

AQA GCSE Sociology (legacy specification)



Specification and overview of Content

Unit 1/paper 1

Studying society you:

- Be able to describe what sociology is and how it differs from other disciplines including psychology, biological and journalistic explanations of the social world
- Social processes including socialisation (primary and secondary) social control and social change
- Social structures including the family, education and stratification systems
- Social issues, including the causes and consequences of inequality and the sources, distribution and exercise of power and authority
- Methodology; describing the research process, aims, hypothesis, pilot studies, sampling methods, data collection methods, analysing data and evaluation
- You need to be aware of the following methods surveys, questionnaires, interviews, longitudinal studies, direct observation, participant and non-participant observation, primary and secondary sources and have the ability to describe their use, value and limitations
- Understand and be able to explain graphs, charts, diagrams and tables of statistics as well as numerical, written and other visual material
- Plan a simple research project, having regard to the ethical issues which might arise in the course of the research process
- You need to be aware of the use of sociological research in implementing social policies

Families:

- Be able to define 'family' and to explain the presence of diverse forms of the family in Britain today: e.g. married/non-married, couple/lone parent, heterosexual/gay, extended/nuclear and reconstituted.
- You should be aware of cultural diversity, migration and changing working patterns as influences on marriage and the family in Britain.
- You will need to understand that an individual might live in many different family situations during a lifetime; and should be able to explain important changes that are taking place in family structures, eg the increase in single person households.
- Candidates should be able to describe and explain role and authority, relationships, eg between men and women, parent(s) and children, members of the wider family, describe changes in these relationships, and relate them to the factors influencing such changes
- Describe and explain changes in the patterns of fertility and expectations of life and be aware of their significance for individuals, family and society generally
- Describe and explain, at a basic level, different sociological approaches to the family, both positive and critical, including, for example, the functionalist, the feminist explanations
- Describe and explain changes in the pattern of divorce in Britain since 1945 and be aware of the consequence of divorce for family members and structures.
- Candidates should have a basic knowledge of contemporary family-related issues, such as the quality of parenting, the relationship between teenagers and adults, care of the disabled/elderly and arranged marriage.

Education

- describe and explain, at a basic level, the present structure of the education system, and have an
- understanding of related debates such as those about faith schools, testing, special needs, and alternative forms of educational provision
- describe and explain, at a basic level, variations in educational achievement in terms of class, gender and ethnicity.
- identify a range of influences on educational achievement, for example, parental values, peer groups, school ethos, streaming, labelling, teacher expectation, economic circumstances, cultural and ethnic background
- describe and explain at a basic level the various functions that education is expected to fulfil
- today, such as serving the needs of the economy, facilitating social mobility and encouraging
- 'Britishness' and social cohesion.
- Candidates should be aware of education as a political issue and be able, at a basic level, to explain both why education reforms have been made and criticisms of those reforms.

Unit 2/paper 2

Crime and Deviance

- Candidates should be able to:
- Distinguish the concepts of crime and deviance
- Describe the ways in which individuals are encouraged to conform to social rules both formal and informal. Candidates should be aware, at a basic level, of the social distribution of crime, eg class, age, gender, ethnicity and locality.
- Candidates should be able to
- outline different sociological explanations of criminal and deviant behaviour, such as sub-cultural theories, labelling theory and relative deprivation
- assess, at a basic level, the usefulness of official crime figures, and self-report and victim studies, to sociologists
- Describe the significance of criminal and deviant behaviour for victims, communities and society in general.
- Candidates should be aware, at a basic level, of the ways in which criminal and deviant behaviour have generated public debates in recent years.
- Candidates should understand, at a basic level, the nature and significance of social problems such as racism and teenage crime.

Mass Media

- Candidates should be able to identify the mass media and outline the major characteristics of this means of communication.
- Candidates should be aware:
- that there are different views of the nature of the relationship between the mass media and audience and how this may be affected by new technologies
- of the significance of the mass media within the socialisation process and be able to describe, at a basic level, its part, along with other agents of socialisation, in the development of people's political and social identities and views of the media as a source of power for the individuals and organisations which own and/or control it, and be able to describe and explain the exercise of this power through, for example, agenda setting, the creation and dissemination of positive/negative images of particular groups/ organisations, e.g. environmentalists, animal rights activists and lone parents of the potential significance for the distribution of power of technological developments, such as the internet of the ways in which the media may encourage stereotyping, and be able to describe the process of deviancy amplification of contemporary media related issues, such as whether media exposure encourages violence.

Social Inequality

- Candidates should be able to:
- describe and explain the nature of stratification as involving the unequal distribution of wealth, income, status and power
- Describe and use appropriately the major concepts involved in the analysis of stratification, including class, status and life chances
- identify and describe forms of stratification based on class, gender, ethnicity, age and religion
- Describe and explain the ways in which life chances are influenced by differences in wealth, income, power and status; and describe and explain the relationship between such inequalities and social factors such as class, gender and ethnicity.
- Candidates should be able, at a basic level, to describe different sociological explanations of poverty, and be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of such explanations, for example, the cycle of poverty, the culture of poverty, structural explanations, welfare dependency, long-term unemployment and exclusion. Candidates should be aware of continuities in the

- recent pattern of inequality and should have an understanding of major debates about stratification, such as whether modern Britain is becoming a meritocracy/classless society, whether class inequality/division has become less significant than inequalities/divisions based on gender, ethnicity or age.

Skills you will need to develop:

AO1 Recall, select and communicate knowledge and understanding of social structures, processes and issues

AO2 Apply knowledge and understanding in a range of contexts both familiar and unfamiliar

AO3 Select, interpret, analyse and evaluate information from different sources

The exams;

<p>Paper 1; Unit 1 Studying society, Families and Education 1 hour and 30 minutes</p>	<p>Paper 2: Unit 2: Crime and deviance, Inequalities and Mass media 1 hour and 30 minutes You should NOT answer the Power section</p>
<p>You will answer questions ranging in marks from 1-6 for the studying society section (these questions follow a set pattern; see the handout attached)</p> <p>Families and education consist of questions ranging in marks from 1-12; in each section you will answer 1 12 mark essay</p>	<p>Questions range in marks from 1-12; in each section you will answer 1 12 mark essay</p>

Helpful aids: The studying society exam: You have all the past papers in your revision packs provided by Miss Stebbings

Question 4: studying item C describe how journalists may approach the issue of racism in British Schools differently from sociologists (4)

This type of question comes up in every exam so you must be prepared for it.

The way that you answer the question is always the same but the application will change depending on the question. You will always be asked about how sociologists examine something compared to:

- Journalists
- Psychologists
- Biologists

	Explain what they are interested in AND how they do their research	Link to the question in this case racism in schools
Sociologists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct research using methods such as questionnaires/interviews • Interested in findings valid information • They examine socialisation, groups of people and how society affects behaviour 	Sociologists may interview the victims and the bullies to find out about their experiences so they can inform the schools and government about ways to prevent it. They would want to find factual valid and reliable information
Journalists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interested in information that the public will find interesting so will buy newspapers/watch TV • Interested in individuals and personal stories • They over exaggerate information 	Would interview the bullies and victims and over exaggerate the most interesting parts to sell stories, they would do it from a personal point of view and it would lack validity
Biologists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct experiments and look at the body, genes and DNA 	They may examine the genes and DNA of the bullies to see if there is something about their genetic makeup that makes them bully
Psychologists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine the mind, individuals and personalities and conduct experiments 	They may conduct experiments in a lab to find out the effect of bullying, if there are certain personality traits that make a person more likely to be the victim of bullying or to become a bully

Question 5: Explain what sociologists mean by ethnicity (4)

Define the term: Ethnicity refers to a group of people who have a shared heritage, culture and skin colour.

Say why it exists: it exist because people are socialised in different ways in different societies so have different ways of life and norms and values

For example: people will speak different languages, eat different foods, and have different music.

Explain your example: A British Muslim may speak both English Gujarati, may eat a biryani rather than a Sunday roast and would follow Islamic teachings and dress.

4 mark questions; helpful hint:

- ✓ Define the key term
- ✓ Say why it exists
- ✓ Give an example
- ✓ Explain the example

Remember to use key terms

Question 6: Explain one way in which sociological research might help schools and educational authorities designed policies to reduce racist bullying in schools

Example:

- a. Identify what type of data could be gained and what information it could give us
Research could be done to find out;
e.g.: Why people are bullied, if the schools ethos influences racist bullying, find out who the bullies are, find out how the school could stop bullying
- b. Explain how it could help in this case reduce racist bullying
The school would be able to identify why pupils suffer racist bullying and could find out how to stop it. For example if they found that there was institutional racism in school where ethnic minority students were being labelled unfairly and racism was being ignored the school could build a policy to stop this from happening. This could reduce racist bullying
- c. Explain how schools and the government could use it
Sociologists could suggest that more ethnic minority teachers need to be employed so that ethnic minority pupils have role models which would also reduce racist bullying as white pupils would have role models from other ethnic groups so they could look up to them.
- d. Tell me about the type of data that would be gained; e.g. it would be primary so a valid account
The data would be primary so first hand and valid, meaning any policies that are developed would have be developed from the information given by those who have been bullied.

This type of question **always** comes up in this part of the exam paper; just be prepared to apply your knowledge to whatever the question asks.

- a. Identify what type of data could be gained and what information it could give us
- b. Explain how it could help
- c. Explain how schools and the government could use it
- d. Tell me about the type of data that would be gained; e.g. it would be primary so a valid account

In these questions you cannot just say build a policy; you need to think up a policy and tell me how it would work

Question 7- 9 are always about a mini case study

ALL your answers **MUST** apply to it

You have been asked as a sociologists to investigate the extent of racism in schools.

Question 7: identify what sociologists mean by secondary data and explain how useful school racist incident figures would be for your investigation (4)

- a. Define the method/data you have been asked about in this case; secondary data and school racist incident figures
You need to tell me what secondary data is; data that already exists and has been collected by someone else; this is usually in the form of official statistics/statistics. Tell me what school racist incident figures are; a record of the number of racist incidents that happen in each school
- b. Identify 2 strengths; ***remember you are talking about statistics from the school about racist incidents; each school will have a record of this***
- c. Explain why they are useful **for researching racism in school**
- d. Explain why they may not be useful **for researching racism in school**

How to answer question 7: you always need to use this formula

- a. Define the method/data you have been asked about
- b. Identify 2 strengths/weaknesses
- c. Explain why they are useful for this research/issue
- d. Explain why they may not be useful

Question 8: identify on ethical issue that you need to consider and explain why you need consider this ethical issue for your investigation (4)

This question is always on the exam; the application will be different!

- a. Define what ethical issues are; ***ethical issues are what is morally right and wrong in research***
- b. Identify one ethical issue:
Ethical issues include:
 - ✓ ***Consent***
 - ✓ ***Anonymity***
 - ✓ ***Confidentiality***
 - ✓ ***Protection from harm***
- c. Tell me why you need to consider it in your research (remember the mini case study)
In this research it is important to consider..... because.....
- d. Tell me how you would overcome it

How to answer the ethics question:

- a. Define what ethical issues are
- b. Identify one ethical issue
- c. Tell me why you need to consider it in your research (remember the mini case study)
- d. Tell me how you would overcome it

You can overcome this issue in this research by.....

You have been asked as a sociologists to investigate the extent of racism in schools.

Question 9: identify one observational method that you would use and explain why it is better than another possible observational methods for obtaining information for your investigation (6)

- a. Define the method; **observation is a method that involves watching the participants either covertly or overtly**
- b. Identify the data it collects and which sociologist who prefers it; **observation collects qualitative data and is favoured by interpretivists as it is high in validity and allows verstehen to be developed**
- c. Identify 2 strengths; **strengths of OVERT observation are:**
 - ✓ **Limited changes in behavior because they don't know they are being observed /Hawthorne effect.**
 - ✓ **Data collected are high in validity so is truthful because the research has become part of the group**
 - ✓ **can observe people in their natural environment so we get to see how they behave usually**
 - ✓ **Limitation on equipment needed so save money**
 - ✓ **Data collected should be valid and achieve verstehen**
- d. Explain why the strengths make it useful for this investigation;
These strengths are useful when researching racism in schools because.....
- e. Identify another method: overt observation is another method that could be used but it is not as good because:
 - **the participants know they are being observed so may change their behaviour so findings will lack validity**
 - **the Hawthorne effect will be present**
- f. Tell me why your original method is better than this for researching the topic you are asked about
Overt observation is better for researching racism in schools than covert observations because..... this means we will find out valid information about racism so we can stop it.

How to answer question 9 when it asks about a specific method:

Remember to apply your answer to the mini case study

- a. Define the methods
- b. Identify the data it collects and which sociologist who prefers it
- c. Identify 2 strengths
- d. Explain why the strengths make it useful for this investigation
- e. Identify another method
- f. Tell me why your original method is better than this for researching the topic you are asked about

You must talk about the key characteristics of the data; micro/valid/verstehen/rapport etc.

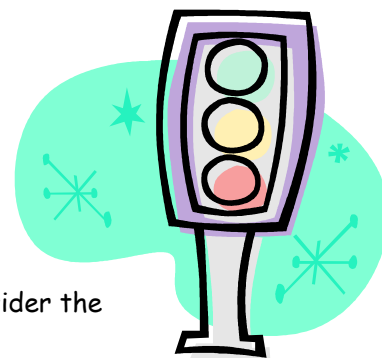
Helpful revision sites and resources:

<http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/subjects/AQA-4190-W-SP-14.PDF> for the specification and past papers

Sociology GCSE for AQA P Wilson and Allan Kidd; Collins; ISBN; 13 9780007310708

Learning check for unit 1: Studying Society, families and education

For each section of unit 1, there will be a list of all the key points you should know in preparation for the examination in summer. You are going to traffic light these checklists so you can evaluate where your strengths and weaknesses are in this subject and also so you can address problem areas in your revision or at workshops with staff. Consider the topics below and tick whether you are;



Red - you do not have a good level of understanding of this;

Amber - you do know about this but do not feel confident to answer an exam question on this;

Green - you understand this topic well

Once you have completed the knowledge check then in the box at the bottom, set yourself some targets of what you are going to improve.

STUDYING SOCIETY

TOPIC	LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING		
	RED	AMBER	GREEN
Be able to explain the difference between a sociological approach and a biological, journalistic or psychological approach			
Be able to describe some of the key features of the social structure of modern Britain			
Be able to describe social processes, such as how individuals are socialised into a society's culture. To be able to define primary and secondary socialisation			
Be able to discuss culture and how it is constantly changing, how we have cultural diversity and subcultures within our society			
Be able to describe the formal and informal agencies of social control - how are individuals controlled in society.			
Be able to discuss social issues, i.e. define power and authority; explain how gender, social class, ethnicity and age can be used as sources of power and inequality.			

To be able to discuss poverty and fear of crime as e.g.'s of social issues. To be able to explain the role of sociological research for informing discussions of social issues.			
Be able to describe the research process i.e how sociologists carry out research (aims, hypothesis, pilot studies, sampling procedures, data collection)			
Be able to explain what primary and secondary sources of data are. How they are used and evaluate the effectiveness of them as sources of data.			
Be able to explain how secondary sources of data are collected; how official statistics and opinion polls are compiled and the strengths and weaknesses of them as a source of data.			
Be able to explain the BSS ethical guidelines and be able to identify possible ethical issues in the research process.			
Be able to explain different sampling techniques and identify the value and limitations of these techniques			
Be able to distinguish between quantitative and qualitative data and the methods that produce them. Be able to explain the values and limitations of these methods			
Be able to describe and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the different forms of observation i.e. direct observation, participant observation, non participant observation			
Be able to make deductions from diagrams, charts, graphs and tables of statistics			

Now you have completed your learning check for studying society you must identify your strengths and weaknesses. Highlight these below and set yourself some targets for this section.

<i>My Strengths</i>	<i>My Weaknesses</i>
<p data-bbox="564 1039 963 1070"><i>My targets for this section are;</i></p> <ol data-bbox="252 1099 277 1352" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="252 1099 277 1131">1.<li data-bbox="252 1211 277 1243">2.<li data-bbox="252 1323 277 1355">3.	

Families

TOPIC	LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING		
	RED	AMBER	GREEN
Be able to define family and household			
Be able to describe different types of families that exist in Britain today i.e. married/non married, couple/lone parent, heterosexual/gay, extended/nuclear and reconstituted			
Be able to describe life cycle diversity in families and the changes that are taking place in families and the effect these have on social trends, i.e. increase in single person households			
Be able to discuss effect of cultural diversity, migration and changing work patterns as influences on marriage and especially the nuclear family in Britain			
Be able to describe and explain the role of the family and contrast both positive and negative views i.e. functionalist and feminist views.			
Be able to describe and explain changes in the patterns of fertility and expectations of life that people have. Be able to explain how both these things are significant for individuals, family and society.			
To be able to describe and explain the changing patterns of marriage, cohabitation, and divorce in Britain, i.e. the causes and the consequences.			
Be able to describe the research process i.e how sociologists carry out research (aims, hypothesis, pilot studies, sampling procedures, data collection)			
Be able to describe and explain changing gender roles within the family; joint and segregated conjugal roles, why are they changing. Also the who has the authority in the family and why.			
Be able to describe and explain the changing patterns in parenting and childcare; the role of grandparents in the family.			
Be able to explain the BSS ethical guidelines and be able to identify possible ethical issues in the research process.			

Be able to explain different sampling techniques and identify the value and limitations of these techniques			
Be able to describe and explain the relationship between research and matters of controversy and debate e.g. quality of parenting, relationship between teenagers and adults, care of the disabled/elderly and arranged marriages.			

Now you have completed your learning check for families you must identify your strengths and weaknesses. Highlight these below and set yourself some targets for this section.

My Strengths	My Weaknesses
<p style="text-align: center;">My targets for this section are;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 	

Education

TOPIC	LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING		
	RED	AMBER	GREEN
Be able to describe and explain the present structure of the education system,			
Be able to describe and explain the functions of education, i.e. secondary socialisation, encouraging 'Britishness' and social cohesion, serving the needs of the economy, facilitating social mobility and social control.			
Be able to explain the values and limitations of different types of schools			
Be able to describe and explain the hidden curriculum.			
Be able to describe and examine the processes of labelling, setting and the development of subcultures			
Be able to describe and explain why there is differential educational achievement, by referring to gender, ethnicity and social class.			
To be able to describe and explain the patterns of differential achievement by considering parental values, peer groups, school ethos, streaming, labelling, teacher expectations, economic circumstances, cultural and ethnic background.			
Be able to describe and explain key policies in education, why they were introduced and what impact they had.			
Be able to describe and explain what research shows us about education today.			

Now you have completed your learning check for Education you must identify your strengths and weaknesses. Highlight these below and set yourself some targets for this section.

My Strengths	My Weaknesses
<p data-bbox="564 1099 963 1133">My targets for this section are;</p> <ol data-bbox="252 1160 280 1473" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="252 1160 280 1193">1.<li data-bbox="252 1301 280 1335">2.<li data-bbox="252 1442 280 1476">3.	

