

# Huish Episcopi Academy



**Sociology Course Handbook 2021**

**Sociology vision: Discover,  
Challenge, Understand**

**Teacher: Mr Woodward**

# Welcome to Sociology at Huish Sixth...

And congratulations on your success in gaining a place at Huish Sixth.

This handbook aims to provide you with an introduction to the subject and the facilities and resources available to you.

It includes information on the structure of the course and assessment, study skills and reading lists. We will be using this booklet throughout the course, but especially in the first few weeks, so keep it at the front of your folder.

## What is Sociology?

The 7 billion people on earth are members of a single biological species: Homo sapiens. But there are striking differences among different people in the world. The Chinese wear white at funerals while people in the United Kingdom prefer black. People in England say a watch "runs" while the Spanish say it "walks" and the Germans say it "functions." Most people in England kiss in public, the Chinese kiss only in private; the French kiss publicly twice (once on each cheek), while the Belgians kiss three times (starting on either cheek); the New Zealand Maoris rub noses and, for their part, few Nigerians kiss at all.

The world over, people wear much or little clothing, are peaceful or warlike, enjoy different kinds of art and music and hold different religious beliefs. We may be the same people biologically, but we differ in our tastes, behaviours and beliefs. These differences are called cultural differences. The study of how people live is the discipline of Sociology.

Sociology is the study of how human societies shape the lives of the people who live in them. People make lots of decisions in the course of living every day. But we make these decisions within the context of "society;" our family, school, nation and the larger world. Most sociological research is regarding the Western world, which is what your A Level course focuses on.

*Are you curious about why things are as they are?*

*Do you want to make the world a better place?*

*Are you a people watcher who enjoys seeing what others do and how they react to various situations?*

*Do you enjoy providing a 'for' and 'against' argument in debates?*

If you answered "yes" to most of these questions, you may have what it takes to become a sociologist!

## What can I do with an A Level in Sociology?

You will study topics such as Family, Education, Crime, Mass Media and Sociological Theory and Methods. We look at exciting social problems and issues such as:

- How does social class affect achievement at school?
- What do feminist say about the role of women in the family?
- Why do people commit crime?
- Does violence in the media lead to violence in society?

Your A level in Sociology will equip you with many skills that you can use in other subjects and in other areas of your life. Most degree courses include some Sociology, e.g:

*Medicine & Nursing – the Sociology of Health*

*History – Social and economic history*

*English – the social context of novels, feminism in the novel, the development of language*

There are also many degree courses where an A level in Sociology will be really helpful, if not essential:

Sociology

Social Policy and Administration

Criminology

Cultural Studies

Law

American Studies

Psychology

Anthropology

Sociology also opens doors to many areas of employment:

Social researcher, Counsellor, Community worker, Probation Officer, Social worker, Charity fundraiser, Primary or Secondary school teacher, Further Education Lecturer, Retail Manager, Journalist, TV researcher, Political researcher, Police Officer or even an agent for MI5!

## What is the Huish Episcopi A Level Sociology vision?

The vision or aims of the sociology department were devised with year 13 pupils. They wanted our three objectives of the department to consist of:

<b>Discover</b>	<b>Discover</b> sociological theory and research
<b>Challenge</b>	Be <b>Challenged</b> to evaluate sociological theory and devise arguments 'for' or 'against' an idea.
<b>Understand</b>	To <b>Understand</b> content so that it can be



	applied to the demands of the AQA Sociology syllabus.
--	---

## Aims and objectives of the AQA Sociology A Level course

By studying Sociology you will:

- Develop a knowledge and understanding of the way society works and of how the members of society interact with each other;
- Use sociological theories to explain social problems and issues
- Develop an understanding of the research methods used by sociologists to find out about the social world;
- Reflect on your own experience of the social world in which we live;
- Develop writing and debating skills which you will be able to use in other subjects and in your wider social life;
- Be able to apply your knowledge of sociology to everyday life and, as a result, become more aware of the many ways in which we are all different.

## Examination structure

Paper 1: Education with Theory and Methods	Paper 2: a) Family and Households b) Mass Media	Paper 3: Crime with Theory and Methods
<p><b>Assessed</b></p> <p>2 hour written exam 80 marks 33.3% of A-level</p> <p><b>Questions</b></p> <p>Education: short answer and extended writing, 50 marks</p> <p>Methods in Context: extended writing, 20 marks</p> <p>Theory and Methods: extended writing, 10 marks</p>	<p><b>Assessed</b></p> <p>2 hour written exam 80 marks 33.3% of A-level</p> <p><b>Questions</b></p> <p>Family and Households: extended writing, 40 marks</p> <p>Mass media: extended writing, 40 marks</p>	<p><b>Assessed</b></p> <p>2 hour written exam 80 marks 33.3% of A-level</p> <p><b>Questions</b></p> <p>Crime and Deviance: short answer and extended writing, 50 marks</p> <p>Theory and Methods: extended writing, 30 marks</p>

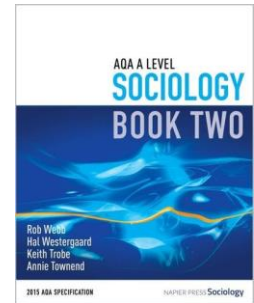
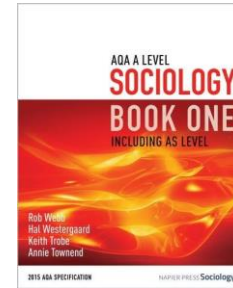
## Main textbooks

Year 12: AQA A Level Sociology Book One Including AS Level.  
By Webb, Westergaard, Trobe, Townend.

Year 13: AQA A Level Sociology: Book 2.  
By Webb, Westergaard, Trobe, Townend.

It is suggested that students buy these textbooks from the school or other book shops.

## Assessment objectives



Sociology has become very skills orientated. Examiners emphasise the importance of Sociology students developing key skills. Your ability to demonstrate these skills will determine your grade in the examinations. **The skills are called Assessment Objectives.**

Assessment Objective 1 (AO1)	Assessment Objective 2 (AO2)	Assessment Objective 3 (AO3)
<p>The examiners are looking for your ability to demonstrate <b>KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING</b> of sociological theories, studies, concepts and methods of enquiry.</p> <p>To gain A01 marks, you need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Recall the names of sociologists</li> <li>○ Use sociologists' theories</li> <li>○ Use sociological concepts – key ideas and be able to define them</li> <li>○ Use evidence to support theories</li> <li>○ Understand the methods used to gain evidence to support theories and reasons for selecting them</li> <li>○ Be able to communicate the above in a coherent argument, selecting relevant information to answer the question set.</li> </ul>	<p>Here, examiners are looking for you to demonstrate your skills to <b>APPLY</b> sociological theories, concepts, evidence and research methods to a range of issues.</p> <p>You must present your arguments in an organised, coherent manner, well communicated, displaying an awareness of theoretical debates in sociology using evidence to support and sustain arguments and conclusions.</p>	<p>Here, examiners are looking for you to <b>ANALYSE</b> and <b>EVALUATE</b> sociological theories, concepts, evidence and research methods in order to present arguments, make judgements and draw conclusions.</p> <p>For this assessment objective you will need to show that you can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Analyse the information and break it down into its constituent parts – looking for areas neglected and assumptions made, logical coherence in the argument</li> <li>○ Evaluate, i.e. weigh up the strengths and weaknesses of approaches, take nothing for granted, offer competing sociological arguments.</li> <li>○ Ask how evidence was gathered, when it was gathered, i.e. can it explain the present? Can it be checked/repeated? Is the approach theoretically biased? Have ethnicity, class and gender been taken into account?</li> <li>○ What are the good 'bits'? What are the bad 'bits'? Take the role of the judge and jury – hear the competing claims, consider the evidence, decide which is the most convincing, explain why, give you verdict justifying your choice.</li> </ul>

## Assessment of your understanding in lessons

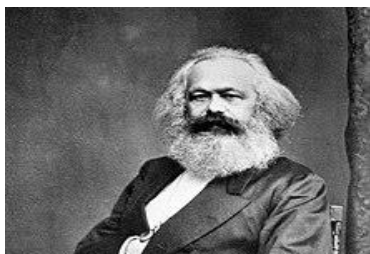
Assessment will be used as a way of helping you to improve, rather than just a method of indicating how you are doing. So, before completing each assessment activity, you will need to look at your last piece of feedback and think about the targets you were given so you do not make the same mistakes again.

During lessons, I will assess your understanding and progress through extended writing, group work, question and answer sessions, whiteboard activities, post-it note activities and practice exam questions.

You will also be expected to assess your own work and that of your peers. Peer-marking is an excellent way of learning what the examiner expects of you and it will be a regular feature of the course.

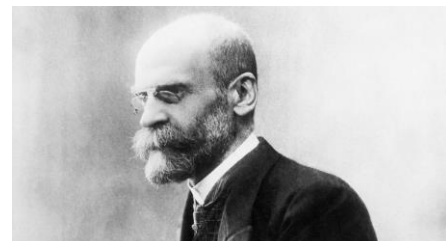
## Tips for your studies

Teaching and Learning styles: Sociology involves a variety of teaching and learning styles. For example, we will use discussion and debate, videos, group work, question and answer sessions and student presentations. Be proactive in all aspects of our lessons so that you make progress in your learning.



My name is Karl Marx  
and I am a Marxist  
sociologist

These two sociologists had very different views about society. During our lessons, we can use their arguments against each other. I call this '50 cent'. Like in a rap battle, something may be said and then the other rapper must respond. This is what you will have to do with competing sociological arguments. It is like a rap battle on the page.



My name is Emile Durkheim  
and I am a functionalist  
sociologist

Study guidelines: Sociology will require a lot of commitment from you. It is recommended that you spend 5 hours a week outside lesson time on Sociology private study. Clearly the demands will vary according to how much work is set. It is vital that you develop good study habits at this stage and are proactive in making revision material as you go through the course, so that you are well prepared for the examinations.

Organization: This is the key to being a successful student. How to be organized:

- a) Buy a ring binder to keep all your work in.
- b) Buy dividers so you can separate different sections of your work.
- c) Date all your notes and handouts to keep them in order
- d) Take responsibility for catching up if you miss a lesson. I will email you the work missed but you need to ensure you complete all the activities and understand the information.
- e) Ensure you meet homework deadlines. My homework usually corresponds to something that I want to use in the lesson so you will be at a disadvantage if you do not have the information.

Reading: On any Sociology course, it is useful to undertake wider reading to extend your knowledge and understanding. This includes textbooks, magazine articles, Sociology Review, newspapers, etc. An important skill in Sociology is the ability to pick out the most relevant bits. You should keep up to date with Current Affairs – read the paper, watch the news and bring in any interesting articles you find.

## Wider reading list and useful websites

Investigating Families <i>N. Jorgenson</i>	Doing Sociology <i>Harvey &amp; MacDonald</i>	<a href="http://www.sociology.org.uk">www.sociology.org.uk</a>
Families <i>D. Leonard</i>	Research Methods <i>McNeill &amp; Chapman</i> A-Z Sociology handbook <i>Lawson &amp; Garrod</i>	<a href="http://www.s-cool.co.uk">www.s-cool.co.uk</a> – this site has some useful revision summaries but only look at topics from our AQA course
How to do Social Research <i>Dunsmuir &amp; Hood Williams</i>	Readings in Sociology <i>W. Kidd et al</i>	<i>Sociology Review: in the library</i>

## Home learning

As well as setting you directed home work to ensure we meet the demands of the AQA syllabus, you will also have independent study work:

# Independent study - Sociology

## What

- As a sixth former, as well as completing your directed study (every week) you will have to complete independent study activities at longer intervals over the year.
- Independent study will involve researching sociology that is related to the exam specification, but is additional to the information you are provided with in lessons, handouts, and course textbooks.

## Why

- This research will help you to understand the course content, as you will be examining the wider context of sociological theory and research, giving you a deeper insight.
- When writing your UCAS personal statement in year 13, you will need to provide evidence of passion for learning. This cannot be achieved by simply talking about topics on the exam specification. You must show that you have gone above and beyond the requirements of the exam.
- If you continue your education at university, you will need to have excellent independent learning skills. Independent study will help you to develop those skills so you are confident when you leave us.

## How

Independent study is much freer than directed study. Follow the general steps below, however you can take it as far as you want. Impress me!

### **1) Find and read a stimulus related to sociology. You can use:**

- Books (fiction or non-fiction)
- Magazine articles: Sociology Review (aimed at A Level students)

- Newspaper articles (reputable newspapers are best e.g. The Independent/The Guardian/The Telegraph/The Times)
- Radio programmes & podcasts (e.g. on radio 4)
- TV shows (documentaries such as “Educating Cardiff”, “Benefits Street” or “Panorama” are best)
- Paintings
- Poems
- Sociological research

- 2) **Examine / carefully read / watch / listen to the stimuli so that you gain a good understanding of it.** You might have to do this more than once. You might need to take rough notes as you do this.
- 3) **Make a resource that explains the key ideas from your stimulus.** Make sure you also explain how it links to a particular topic, theory or study from the course. Use your own words – no plagiarism! (copying directly from the resource) Your resource could be in the form of the suggestions below. Ensure you vary your choice of presentation style:
- A poster
  - A summary
  - A poem
  - A picture / storyboard / cartoon (you will need to include some text / writing also).
  - A podcast or recording.
  - A video
  - A song
- 4) **Present your stimuli to your peers in lesson.** This will be in small groups. Your teacher will tell you when the deadline / presentation day is.

**5) Hand in your stimuli to your teacher.**

### **When**

- You will have a maximum of one or two independent study activities to complete each term.



# #discover, challenge, understand



Family	Education	Crime	Mass media
What do feminist say about the role of women in the family?	How does social class affect achievement at school?	Why are young black men more likely to be stopped and searched than young white men?	Who controls the mass media?
Are experiences in childhood positive or negative?	How does gender affect A Level subject choices?	Why do people commit crime?	Does violence in the media lead to violence in society?

## Your 'bridging the gap' independent study task

#discover, challenge, understand

You need to do the following **by the first lesson of Sociology in September 2021**:

- 1) Choose one question from the table below that you want to find out the answer to.

What are the reasons for an increase in divorce statistics?	Have educational Government policies improved the education system?	What forms of punishment for criminal activity are used in the UK?	How is ethnicity, gender and social class represented in the media?
How can we explain greater diversity in family structures?	What do functionalist sociologists versus Marxist sociologists say about the education system?	How does globalisation affect criminality?	How has 'new media' impacted society?

- 2) Read the instructions on pages 7-8 about independent study and make your resource.
- 3) Bring your resource in to show/read/explain to your classmates on the first lesson of Sociology in September.

***Tip: You should be looking for sociological theory or research rather than common sense ideas.***

**Challenge: Can you evaluate any of the sociological information? Can you provide any 'for' arguments to say the information is correct or any 'against' information to say the information is not accurate?**

**Good luck with your independent study work over the summer holiday!**