

SOCIOLOGY

Exam board: AQA

Assessment methods: 100% examination

Length of exams: 3 x 2 hours

Breakdown of units:

Paper One: Education with Theory and Methods: Divided into three sections, Education, with a short answer question and extended essay; an extended essay on Methods in Context; an extended essay on Theory and Methods

Paper Two: Topics in Sociology: The topics offered will depend on who is teaching the course but should include Culture and Identity or Families and Households as option 1 and Beliefs in Society or The Media as option 2. The paper is divided into two sections corresponding to the two sets of options. Candidates will be required to write an extended essay from each section.

Paper Three: Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods: This paper will require candidates to produce a short answer and write an extended essay on Crime and Deviance plus an extended piece of writing on Theory and Methods.

Topic Content (illustrative details)

Education: The role and purpose of education, including vocational education and training, in contemporary society. Differential educational achievement of social groups by social class, gender and ethnicity in contemporary society. Relationships and processes within schools, with particular reference to teacher/pupil relationships, pupil subcultures, the hidden curriculum, and the organisation of teaching and learning.

Sociological Methods: Quantitative and qualitative methods of research; their strengths and limitations; research design. Sources of data, including questionnaires, interviews, participant and non-participant observation, experiments, documents, and official statistics; the strengths and limitations of these sources. The relationship between positivism, interpretivism and sociological methods; the nature of 'social facts'

Families and Households: The relationship of the family to the social structure and social change, with particular reference to the economy and to state policies. The nature and extent of changes within the family, with reference to gender roles, domestic labour and power relationships. The nature of childhood, and changes in the status of children in the family and society.

Beliefs in Society: Different theories of ideology, science and religion, including both Christian and non-Christian religious traditions. Religious organisations, including cults, sects, denominations, churches and New Age movements, and their relationship to religious and spiritual belief and practice. The significance of religion and religiosity in the contemporary world, including the nature and extent of secularisation in a global context.

Crime and Deviance: Different theories of crime, deviance, social order and social control. The social distribution of crime and deviance by age, ethnicity, gender, locality and social class, including recent patterns and trends in crime. Globalisation and crime in contemporary society; the mass media and crime; green crime; humanrights and state crimes. Crime control, prevention and punishment, victims, and the role of the criminal justice system and other agencies.

Sociological Theory: Consensus, conflict, structural and social action theories. The concepts of modernity and post-modernity in relation to sociological theory. The nature of science and the extent to which sociology can be regarded as scientific. The relationship between theory and methods. Debates about subjectivity, objectivity and value freedom. The relationship between sociology and social policy.

Overlap with other subjects: Students have combined Sociology with a number of subjects and found links between them. These include History, Government and Politics, Media Studies and Philosophy.

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