

# Step up to A-Level Sociology

## What will I study in this course?

A-Level Sociology covers four units of sociological interest; Families and Households, Education, Crime and Deviance and Beliefs in Society.

**Education:** including class/gender/ethnic differences in achievement rates, the significance of educational policy and relationships/processes in schools.

**Families and Households:** including changing gender roles within the family, the nature of childhood and changing demographic trends in the UK.

**Beliefs in Society:** including the rise of terrorism globally, the changing nature of religious movements (including sects and cults) and the influence of ideology in the UK.

**Crime and Deviance:** including the role of surveillance in the UK, victimology and the social distribution of crime in the UK by ethnicity, gender and class.

## What is Sociology?

Sociology is the study of society - how people interact and create social norms in groups. A level Sociology examines social behaviour from a variety of perspectives: how it originates and then develops, as well as the ways people are organised into groups according to distinctions such as class, gender and race.

A level Sociology also looks at the institutions and forces which shape and are shaped by groups within a society, such as the media, religion and education.

A level Sociology has a specific focus on contemporary society (history in action), providing an awareness of the importance of social structure and actions in explaining social forces and issues.

### Some questions A level Sociology covers include:

- Why do boys underachieve in the education system?
- Why are black people five time more likely to be stopped and searched?
- Why are women more religious when religion oppresses them?

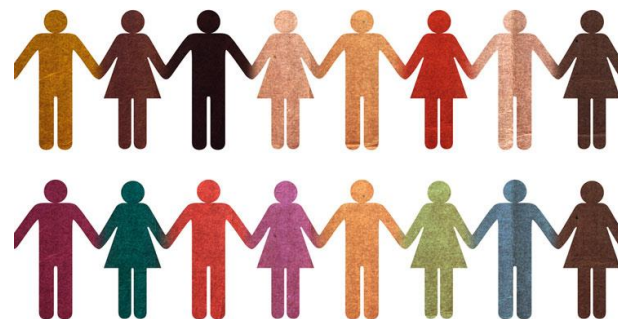
## What skills will this course develop?

You will learn to **listen** to other viewpoints, to **debate** and to come to your own conclusions. From this you will also develop **cross-cultural understanding**, especially regarding racial, ethnic, and gender differences in values, perceptions, and approaches to work.

You will develop your ability to **think critically**, as well as research methods skills like **interpretation and analysis of data**.

You will gain **confidence** in **discussing ideas** and **presenting them to others**.

**What can I go on to study?** This course is ideal preparation for a wide range of subjects at university including Law, Anthropology, Politics, History, Philosophy, Psychology, Marketing and Economics.



# Step up to A-Level Sociology

This is a menu of tasks to help you get ready to study Sociology at A-Level. Try to choose a ‘balanced diet’ of activities each week:, e.g. explore some of the video clips, listen to a radio programme, complete one of the written challenges, read part of one of the suggested books and watch one of the recommended documentaries or TV programmes.



## Video clips

Each of these clips introduces an idea or theme that is relevant to the A-Level course. Write down what questions the clip raises and how you would respond to them.

### How economic inequality harms societies

[https://www.ted.com/talks/richard\\_wilkinson\\_how\\_economic\\_inequality\\_harms\\_societies](https://www.ted.com/talks/richard_wilkinson_how_economic_inequality_harms_societies)

### How we’re priming some kids for college and others for prison

[https://www.ted.com/talks/alice\\_goffman\\_how\\_we\\_re\\_priming\\_some\\_kids\\_for\\_college\\_and\\_others\\_for\\_prison](https://www.ted.com/talks/alice_goffman_how_we_re_priming_some_kids_for_college_and_others_for_prison)

### The real story of McMafia – global crime networks

[https://www.ted.com/talks/misha\\_glenny\\_the\\_real\\_story\\_of\\_mcmafia\\_how\\_global\\_crime\\_networks\\_work](https://www.ted.com/talks/misha_glenny_the_real_story_of_mcmafia_how_global_crime_networks_work)

### The Teenage Brexit Fanclub

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBUxDpOcOoU>

### Charlottesville: Race and Terror

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RIrcB1sAN8I>

### Violence against women – it’s a men’s issue

[https://www.ted.com/talks/jackson\\_katz\\_violence\\_against\\_women\\_it\\_s\\_a\\_men\\_s\\_issue](https://www.ted.com/talks/jackson_katz_violence_against_women_it_s_a_men_s_issue)



## Documentaries

These documentaries will get you thinking even more deeply about sociological ideas. Write down five key ideas from the documentary and a list of questions that you will explore further.

### Louis Theroux (choose what interests you most)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/group/p06k7x37>

### Life and Death Row

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/group/b071jy7p>

### Stacey Dooley Investigates: Russia’s War on Women

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/p05vb22n/stacey-dooley-investigates-russias-war-on-women>



## Radio programmes and podcasts

These challenging programmes are great for making you think hard. These have been chosen to stretch you so don’t worry if you find some parts difficult to understand. Write down what you learned about the topic of each programme. Which opinions do you agree with and why?

**Slow Burn:** follows significant political events such as the Watergate scandal, impeachment of Bill Clinton and murders of the Notorious B.I.G. and Tupac (this in particular links to our Crime and Deviance unit)

<https://tunein.com/podcasts/History-Podcasts/Slow-Burn-p1088539/>

**Reasons to be Cheerful:** Progressive ideas to change the world (with Ed Miliband and Geoff Lloyd). Best sociological episodes are on constructions of masculinity and ‘the fat cat pay gap’.

<https://play.acast.com/s/reasonstobecheerful/2196de7a-19df-4006-af97-b216ebfa16ae>

**Freakonomics:** Loads of great sociological links here. My favourites are ‘Does Hollywood still have a Princess problem?’, ‘Does anyone really know what socialism is?’ and ‘Abortion and Crime, Revisited’

<https://freakonomics.com/archive/>



## Questions to debate

These questions may look simple, but there are no easy answers. Choose a question and try discussing it with somebody else. Then write at least 500 words exploring different possible responses and explaining your own opinion.

**Is institutional racism still a problem in the UK?**

**To what extent does gender shape our life chances?**

**Has society accepted single parenting?**

**Is religion still relevant to contemporary life?**

**Are schools failing boys?**

**To what extent is the individual shaped by society?**



## Books

These books are excellent introductions to themes we study in Sociology. They are all available to buy for less than £5. Write a short summary of a section of the book or a more detailed book review.

**The Establishment** by Owen Jones (£3-£4 pound on ebay). Miss Minns has a copy and can photocopy relevant chapters – just ask.

**The Beauty Myth** by Naomi Wolf (£1-£3 on Amazon bookstore)

**Unjust Rewards** by Polly Toynbee and David Walker (£2-£3 on ebay)

**Living Dolls: The Return of Sexism** by Natasha Walter (£2-£3 on ebay)

**Education and Institutional Racism** by David Gillborn (£5 from ebay)

**Chavs** by Owen Jones (£3-£4 on ebay)



## TV programmes and films

Lots of TV programmes and films are inspired by sociological questions. Here are a few that link to the A-Level course. If you get the chance, watch them and think carefully about the ideas which they explore.

**When They See Us;** available on Netflix.

**The People vs OJ Simpson;** available on Netflix.

**Three Girls;** available on Netflix and iPlayer.

**Unbelievable;** available on Netflix.

**The Great British School Swap;** available on 4OD.

**Child of Our Time;** available on iPlayer.

# Independent learning log

Use this log to keep a record of your preparation work. You can also upload your work to the Step up to A-Level Sociology Google Classroom. Find out more by emailing [Bminns@thequestacademy.org.uk](mailto:Bminns@thequestacademy.org.uk)

[illegible]