

GCSE Sociology

Your companion guide to our new specification

First teaching from September 2017

First assessment summer 2019



Find out more at:

aqa.org.uk/sociology

GCSE Sociology is changing

We've created this guide to help clarify how the new GCSE changes from Ofqual and the Department for Education will affect you and your students.

These changes will apply to all exam boards offering GCSE Sociology from September 2017.

All GCSEs will be linear

All exams will take place at the end of the course.

GCSEs will be graded 9–1

All new GCSEs will be graded 9 – 1, rather than A* – G.

Grade 9 will be the highest and equivalent of an A**. Grade 4 will be equivalent to a Grade C and Grade 1 will be equivalent to a Grade G.

Key dates for your diary	
Download our draft specification for GCSE Sociology from aqa.org.uk/sociology	July 2016
Book your place at our free launch event (also available online)	September and October 2016
Download our accredited specification from aqa.org.uk/sociology	Autumn 2016
Download papers and marks schemes from the GCSE Sociology page on our website	Autumn 2016
Start teaching our new GCSE Sociology	September 2017
First exams for the new GCSE Sociology	Summer 2019

For more information about GCSE changes, visit aqa.org.uk

A specification for you and your students

Creating a new GCSE Sociology qualification that meets the needs of you and your students is extremely important to us. That's why we've worked with teachers and subject experts to design a new specification that you'll enjoy teaching as much as your students will enjoy learning.

1. We're confident you'll find our new specification engaging, interesting and practical to teach.
2. Topic changes have been kept to a minimum so you'll be familiar with lots of the content.
3. Discover teaching resources to help you plan your lessons, teach and assess your students.
4. We're also hosting free, 'preparing to teach' and 'specification launch events', to ensure you're fully prepared to teach the new specification in September 2017.

We're here if you need us

Want to speak to someone in the GCSE Sociology team?

T: 01483 477 822

E: sociology@aqa.org.uk

Explore our draft specification:
aqa.org.uk/sociology

Find out more about the new GCSE grades:
aqa.org.uk/exam-changes



Reasons you'll enjoy teaching this new AQA specification

- Studying GCSE Sociology gives students valuable knowledge and understanding of today's society through studying families, education, crime and deviance and social stratification.
- It allows students to develop critical and evaluative skills.
- You can re-use many of your existing resources.

A specification designed for you and your students

Students study key ideas of classical sociologists including Durkheim, Marx and Weber, referencing their view of the world and their contribution to the development of sociology.

Students also learn how to apply various research methods to

different sociological contexts, to gain transferable skills including:

- how to investigate facts to make deductions
- how to develop opinions and new ideas on social issues
- how to analyse and understand the social world.

How the new assessment will work

- 100 % exam based with no non-exam assessment.
- Two equally weighted components of one hour and 45 minutes, worth 100 marks each.
- Our assessment will use a mixture of question styles such as multiple choice, short answer and extended response questions.

Specification at a glance

Paper 1	+	Paper 2
What's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none">The sociology of familiesThe sociology of educationRelevant areas of social theory and methodology		What's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none">The sociology of crime and devianceThe sociology of social stratificationRelevant areas of social theory and methodology
How it's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none">Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes100 marks50 % of GCSE		How it's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none">Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes100 marks50 % of GCSE
Questions <p>Section A has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses.</p> <p>Section B has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses.</p>		Questions <p>Section A has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses.</p> <p>Section B has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses.</p>

Find out more

You can see full details of the new specification at: aqa.org.uk/sociology

Clear assessment and marking you can trust

We know the time and effort that you and your students put in to exams. We also understand how essential it is that the marks we give are fair, reliable and trustworthy.

Getting the right results

Our Centre for Education Research and Practice (CERP) provides statistics and research evidence to ensure we assess and mark your students' work fairly and accurately. We also recruit and train the highest calibre examiners and continually monitor their work.

Clear question papers

Students of all abilities will understand our clearly worded exam papers.

Well structured mark schemes and exemplar materials

Our mark schemes demonstrate how to help your students get the best marks.

Our exemplars use real student answers with comments from senior examiners to explain how our mark schemes are applied.

More exam help and advice available

1. Watch our videos on 'assessment explained' or see 'how we create a specification' at [aqa.org.uk/exams](https://www.aqa.org.uk/exams)
2. Analyse student results with our free Enhanced Results Analysis tool [aqa.org.uk/era](https://www.aqa.org.uk/era)
3. More exam-related help is available [aqa.org.uk/results](https://www.aqa.org.uk/results)

Assessment support

Our exam resources will help you prepare for exams, these include practice questions, tests and revision exercises. If you'd like to speak to us about the new exams, call us on 01483 477 822.

Free resources help you bring the new specification to life

We've worked closely with fantastic teachers to create resources you'll find useful and inspiring.

Each resource will help you with a specific aspect of teaching – either planning your lessons, teaching them, or preparing your students for exams.

Resources include:

- events to introduce you to the new specification and advise on how you can teach it
- schemes of work and lesson plans
- specimen question papers
- mark schemes
- student exemplar materials
- training and professional development opportunities
- digital resources.

Want to improve your teaching skills?

We offer subject specific continued professional development courses throughout the year.

Browse our courses at coursesandevents.aqa.org.uk

To improve your professional skills, search aqa.org.uk/professional-development



Join the conversation
@AQACPD



Here's what The British Sociological Association (BSA) think about our new specification:

"The new course has some exciting developments, bringing sociological theories, theorists and research methods into sharper focus with clear and fascinating connections to real-life practical applications.

It will provide a solid introduction to social relations, social institutions and social divisions: essential grounding for anyone interested in further study or a career path that involves working with people or groups of people, such as management and business, social policy, politics and health occupations."

Judith Mudd, Chief Executive of the British Sociological Association

Keep in touch

To contact our subject team:

T: 01483 477 822

E: sociology@aqa.org.uk

To receive regular updates about
GCSE Sociology register at:
aqa.org.uk/from-2017

**Want to know about our
new specification, launch
meetings and resources?**

aqa.org.uk/sociology

The information in this guide is based on the draft specification submitted to Ofqual in July 2016 and is subject to change. We will publish the accredited specification and specimen question papers as soon as we receive Ofqual accreditation expected in the autumn.

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September 2016 Version 1.1

G00965