

RMGS

Sociology

A Level

What are the aims of the course?

Sociology is a social science which can best be defined as the study of people in groups and the institutions in society.

This course aims to enable students to:

- acquire knowledge and a critical understanding of **contemporary social processes and structures**
- appreciate the significance of **theoretical and conceptual issues** in sociological debate
- understand sociological methodology and a range of **research methods**
- reflect on **their experiences of the social world** in which they live
- develop skills which enhance their ability to **participate more effectively in adult life**

What does it involve?

Sociology is concerned with the study of people in social groups and the institutions in society. Sociologists believe that human behaviour results from the way that people interact with each other. They are therefore interested in what goes on within social groups, from the smallest, such as family or friendship groups, through to large societies.

Sociologists are interested in patterns of behaviour which are learned. They believe that very few behaviours are natural, or biologically determined. They argue that most of the things we do have been taught. We are brought up to behave in certain ways by our parents, teachers and other agencies and structures in society.

In order to examine the different ways of behaving and thinking which are characteristic of different social groups, sociologists undertake social research. They are also concerned with developing theories to explain what they find.

Sociologists like to ask questions like:

- How does society shape our lives?
- In what ways does religion influence people?
- Do rich people exploit poor people?
- Why do some children do better in school than others?
- What factors lead to criminal and deviant behaviour?

Style of teaching and learning

We use a wide range of teaching and learning strategies in Sociology in order to ensure that you are always fully engaged with the subject matter – this is essential if you are to make the most of the unique opportunities that this subject offers. You will partake in discussions, complete your own Sociology definitions of terms, have access to an impressive range of published research and textbooks, receive regular opportunities to perfect your exam technique and clarify your understanding of the work covered both in class and at home.

How is it assessed?

Linear A Level

	Content of examination	Examination style
Paper 1 (33.3% of A Level)	Education with Theory and Methods (Education; Methods in Context; Theory and Methods	2 hour exam, mainly extended writing (essay-style) with a few short answer questions.
Paper 2 (33.3% of A Level)	Families and Households Beliefs in Society	2 hour exam, extended writing (essay-style)
Paper 3 (33.3% of A Level)	Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods	2 hour exam, mainly extended writing (essay-style) with a few short answer questions.

Are there any specific entry requirements?

Students should have a C grade in GCSE English Language, an open mind and a keen interest in current affairs and the world around them.

Why is it a useful qualification?

The value of thinking in a sociological fashion is that the subject raises lots of questions to think about. Sociology is a critical or radical subject; it is about questioning why society is as it is. It is about digging under the surface, looking at what is really going on. Sociology opens up the mind; it asks people to be critical of the world they live in. Sociology asks us to question how society works, and to think again about the many untested assumptions that we might have about the world. You will consider what the world is really like, rather than how you might have been brought up to believe it is like.

You will learn skills such as evaluation of theories, essay technique, data analysis and how to respond to information. It is a discipline accepted by universities and employers alike. Students of Sociology go onto a hugely diverse range of careers, from jobs in the media, such as researchers and journalists, to teaching and lecturing, to Police work, to Social work and health care; the list is endless.