

# *A level Sociology transition pack*

Welcome to A Level Sociology – your journey into understanding society starts here!

Sociology is one of the most fascinating and relevant subjects you can study. It's all about making sense of the world around you. Exploring how society works, why people behave the way they do, and how powerful institutions like the education system, the family, and the criminal justice system shape our lives.

Even before picking up a textbook, you already bring valuable insights to the subject. You've experienced school, family life, and media influence first-hand – which means you're already engaging with many of the core ideas we'll be exploring together. In Sociology, we take those everyday experiences and investigate them through different perspectives, challenging assumptions and asking critical questions.

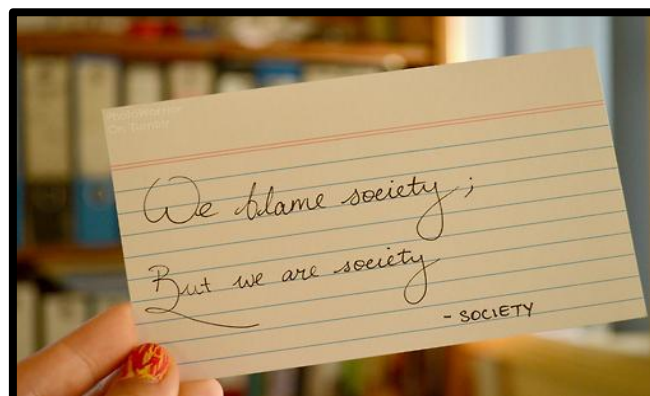
This subject is for curious minds. You'll need to think independently, analyse arguments, and reflect on real-world issues – from inequalities in education to changes in government policy post-Covid-19. You'll learn about classic sociologists from the 19th century, but you'll also explore cutting-edge research on today's most pressing social debates.

Your induction pack includes key tasks designed to introduce you to the kind of thinking and skills you'll need for A Level Sociology. These tasks will be assessed, and completing them to a high standard – alongside passing the baseline assessments in September – is essential to securing your place on the course.

We're excited to welcome you to the world of Sociology – where no topic is off-limits, and every opinion can be explored with evidence and an open mind.

If you get stuck on any of the tasks, feel free to email me or Mr Richards on:

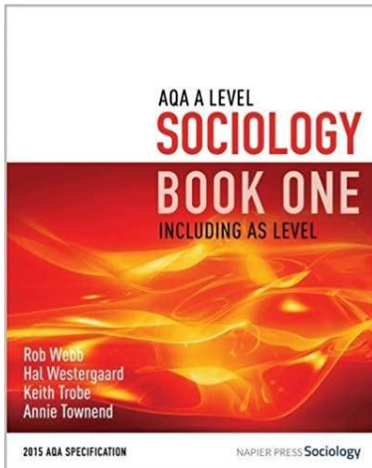
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## Key information for A level sociology

**Specification:** AQA ([www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology](http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology))

### Textbooks:



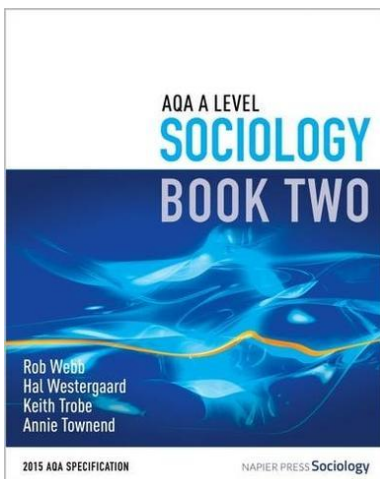
#### Year 1: AQA A level Sociology Book One

by [Rob Webb](#) (Author), [Hal Westergaard](#) (Author), [Keith Trobe](#) (Author), [Annie Townend](#) (Author)

2015 edition

ISBN – 13: 978-0954007911

Approximate price: £24.99



#### Year 2: AQA A level Sociology Book Two

by [Rob Webb](#) (Author), [Hal Westergaard](#) (Author), [Keith Trobe](#) (Author), [Annie Townend](#) (Author)

2015 edition

ISBN – 13: 978-0954007928

Approximate price: £24.99

### Assessment:

**100% exam** – 3 x 2 hour exams at the end of the two year course

### Organisational requirements:

You must ensure that you are fully prepared and organised for every sociology lesson – it is a content heavy course. The expectation is that you bring the following to every sociology lesson:

- Lever arch folder (no small notebooks)
- Dividers
- Normal stationery: pens, pencil, ruler, highlighters etc.
- Lined paper
- Plastic wallets (to store your exam practice papers)
- Sociology textbook (purchasing your own is highly recommended)

## What is Sociology?

Sociology is the study of human societies, human behaviour and human relationships. It was established in the late 1700s (18th century) through writers such as Auguste Comte.

According to George Ritzer (1979) said "Sociology is the study of individuals in a social setting that includes groups, organisations, cultures and societies. Sociologists study the interrelationships between individuals, organisations, cultures and societies."

## What will I study over the next two years?

Module	Summary	Year studied
Education	<p>Students are expected to be familiar with sociological explanations of the following content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the role and functions of the education system, including its relationship to the economy and to class structure</li><li>• differential educational achievement of social groups by social class, gender and ethnicity in contemporary society</li><li>• relationships and processes within schools, with particular reference to teacher/pupil relationships, pupil identities and subcultures, the hidden curriculum, and the organisation of teaching and learning</li><li>• the significance of educational policies, including policies of selection, marketisation and privatisation, and policies to achieve greater equality of opportunity or outcome, for an understanding of the structure, role, impact and experience of and access to education; the impact of globalisation on educational policy.</li></ul>	1
Research Methods	<p>Students must examine the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• quantitative and qualitative methods of research; research design</li><li>• sources of data, including questionnaires, interviews, participant and non-participant observation, experiments, documents and official statistics</li><li>• the distinction between primary and secondary data, and between quantitative and qualitative data</li><li>• the relationship between positivism, interpretivism and sociological methods; the nature of 'social facts'</li><li>• the theoretical, practical and ethical considerations influencing choice of topic, choice of method(s) and the conduct of research</li></ul>	1

Families and Households	<p>Students are expected to be familiar with sociological explanations of the following content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the relationship of the family to the social structure and social change, with particular reference to the economy and to state policies</li> <li>• changing patterns of marriage, cohabitation, separation, divorce, childbearing and the life course, including the sociology of personal life, and the diversity of contemporary family and household structures</li> <li>• gender roles, domestic labour and power relationships within the family in contemporary society</li> <li>• the nature of childhood, and changes in the status of children in the family and society</li> <li>• demographic trends in the United Kingdom since 1900: birth rates, death rates, family size, life expectancy, ageing population, and migration and globalisation.</li> </ul>	1
Theory and methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quantitative and qualitative methods of research; research design</li> <li>• sources of data, including questionnaires, interviews, participant and non-participant observation, experiments, documents and official statistics</li> <li>• the distinction between primary and secondary data, and between quantitative and qualitative data</li> <li>• the relationship between positivism, interpretivism and sociological methods; the nature of 'social facts'</li> <li>• the theoretical, practical and ethical considerations influencing choice of topic, choice of method(s) and the conduct of research</li> <li>• consensus, conflict, structural and social action theories</li> <li>• the concepts of modernity and post-modernity in relation to sociological theory</li> <li>• the nature of science and the extent to which Sociology can be regarded as scientific</li> <li>• the relationship between theory and methods</li> <li>• debates about subjectivity, objectivity and value freedom</li> <li>• the relationship between Sociology and social policy.</li> </ul>	2
Mass Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the new media and their significance for an understanding of the role of the media in contemporary society</li> <li>• the relationship between ownership and control of the media</li> <li>• the media, globalisation and popular culture</li> <li>• the processes of selection and presentation of the content of the news</li> <li>• media representations of age, social class, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and disability</li> <li>• the relationship between the media, their content and presentation, and audiences</li> </ul>	2
Crime and deviance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• definitions of crime and deviance, and how social order and social control is maintained</li> <li>• the social distribution of crime and deviance by ethnicity, gender and social class, including recent patterns and trends in crime</li> <li>• globalisation and crime in contemporary society; the media and crime; green crime; human rights and state crimes</li> <li>• crime control, surveillance, prevention and punishment, victims, and the role of the criminal justice system and other agencies.</li> </ul>	2

## A level sociology preparatory tasks

Please complete all tasks in this pack and bring a printed copy with you on your first day in September (you will refer to this frequently throughout sociology). Guidance for all of these can be sought in the year 1 (and 2) textbooks which you are advised to purchase, or on [www.revisesociology.com](http://www.revisesociology.com)

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### **TASK 1: Knowledge of Key Terms**

Complete this glossary of terms for the education module. You need to write down the definition of the term given ensuring you support these definitions with examples of each term. Remember, this is a reference document to be used later, so make it count.

- |                             |                           |                                  |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ▪ Alienation                | ▪ Globalisation           | ▪ Ruling class ideology          |
| ▪ An organic analogy        | ▪ Grammar schools         | ▪ Social policies                |
| ▪ Bourgeoisie               | ▪ Hidden curriculum       | ▪ Social mobility                |
| ▪ Capitalism                | ▪ Ideology                | ▪ Socialism                      |
| ▪ Compensatory education    | ▪ Immediate gratification | ▪ Speech codes (Basil Bernstein) |
| ▪ Communism                 | ▪ Inequality              | ▪ Stratification                 |
| ▪ Cultural capital          | ▪ Marginalisation         | ▪ Tripartite system              |
| ▪ Cultural deprivation      | ▪ Material deprivation    | ▪ Triple Shift (re:feminism)     |
| ▪ Deferred gratification    | ▪ Meritocracy             | ▪ Upper class                    |
| ▪ Economic capital          | ▪ Middle class            | ▪ Values                         |
| ▪ Egalitarian society       | ▪ Norms                   | ▪ Working class                  |
| ▪ False class consciousness | ▪ Proletariat             |                                  |

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**Task 2:** In paragraphs of no more than 10 lines each, give brief explanations of how the following explanations try to explain the functioning of society:

- |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Functionalism | 4. The New Right |
| 2. Feminism      | 5. Postmodernism |
| 3. Marxism       |                  |

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### **Task 3: Developing a political understanding for A level sociology**

Students in sociology tend to do well if they have a basic understanding of the main political parties in the UK. Do some research and answer the following questions:

1. Who is the current prime minister?
2. What party do they belong to?
3. Traditionally, which social class is this party associated with?
4. Who is the leader of the opposition?
5. What party do they belong to?
6. Traditionally, which social class is this party associated with?
7. What is the relationship between sociology and politics/social policies?

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#### Task 4: Careers focus

Create a mind map to identify the different careers a sociology student/graduate may pursue.

#### Useful websites to help you in A level sociology:

[www.aqa.org.uk/sociology](http://www.aqa.org.uk/sociology)

[www.revisesociology.com](http://www.revisesociology.com)

[www.tutor2u.net/sociology](http://www.tutor2u.net/sociology)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-42615109>

Thank you for making your way through this pack. I have no doubt that if you continue to take responsibility for your learning and continue to complete all work set to the appropriate standard, this will be the right course for you and you will progress well.

I look forward to seeing you in September and helping you discover the wonders of Sociology in more detail.

