

Curriculum Vision

Faculty	Humanities	Subject	Sociology
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Our Vision

Subject vision

The Sociology subject area is committed to creating students with high aspirations and self-confidence. Who are responsible citizens with awareness of social issues such as inequality, prejudice and discrimination and can see the ways society treats individuals and groups based on biases.

At JWS we want to teach students about their place in society and their opportunities to change it for the better, in the process we want students to lead healthy and happy lives by developing awareness of social issues which they can apply in their own lives. By the end of the two year course we want students to leave us as confident individuals who can develop and express their own informed opinions but also be respectful of the views of others. Throughout the course we want to encourage students to actively challenge taken-for granted assumptions and question their everyday understanding of social phenomena.

Curriculum Intent

At KS5, students study the AQA Sociology specification which is selected for its wide-ranging exploration of a huge range of topics within Sociology. This includes overarching topics such as Education, Families and Households, Crime and Deviance and Global development. Within each of these topics students will explore the link between culture, experience and outcomes and they will also examine how a person's class, gender and ethnicity shape their experiences, outcomes and life changes, within the wider world. Students are also required to engage in research methods which requires a detailed and thorough understanding of how high-quality sociological research is conducted, in line with the features of other sciences, whilst questioning the role of scientific methods to study sensitive topics such as bullying victimology and suicide.

These topics prepare all students for higher education and looking at humans from a holistic perspective as well. The AQA assessment criteria also allows all students to develop a range of skills which superbly compliment not only the other humanities subjects, but also English, Maths and the other sciences.

In what ways does our curriculum help to develop?

Cultural diversity and identity: Identity and cultural diversity are central themes in Sociology AS and A-Level. We consider the different aspects of our lives which make up our identity and we also consider cultural differences around the world, in the UK and within institutions such as schools.

Community participation: By developing a greater awareness of social issues such as discrimination, inequality and poverty students are more likely to take an interest and participate in events and activities within their local community.

Careers and enterprise: Sociology teachers discuss with their students the possible career destinations which studying sociology can lead to. These include teaching, social and community

work, work in the criminal justice system and policing. Many of our students go on to study Sociology at Degree level and embark on careers in these fields.

Technology and the media: As part of our study of the influence of agencies of socialisation on individuals and different social groups students will be encouraged to consider and question the impact of the media on our behaviour, beliefs and attitudes. Students are also encouraged to engage with the media outside of the classroom in order to search for examples to support their learning in the classroom.

Creativity and critical thinking: Critical thinking is essential to the study of Sociology. Students are constantly encouraged to question, challenge and compare different sources of information and different sociological theories. Students will be required to weigh up the information they have learnt in class and make a critical judgement about it in essay questions.

Curriculum Sequencing Rationale and Implementation

Year 12 content

Students begin the course with a 5 week introduction unit, looking at the key themes of culture and socialisation which run through the whole course. Students will learn about the 4 key sociological theories in general – functionalism, Marxism, feminism and social action, before these are explored and linked to the examination units. Students will also be introduced to key terms and concepts and how they affect people, including how CAGE (class, age, gender and ethnicity) affects peoples outlook on social and sociological problems, but also how a person's CAGE affects the way other treat them. In addition to this students are introduced to the practical, ethical and theoretical considerations sociologists have to make all the time, when planning, conducting and analysing their research.

This is taught initially, then after this the 2 examination units are taught, often running concurrently, due to the staffing nature of sociology. This is not an issue as these two units are not linked in terms of content and do not need to be taught in a particular order. Key themes discussed in the introduction unit are readdressed in both examination units and concepts are strengthened by looking for example key theories in two different topics at almost the same time in the academic year.

The two examination units taught in year 1/AS are (the compulsory unit) education and methods in context and then (the optional unit) Families and households with research methods. Both units are taught following the suggested textbook and specification layout, to support the students understanding the changes in education or the family over the past 100 years in the UK. Both units start with theories of either education or family and the changes in educational landscape and policy or the demography of the UK, before moving onto other subtopics within the wider units.

Once these have been taught, research methods are taught by either one or both teachers (depending on content delivery, which is influenced by the timetabled teaching split), after each research method is taught, including evaluative comments surrounds Practical, Ethical and Theoretical considerations, these methods are linked back to Education to support the answering of a methods in context question which features on paper 1.

Year 13 content

There are 3 units to be taught across year 2 in sociology and again these can be concurrently taught by 2 teachers if staffing allows.

(the compulsory unit) crime and deviance is taught alongside (the optional unit) global development, which nicely links to Geography and supports our humanities vision of students knowing their place within the wider world, rather than just focusing on the UK. These two units again go back to the key themes taught in year 1 and the key theories and methods are again taught discretely within these new units.

After students have completed these units they are taught the more synoptic element of the course towards the end of year 2, which looks at Theoretical and methodical issues. Students explore the theories again in more depth, link different areas of their study to the use of methods and also look at key issues, such as should sociology be a science and can you be value free in sociology. Students need to use their 2 years of study to help present a range of ideas in the form of evaluative essay answers for this section of the course.