

GET READY TO STUDY SOCIOLOGY

If you are planning to study Sociology with us in September, please review this document and complete the required activities.

Please bring the completed activities with you at induction.

What specification will I study?

We study the AQA specification for A Level Sociology

Here is the link to the specification: [AS and A-level Sociology Specifications for first teaching in 2015](#). Alternatively, you can scan the QR code.



How many lessons will I have a week?

You will have four lessons per week for Sociology. These lessons will include a blend of teacher-led explanations, structured discussion and debate, independent study tasks, and opportunities to apply sociological theories to real-world situations. This combination helps you develop the analytical and evaluative skills needed to understand how society is organised and how social structures influence people's lives.

Who can I contact if I have a question about this subject?

If you have any questions, please contact the Curriculum Leader for Psychology and Sociology, **Rebecca Thompson**, at r.thompson@barnsley.ac.uk.

What subjects go well with Sociology?

Sociology pairs well with several subjects because it sits at the heart of the social sciences and helps you explore how society is structured and how people's lives are shaped by wider social forces. Popular subject combinations with Sociology include Politics, Religion, Philosophy and Ethics, English, History, Psychology, and Criminology.

What grades should I have?

We require applicants for the A Level programme to have a GCSE point score mean average of 5 or above. This must include a grade 5 or higher in English Language and in a humanities subject, such as Geography, History, or Religious Studies.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Paper 1: Education with Theory and Methods
Education Methods in Context Theory and Methods
Paper 2: Topics in Sociology
Culture and Identity The Media
Paper 3: Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods
Crime and Deviance Theory and Methods

WHAT WILL I NEED?

To study the course, you will need the following equipment:

- A folder with dividers
- Lined paper
- Pens and pencils
- Highlighters
- Whiteboard pens (non-permanent)

There are textbooks that can be bought for AQA A Level Sociology however, please wait to buy these as we will go through these during induction.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

A Level Sociology is assessed through external examinations at the end of the second year. You will take three exams, each lasting two hours:

- **Paper 1:** Education with Theory and Methods
- **Paper 2:** Topics in Sociology
- **Paper 3:** Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods

INDUCTION TASK

Please complete the following activities and bring them to your first Sociology lesson.

You may either type your answers and print them or write them by hand on A4 lined paper. Whichever option you choose, you **must bring a physical copy to your first lesson.**

Please read the instructions carefully and complete all activities. If you have any questions, email r.thompson@barnsley.ac.uk.

Activity One: Key Terms in Sociology

Research the following key terms and explain what it means in your own words. By researching and answering the questions, you will build a basic understanding of how individuals learn to behave and fit into society.

- What is sociology?
- What are norms?
- What are values?
- What is culture?
- What is socialisation?
- What is primary socialisation?
- What is secondary socialisation?
- What are some examples of agencies of socialisation?

Watch the following video for an introduction into Sociology

Link: [What Is Sociology?: Crash Course Sociology #1](#)



Activity Two: Key Perspectives in Sociology

During your A Level Sociology course, you will study several major sociological perspectives. Use the internet to research each perspective and answer the questions below.

The following link will take you to videos which will help you link: [Introduction to A-level Sociology Topic Videos | Collections | Sociology | tutor2u](#). Alternatively, scan the QR code.



1) Functionalism

- What are the main ideas behind Functionalism?
- How do Functionalists view society?
- What is meant by “value consensus”?
- What role do social institutions (e.g., family, education) play in maintaining social order?
- How do Functionalists explain social change?

2) Marxism

- What are the main ideas behind Marxism?
- What is the difference between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat?
- What do Marxists mean by “capitalism”?
- How do Marxists explain inequality?
- What is meant by “ideology” in Marxist theory?
- How do Marxists believe social change occurs?

3) Feminism

- What are the main ideas behind Feminism?
- What is patriarchy?
- How do Feminists explain gender inequality?
- What are the differences between Liberal, Marxist, Radical, and Intersectional Feminism?
- How do Feminists believe society can become more equal?

4) Interactionism

- What are the main ideas behind Interactionism?
- What is meant by “micro-level” sociology?
- What is labelling theory?
- How do Interactionists explain identity and behaviour?
- What is the “self-fulfilling prophecy”?

5) Postmodernism

- What are the main ideas behind Postmodernism?
- What do Postmodernists mean by a “fragmented” society?
- How do Postmodernists view identity?
- Why do Postmodernists argue that traditional theories (e.g., Marxism, Functionalism) are outdated?
- What role do media and consumer culture play in shaping society?

6) New Right

- What are the main ideas behind the New Right?
- How does the New Right view the family?
- What are their views on welfare and social policy?
- How do New Right thinkers explain social problems?
- How does the New Right differ from Functionalism?

Activity Three: Theoretical frameworks

You need to research the main sociological theoretical frameworks that explain how society works. Each perspective looks at human behaviour in a different way. Read each set of questions and find clear answers that help you understand what the theoretical framework is and how it explains society.

As you work, try to link each sociological perspective to its wider framework. For example, **Marxism is a structural theory**, so it fits under the structuralist theory. Making these links will help you see how the theories connect.

Structuralism

- What does it mean when we say a sociological perspective is *structuralist*?
- Which sociological perspectives are examples of structuralism?

Social Action Theory

- What is Social Action theory?
- Which sociological perspectives are examples of social action theory?

Consensus Theories

- What is a consensus theory?
- Which sociological perspectives are examples of consensus theories?

Conflict Theories

- What is a conflict theory?
- Which sociological perspectives are examples of conflict theories?