

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

AQA

Entry Requirements

Grade 5 in GCSE English Language or English Literature

Assessment

Two year linear A Level

All units assessed through formal written examination.

SOCIOLOGY

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"The difficulty in Sociology is to manage to think in a completely astonished way about things you thought you had always understood" Pierre Bourdieu.

Ever wondered how we developed into the society we are today? How much society shapes our behaviour? How much of our identity and behaviour is shaped by our families, peer groups, education or the media? Why there is inequality in society? If students are curious about why people behave the way they do, then sociology is for them. Sociology is an enjoyable and illuminating subject which helps students to understand the world around them. It trains learners to answer the 'what', 'how' and 'why' questions about human societies. If students enjoy a good debate, listening to alternative viewpoints and learning in small groups then this subject will suit them.

Sociology is fundamentally about the study of social relationships and institutions. It is a diverse subject, ranging from crime to religion, from the family to the state, from the divisions of race and social class to the shared beliefs of a common culture and from social stability to radical change in whole societies. Sociology can help us make sense of the society we live in, and we aim to make its study exciting and illuminating to our students, encouraging both their curiosity and social responsibility.

At Birchwood we study the AQA Sociology A Level specification which is very well respected and known for keeping up to date with sociological developments allowing students to develop a clear and valid understanding of Sociology. Students will learn the fundamentals of the subject and develop skills valued by higher education and employers including critical analysis, independent thinking and research skills.

By the end of Key Stage 5 students will be able to demonstrate a complex understanding of sociological theories for analysing society such as conflict theory (Marxism, feminism), functionalism, interpretivism and research methods. They will be able to analyse and evaluate theories of, and approaches to, the study of behaviour in society, including their practical application to the functioning of institutions in society such as the family, the media, the criminal justice system and education.

Course Requirements

This is an exam-based subject, with high levels of terminology and independent research required to succeed. As it is a new subject which is not taught at GCSE it will be a requirement of students embarking on this course to have a strong academic base in English. Students should also be comfortable interpreting data.

Career and Progression Opportunities

The subject is of particular use for those considering careers in the media, education, social work, nursing or research. Students may go on to take a degree in the subject or in a related area such as Social Policy, Criminology or Social Work. Others find it useful in their applications for a range of other subjects including Business, English, Journalism, Nursing, Teacher Training and History.

Link to specification and useful website:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology/as-level/sociology-7191/specification>