



A LEVEL Sociology AQA

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW OR BE ABLE TO DO BEFORE TAKING THIS COURSE?

The study of Sociology is the study of people in society – their lives, opportunities, beliefs and behaviour. It looks especially at how people's lives are often influenced by such factors as their age, gender, ethnicity and/or class background. Some examples of this are given in the topics outlined below.

Sociology involves the analysis and presentation of material in written and, occasionally, in statistical form. Students should, therefore, be competent in English Language (at least a grade 5 at GCSE) and interested in Humanities.

Ideally, students opting for Sociology at Advanced Level should also have an interest in the world around them: observing people, keeping up with the news and watching relevant documentaries on TV all help.

WHAT WILL I LEARN ON THIS ADVANCED GCE COURSE?

Sociology is organised around three modular units.

A Level

Unit 1 – Education with Theory and Methods (Written examination 2 hours).

Issues to be examined include: how class, gender and ethnicity influence educational achievement rates, and the relationship between schooling and the world of work.

Unit 2 – Topics in Sociology (Written examination 2 hours).

Students will study two topics. Families and Households examines the changes in the way people live and asks questions like the following: Why do more people live on their own? Is the family in decline? What is happening to the divorce rate and why? Are men and women more equal than they used to be? Beliefs in Society explores the role of religion and other belief systems in society, including the way religion can exert a positive influence as well as causing social conflict.

Unit 3 – Crime & Deviance with Theory and Methods (Written examination 2 hours).

The topic of Crime and Deviance covers debates about the changing rate of crime, why the typical offender is young and male, how the mass media report crime and globalisation has changed its nature.

Like any good A Level, Sociology can be taken as an indicator of general academic ability. Indeed, its academic credentials are reinforced by the elite Russell Group of universities' categorisation of A Level subjects. Up to twenty subjects were on a list defined as those from which it is recommended that students only choose one. Sociology had no such suggested limitation and, we suggest that, as a specific body of knowledge and skills, it works well in a range of combinations. It is a good counterbalance to those opting for sciences at A Level and would be especially recommended for those wishing, later, to study science in some medical or environmental context. Equally, it is very closely related in subject matter with aspects of politics, history, geography and philosophy whilst the skills required overlap with those in English Literature or similar 'literary' subjects.

Contact: osmith@ashlyns.herts.sch.uk