based subject so be expected to write many, although they do not always have to be very long. You will also be expected to do your own research and keep up to date with current affairs.

The first year course is comprised of two units:

Unit 1: Families and Households

This unit examines the role of the family in society and examines how family life has changed over the past century.

Unit 2: Education and Sociological Methods

This unit looks at the purpose of education and examines the factors that contribute to the academic success of a student.

The second year course is also comprised of two units:

Unit 3: Beliefs in Society

This unit looks at the role of religion and sects and cults in society.

Unit 4: Crime and Deviance

This unit examines reasons why people are deviant and commit crimes.

How will I be assessed?

There are two unit examinations in Year 12 which are externally assessed, with a paper on each of the topics. In Year 13 there are also two externally assessed unit examinations.

Am I suited to this course?

You would be well-suited to studying Sociology at A level if you:

- have an interest in people and the way we are shaped by the world around us
- have an interest in how societies change and develop over time
- are willing to take on board new ideas and ways of thinking
- want to develop the way you organise and present information, ideas and arguments
- want to find out how society works
- enjoy testing theories to find out if they are true.

What other subjects does it complement?

Sociology complements a number of other subjects, but particularly History, Psychology, Law, Film Studies, Geography and the Natural Sciences.

Where can it lead?

Sociology is an essential part of many higher education courses including Law, Medicine, Social Work, Criminology, Health and Social Care and Teacher Training. It provides a good background for careers in publishing, civil service, law, education and social work.