

What are the aims and intentions of this curriculum?

The first year of the two-year A-level course is the AS course, designed to introduce students to work at a new level, making the transition from GCSE studies. For many students, the two-year A-level course will lead to higher education, and the AS course is the first stage of that progression. In sociology the aim is to introduce students to a range of explanations for behaviour in society. They will develop their ability to think critically through discussion of the body of research done by sociologists, understanding that there are seldom 'simple answers'. This is a research-based subject, so students will discuss ways in which different research methods lead to different conclusions.

The intention is that students will complete the course with a good understanding of key sociological issues in relation to the contemporary UK. AS Sociology will introduce them to debates regarding social inequalities, and they will consider the interaction of social class background and gender as factors that impact on life chances. By the end of the year they will understand how sociological ideas and arguments can be applied to a range of situations: sociology is everywhere as we study the interaction between individual and society, debating the extent to which we are shaped by the world we live in. For OCR Sociology the AS course includes two units: **Socialisation, Culture and Identity** (Unit 1) and **Researching and Understanding Social Inequalities** (Unit 2).

Unit 1 considers a range of social influences (family, peer group, media) and the importance of studying these influences in context. We begin with the key question 'Why am I?' and the rest of the course provides possible answers. There will be an in-depth study of the family and how and why families have changed in recent decades, for example changing roles and relationships within the family: why are men reluctant to share housework?

Unit 2 introduces students to research methodologies, and they will have opportunities to conduct their own research. They will also be introduced to work on social inequalities and consider the extent to which, for example, women are disadvantaged by a glass ceiling in the workplace.

Term	Topics	Knowledge and key terms	Skills developed	Assessment
Autumn 1	<p>Introduction to sociology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The individual in society: 'who am I?' Thinking sociologically: 'A Martian sends a postcard home' Social differentiation and stratification: to what extent are people in society 'equal'? <p>Introduction to families and relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is a family? What is a household? Are all families the same? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socialisation; primary and secondary Gender socialisation Agencies of socialisation: family, school, and peer group Culture as 'a way of life' Norms and values Subcultures Deviance Seven-Up: a case study of primary socialisation and social class – social diversity Families and households Family diversity: social class (following on from Seven-Up) and ethnicity 	<p>Contested knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From the outset students should start to understand how to select evidence when forming an argument, eg to what extent are people in society equal? <p>Revision and retrieval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lessons start with a topical new story that can be used to stimulate discussion of work done, a way in to recalling content of earlier lessons – how successful is ongoing revision? <p>Writing for assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will start to understand assessment requirements for exam responses, eg four-, six-, and eight-mark questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first half-term is devoted to knowledge and understanding of key terms as required for exam responses Students will be assessed on their ability to develop their writing Simple four- and six-mark questions will feature in the suitability test at the end of September: students will demonstrate progress made thus far

<p>Autumn 2</p>	<p>Introduction to sociological theory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different perspectives: functionalism, Marxism, feminism <p>Introduction to families and relationships continued</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classification of families • The family and social change • Perspectives on the family • Roles and relationships within the family <p>Preparation for the November Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One examination paper with material taken from different parts of the course 	<p>Sociological theory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus theories and conflict theories • Functionalism: organic analogy and value consensus, eg Durkheim and Parsons • Marxism: class conflict and exploitation • Bowles & Gintis (correspondence principle) • Bourdieu (three forms of capital) • Feminism: patriarchy • De Beauvoir, Greer, and Oakley: differences between first- and second-wave feminisms • Families • Perspectives as above • Roles and relationships: different explanations of gender relations and social change (eg sexual division of labour) 	<p>Contested knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding that sociological explanations are informed by theories that offer generalisations <p>Revision and retrieval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the introduction of theory students can see that that key terms are not innocent descriptions • An opportunity to go back to work done since the beginning of the course: revision in light of advanced knowledge <p>Examination preparation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are introduced to the need to move on from revision when preparing for formal examinations 	<p>November Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One paper: one hour 30 minutes • Based on work done and issues arising: specific strengths and weaknesses to be investigated in formal examination conditions
<p>Spring 1</p>	<p>Researching social inequalities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative vs quantitative approaches <p>Preparation for the February Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Again for AS students one examination paper with material taken from those topics that are most appropriate at the time 	<p>Researching social inequalities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microsociology and, eg, ethnography • Macrosociology and, eg, statistical data • Official statistics • Disinterested inquiry and values 	<p>Contested knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding that sociologists have different assumptions about the kind of knowledge they wish to produce • The difference between ‘data collection’ and ‘data production’ <p>Revision and retrieval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on research methods allows students to revisit topics and think about them differently <p>Examination preparation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will hopefully benefit from the experience of November’s exam: how can they prepare better this time? 	

Spring 2	Understanding social inequalities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class inequalities • Gender inequalities 	Inequalities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing work done earlier on different perspectives • Theories now applied to different areas, eg family, education, media, work, leisure (as appropriate) 	Contested knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A better understanding of the assumptions underpinning different perspectives Revision and retrieval <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As with research methods, opportunities to revisit earlier topics with a fresh outlook Examination preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the February Assessment students entered for the May public exams can start to focus on their individualised programmes • All students are given a set of exam preparation notes summarizing the work done on how to learn: an emphasis on the shift from revision to exam preparation with full mark schemes for each question on all sections of both papers 	February Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Either side of half-term? • AS in November, one paper: one hour 30 minutes • Again based on work done and issues arising: specific strengths and weaknesses to be investigated in formal examination conditions
Summer 1	Examination preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two groups of students: those sitting public exams starting in mid-May and those sitting internal end-of-year exams in June/July 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In this short half-term: opportunities to fine-tune understanding of any/all topics • Lessons will be organised round topics that facilitate synopticism • Content TBA 	Revision and retrieval <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More appropriate for students sitting exams in June/July Examination preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More appropriate for students sitting exams in May 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam questions in combination in timed conditions • Sections (eg 40 minutes) then the full paper (one hour 30 minutes)
Summer 2	Preparation for end-of-year examinations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8PLO/01 • 8PLO/02 	TBA	Examination preparation TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two full examination papers • Each paper: one hour 45 minutes