

WHY CHOOSE SOCIOLOGY?

“Sociology is the study of human society and human social behaviour”. Sociologists strive to go beneath the surface of what seems obvious, common sense or natural, to discover and understand what is really happening.

The fascination of sociology lies in the fact that it makes us see in a new light the very world in which we live ... It can be said that the first wisdom of sociology is this: “things are not what they seem” (**Berger**).

Sociologists are interested in a wide range of social issues, such as whether prisons really deter criminals, why levels of inequality are increasing, why boys are underachieving at school, whether families are less important nowadays and if social class differences have disappeared. If any of these issues interest you, then you are bound to be fascinated by Sociology and may wish to find out more.

HOW USEFUL WILL IT BE?

A Sociology qualification is regarded as a respected academic A Level and is acceptable and valuable when applying for courses in Higher Education or for direct entry into a job. It is especially helpful for those wishing to pursue careers in Social and Welfare Work, Journalism, Nursing, the Police, the Probation Service, Human Resources, Research Organisations or teaching. It is also beneficial to those studying social sciences and many other courses at College or University, especially Sociology, Criminology and Social Policy.

WHAT WILL YOU NEED TO DO TO BE SUCCESSFUL?

To study this subject you will need a minimum of five GCSE subjects at Grade A*-C. A Grade C GCSE English Language is necessary as comprehension and essay writing skills are particularly important. You must be willing to undertake plenty of background reading and to read a quality newspaper regularly. Keeping up-to-date with relevant sociological matters is also necessary so watching the news and some editions of TV programmes such as Panorama can add to your knowledge of issues in present day society.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY ON THE COURSE IN YEAR 12 – THE AS LEVEL?

At AS, candidates studying this specification will acquire knowledge of contemporary social processes and social changes. Candidates will be encouraged to develop their own sociological awareness through active engagement with the contemporary social world. These will be examined through the following units:

Unit 1: Culture and Identity.

Unit 2: Education and Sociological Methods.



SIXTH FORM

HOW IS THE AS LEVEL ASSESSED?

Unit 1: 1hr examination. Candidates choose one topic from three and answer one question. Each question consists of five parts.

Unit 2: 2hr examination. Candidates answer:

- (a) One question on the chosen topic: Education. This question consists of four data response questions.
- (b) One question on sociological research methods in the context of education. This question consists of one part.
- (c) In addition, candidates answer one question on free-standing research methods. This question consists of four data response questions.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY ON THE COURSE IN YEAR 13 – THE A2 LEVEL?

At A2, candidates will continue to focus on contemporary society but they should demonstrate a wider range and greater depth of knowledge and understanding and more highly developed skills of application, analysis, interpretation and evaluation.

In Year 13 these will be studied through the following units:

Unit 3: Mass media.

Unit 4: Crime and Deviance & Theory and Methods.

HOW IS THE A2 LEVEL ASSESSED?

Unit 3: 1hr 30min examination. Candidates answer one compulsory question and one essay question from a choice of two.

Unit 4: 2hrs examination – one three-part synoptic question. In this candidates have to answer:

- (a) One question on crime and deviance. This question consists of two parts.
- (b) One question on sociological research methods in the context of the crime and deviance topic.
- (c) In addition, candidates answer one question on theory and methods. This question consists of one essay.

HOW MUCH TIME WILL YOU HAVE TO SPEND ON PRIVATE STUDY/RESEARCH?

AS Level: at least 4 hours per week

A2 Level: at least 5 hours per week