
GCSE SOCIOLOGY

(8192)

Specification

For teaching from September 2017
onwards For exams in 2019 onwards

Version 1.1 14 October 2021



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Are you using the latest version of this specification?

- You will always find the most up-to-date version of this specification on our website at
- We will write to you if there are significant changes to the specification.

1 Introduction

1.1 Why choose AQA for GCSE Sociology

GCSE Sociology helps students to gain knowledge and understanding of key social structures, processes and issues through the study of families, education, crime and deviance and social stratification.

Students will develop their analytical, assimilation and communication skills by comparing and contrasting perspectives on a variety of social issues, constructing reasoned arguments, making substantiated judgements and drawing reasoned conclusions.

By studying sociology, students will develop transferable skills including how to:

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

You can find out about all our Sociology qualifications at aqa.org.uk/sociology

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 the discipline.

Students will also learn how to apply various research methods to different sociological contexts. They will be introduced to sociological terms and concepts concerned with social structures, social processes and social issues.

Clear, well structured exams, accessible for all

To enable your students to show their breadth of knowledge and understanding, we've created a simple and straightforward structure and layout for our papers, using a mixture of question styles.

For more information on our exciting new GCSE Sociology qualification, visit aqa.org.uk/sociology

1.2 Support and resources to help you teach

We've worked with experienced teachers to provide you with a range of resources that will help you confidently plan, teach and prepare for exams.

Teaching resources

Visit aqa.org.uk/8192 to see all our teaching resources. They include:

- sample schemes of work to help you plan your course with confidence
- training courses to help you deliver AQA Sociology qualifications
- subject expertise courses for all teachers, from newly qualified teachers who are just getting started to experienced teachers looking for fresh inspiration.

Preparing for exams

Visit [aqa.org.uk/8192](https://www.aqa.org.uk/8192) for everything you need to prepare for our exams, including:

- sample papers and mark schemes for new courses
- Exampro: a searchable bank of past AQA exam questions
- example student answers with examiner commentaries.

Analyse your students' results with Enhanced Results Analysis (ERA)

Find out which questions were the most challenging, how the results compare to previous years and where your students need to improve. ERA, our free online results analysis tool, will help you see where to focus your teaching. Register at [aqa.org.uk/era](https://www.aqa.org.uk/era)

For information about results, including maintaining standards over time, grade boundaries and our post-results services, visit [aqa.org.uk/results](https://www.aqa.org.uk/results)

Keep your skills up-to-date with professional development

Wherever you are in your career, there's always something new to learn. As well as subject specific training, we offer a range of courses to help boost your skills.

- Improve your teaching skills in areas including differentiation, teaching literacy and meeting Ofsted requirements.
- Prepare for a new role with our leadership and management courses.

You can attend a course at venues around the country, in your school or online – whatever suits your needs and availability. Find out more at [coursesandevents.aqa.org.uk](https://www.coursesandevents.aqa.org.uk)

Help and support

Visit our website for information, guidance, support and resources at [aqa.org.uk/8192](https://www.aqa.org.uk/8192)

If you'd like us to share news and information about this qualification, sign up for emails and updates at [aqa.org.uk/keepinformed-computer-science](https://www.aqa.org.uk/keepinformed-computer-science)

Alternatively, you can call or email our subject team direct.

E: sociology@aca.org.uk

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2 Specification at a glance

This qualification is linear. Linear means that students will sit all their exams at the end of the course.

2.1 Subject content

1. [The sociological approach](#) (page 9)
2. [Social structures, social processes and social issues](#) (page 9)
3. [Families](#) (page 10)
4. [Education](#) (page 13)
5. [Crime and deviance](#) (page 15)
6. [Social stratification](#) (page 17)
7. [Sociological research methods](#) (page 19)

2.2 Assessments

Paper 1: The sociology of families and education
<p>What's assessed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sociology of families • The sociology of education • Relevant areas of social theory and methodology <p>Students will be expected to draw on knowledge and understanding of the entire course of study to show a deeper understanding of these topics.</p>
<p>How it's assessed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes • 100 marks • 50% of GCSE
<p>Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section A has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses. • Section B has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses.



Paper 2: The sociology of crime and deviance and social stratification

What's assessed

- The sociology of crime and deviance
- The sociology of social stratification
- Relevant areas of social theory and methodology

Students will be expected to draw on knowledge and understanding of the entire course of study to show a deeper understanding of these topics.

How it's assessed

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 100 marks
- 50% of GCSE

Questions

- Section A has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses.
- Section B has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses.

3 Subject content

This specification requires students to:

- draw on information and evidence from different sources and demonstrate the ability to synthesise them
- analyse and evaluate different research methods used in sociological investigations and assess, critically, the appropriateness of their use
- analyse and evaluate information and evidence presented in different written, visual and numerical forms
- apply their understanding to explore and debate the current sociological issues outlined in each of the topic areas
- use sociological theories and evidence to compare and contrast social issues, construct reasoned arguments and debates, make substantiated judgements and draw conclusions
- draw connections between the different topic areas studied.

3.1 The sociological approach

All the content is set in a United Kingdom (UK) context except where otherwise stated.

Students must know and understand:

- debates within sociology including conflict versus consensus
- how sociological knowledge and ideas change over time and how these ideas inform our understanding of the social world
- the contextualised work (a sense of time and place) of key classical sociologists Durkheim, Marx and Weber referencing both their view of the world and their contribution to the development of the discipline
- different sociological perspectives on social structures, social processes and social issues, including those informed by: feminism, functionalism, interactionism and Marxism as specified in the topics listed below and key arguments (identified through reading and responding to extracts from [key sociological texts](#) (page 45))
- the interrelationship between the core areas of sociology
- how to use sociological research methods as outlined in the topics and how they apply in the specified contexts ie families, education, crime and deviance, social stratification. Teachers may encourage their students to undertake small-scale research projects in order to develop their understanding of the practical difficulties faced by the sociologists working in the field
- [key sociological terms and concepts](#) (page 27) concerned with social structures, social processes and social issues and the explanation of social phenomena including: society, socialisation, norms, values, roles, labelling, discrimination, power and authority.

3.2 Social structures, social processes and social issues

For each topic area students are asked to critically evaluate and compare and contrast theories or explanations, including the key features of each theory or explanation in the context of a specific topic and area of sociology.

Students are expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of key sociological theories by reading and responding to extracts which illustrate the different views of sociologists. They should be able to critically analyse and evaluate how the issues have been interpreted by these sociologists.

For each topic area students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of relevant methods and methodological issues, for example the use of official statistics, qualitative and quantitative approaches and the use of mixed methods.

They will explore and debate contemporary social issues in order to be able to challenge everyday understandings of social phenomena from a sociological perspective. The knowledge, understanding and skills they develop will provide a basis for further study and career choices.

3.3 Families

3.3.1 Functions of families

Content	Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differing views of the functions of families. Parsons (page 45) functionalist perspective on primary socialisation and the stabilisation of adult personalities. 	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify, describe and explain the functions of families (sexual, reproductive, economic and educational) describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on the functions of families (functionalist, feminist and Marxist).

3.3.2 Family forms

Content	Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How family forms differ in the UK and within a global context. The work of the Rapoports on family diversity. 	<p>Students should be able to identify, describe and explain various family forms (nuclear, extended, reconstituted, lone parent, single sex).</p>

3.3.3 Conjugal role relationships

Content	Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different views of conjugal role relationships. • The feminist perspective of Oakley on the idea of the conventional family. 	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify, describe and explain joint and segregated conjugal roles • describe and explain the domestic division of labour in both traditional and contemporary families • demonstrate their understanding of issues that impact on conjugal role relationships within the contemporary family including decision making, money management, dual career families, child rearing and leisure activities • describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on conjugal role relationships (functionalist, feminist and Marxist).

3.3.4 Changing relationships within families

Content	Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing relationships within families. • How relationships within families have changed over time. • The theory of the symmetrical family and the principle of stratified diffusion developed from the functionalist perspective of Willmott and Young. 	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify, describe and explain how relationships within families have changed over time (pre-industrial, industrial and contemporary/modern) • identify, describe and explain contemporary family related issues, the quality of parenting, the relationships between teenagers and adults, care of the disabled/elderly and arranged marriage • describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on changing relationships within families (functionalist, feminist and Marxist) • describe the key ideas of Willmott and Young (page 46).

3.3.5 Criticisms of families

Content	Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Different criticisms of families (isolation and unrealistic idealisation, loss of traditional functions, lack of contact with wider kinship networks, the status and role of women within families, marital breakdown, dysfunctional families).• The work of Zaretsky on developments in families from a Marxist perspective and Delphy and Leonard's feminist critique of families.	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify, describe and explain different criticisms of families• describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on these issues (functionalist, feminist and Marxist)• describe the key ideas of Zaretsky (page 46) on families• describe the key ideas of Delphy and Leonard (page 45) on families.

3.3.6 Divorce

Content	Additional information
<p>Changes in the pattern of divorce in Britain since 1945 and the consequences of divorce for family members and structures.</p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify, describe and explain the pattern of divorce in Britain since 1945 using relevant statistical data• explain reasons for the rise in divorce since 1945 including: changes in the law, changes in social attitudes and values, secularisation, changes in the status of women in society• describe the consequences of divorce for family members (husband and wife, children and extended family) and the increase in the numbers of lone parent families• describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on these issues (functionalist, feminist and Marxist).

3.4 Education

3.4.1 Roles and functions of education

Content	Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different views of the role and functions of education. • The functionalist perspective of Durkheim on education as the transmission of norms and values and Parsons on achieved status and the operation of schools on meritocratic principles. 	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify, describe and explain the functions of education including serving the needs of the economy, facilitating social mobility and fostering social cohesion • identify and describe a variety of different types of school including primary and secondary, state and private • describe alternative forms of educational provision including home schooling and de-schooling • describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on these issues (functionalist, feminist and Marxist) • describe the key ideas of Durkheim (page 47) on education • describe the key ideas of Parsons (page 48) on education.

3.4.2 The relationship between education and capitalism

Content	Additional information
<p>Different views of the correspondence principle on the relationship between education and capitalism as developed from a Marxist perspective by Bowles and Gintis.</p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe the key ideas of Bowles and Gintis (page 47) on education and capitalism • describe, compare and contrast a variety of alternative sociological perspectives on the correspondence principle.

3.4.3 Educational achievement

Content	Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Factors affecting educational achievement.• The work of Halsey on class-based inequalities and Ball on parental choice and competition between schools.	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify, describe and explain various factors affecting educational achievement including class, gender and ethnicity• describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on these issues (functionalist, feminist and Marxist)• describe the key ideas of Halsey (page 47) on class-based inequalities• describe the key ideas of Ball (page 47) on parental choice and competition between schools.

3.4.4 Processes within schools

Content	Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Processes within schools affecting educational achievement.• The work of Ball on teacher expectations and Willis on the creation of counter school cultures.	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify, describe and explain various processes within schools affecting educational achievement including, streaming, setting, mixed ability teaching, labelling and the self-fulfilling prophecy• describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on these issues (interactionist, functionalist, feminist and Marxist)• describe the key ideas of Ball (page 46) on teacher expectations• describe the key ideas of Willis (page 48) on the creation of counter school cultures.

3.5 Crime and deviance

3.5.1 The social construction of crime and deviance

Content	Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The social construction of concepts of crime and deviance and explanations of crime and deviance. The work of Merton on the causes of crime from a functionalist perspective and Becker from an interactionist perspective. 	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify, describe and explain various sociological explanations of crime and deviance including anomie, labelling, structural theories, subcultural theories and interactionist theory explain the social construction of concepts of crime and deviance describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on the social construction of crime and deviance (interactionist, functionalist, feminist and Marxist) describe the key ideas of Merton (page 50) on the causes of crime describe the key ideas of Becker (page 48) on the causes of crime.

3.5.2 Social control

Content	Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal and informal methods of social control. The work of Heidensohn on female conformity in male dominated patriarchal societies. 	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify, describe and explain formal and informal methods of social control including unwritten rules and sanctions describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on social control (interactionist, functionalist, feminist and Marxist) describe the key ideas of Heidensohn (page 49) on female conformity.

3.5.3 Criminal and deviant behaviour

Content	Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Factors affecting criminal and deviant behaviour and ways in which criminal and deviant behaviour have generated public debate.• The work of Albert Cohen on delinquent subcultures and Carlen on women, crime and poverty.	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify, describe and explain factors affecting criminal and deviant behaviour including social class, gender, ethnicity and age• identify and describe various public debates over criminal and deviant behaviour including concerns over violent crime, sentencing, the treatment of young offenders, the prison system and media coverage of crime• describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on factors affecting criminal and deviant behaviour (interactionist, functionalist, feminist and Marxist)• describe the key ideas of Albert Cohen (page 49) on delinquent subcultures• describe the key ideas of Carlen (page 49) on women, crime and poverty.

3.5.4 Data on crime

Content	Additional information
<p>The usefulness of the main sources of data on crime, the collection of official data on crime, patterns and trends in crime figures and the 'dark figure'.</p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify and describe the main sources of data on crime• describe the pattern and trends in crime figures using relevant statistical data• explain the 'dark figure' of crime (unreported and unrecorded crime)• describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on the use of data on crime (functionalist, feminist and Marxist).

3.6 Social stratification

3.6.1 Functionalist theory of stratification

Content	Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different views of the functionalist theory of social stratification. • The work of Davis and Moore on social stratification from a functionalist perspective. 	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe and explain the functionalist theory of stratification (effective role allocation and performance linked to the promise of rewards) • describe the key ideas of Davis and Moore (page 51) • describe, compare and contrast alternative perspectives on functionalist theory (feminist and Marxist).

3.6.2 Socio-economic class

Content	Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different views of socio-economic class. • The work of Marx and Weber on socio-economic class. 	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify, describe and explain socio-economic class divisions in society • describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on socio-economic class (functionalist, feminist and Marxist) • describe the key ideas of Marx (page 52) on socio-economic class • describe the key ideas of Weber (page 54) on socio-economic class.

3.6.3 Life chances

Content	Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different views on factors affecting life chances. • The work of Devine revisiting the idea of the affluent worker. 	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify, describe and explain factors affecting life chances including social class, gender, race and ethnicity, sexuality, age, disability, religion and belief • describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on life chances (functionalist, feminist and Marxist) • describe the key ideas of Devine (page 51) on the idea of the affluent worker.

3.6.4 Poverty as a social issue

Content	Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Different interpretations of poverty as a social issue.• The work of Townsend on relative deprivation and Murray on the underclass.	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify, describe and explain different interpretations of poverty as a social issue including, the culture of poverty, material deprivation, the way in which governments have attempted to alleviate poverty and unemployment, the impact of globalisation• describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on poverty (functionalist, feminist and Marxist)• describe the key ideas of Townsend (page 53) on relative deprivation• describe the key ideas of Murray (page 52) on the underclass including links to New Right theories.

3.6.5 Power and authority

Content	Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Different forms of power and authority.• The work of Weber on power and authority.	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify, describe and explain different forms of power and authority including traditional, charismatic, rational-legal, formal and informal sources of power• describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on power and authority (functionalist, feminist and Marxist)• describe the key ideas of Weber (page 54) on power and authority.

3.6.6 Power relationships

Content	Additional information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe and explain different views on factors affecting power relationships. The work of Walby on patriarchy. 	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify, describe and explain different factors affecting power relationships including social class, gender, sexuality, race, age, disability, religion and beliefs describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on power relationships (functionalist, feminist and Marxist) describe the key ideas of Walby (page 53) on patriarchy.

3.7 Sociological research methods

In the context of the various social structures, social processes and social issues detailed in the specification, students should be able to:

- identify, describe and explain various methods and methodological issues
- identify and explain the advantages and disadvantages, strengths and weaknesses of a particular method for a specific area of research
- demonstrate an understanding of the process of research design for a specific area of research, including practical difficulties and ethical issues
- demonstrate an understanding of the relevance and usefulness of various primary and secondary sources for a specific area of research
- demonstrate the ability to interpret data presented in a variety of forms.

Content	Additional information
Research design	Describe and explain the processes involved in research design: the establishment of appropriate aims and relevant hypotheses, the use of pilot studies, the selection of appropriate sampling methods and the analysis of data.
Qualitative and quantitative methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe and explain qualitative and quantitative methods (questionnaires, interviews, observations) and assess the value, application, and strengths and weaknesses of different methods. Assess the usefulness of the mixed methods approach.
Different types of data	Assess the usefulness of different types of data, qualitative and quantitative data, and official and non-official statistics.

Content	Additional information
Primary and secondary sources	Describe and explain primary and secondary sources of data.
Interpretation of data	Demonstrate the ability to interpret graphs, diagrams, charts and tables to discern patterns and trends in statistical data.
Practical issues	Practical issues including time, cost and access.
Ethical issues	Ethical issues are consent, confidentiality and harm to participants and how the issues can be addressed.

4 Scheme of assessment

Find past papers and mark schemes, and specimen papers for new courses, on our website at [aqa.org.uk/pastpapers](https://www.aqa.org.uk/pastpapers)

This specification is designed to be taken over two years.

This is a linear qualification. In order to achieve the award, students must complete all assessments at the end of the course and in the same series.

GCSE exams and certification for this specification are available for the first time in May/June 2019 and then every May/June for the life of the specification.

All materials are available in English only.

Our GCSE exams in Sociology include questions that allow students to demonstrate their ability to:

- draw together their knowledge, skills and understanding from across the full course of study
- provide extended responses.

4.1 Aims and learning outcomes

Courses based on this specification must encourage students to:

- apply their sociological knowledge, understanding and skills to develop an understanding of relationships and tension between social structures and individual agency within a UK and global context
- critically analyse information and use evidence to make informed arguments, reach substantiated judgements and draw conclusions
- use and apply their knowledge and understanding of how social structures and processes influence social control, power and inequality
- use sociological theories to understand social issues, debates, social changes and continuities over time
- understand and evaluate sociological methodology and a range of research methods
- use sociological terminology appropriately and make connections between the key areas of subject content.

4.2 Assessment objectives

Assessment objectives (AOs) are set by Ofqual and are the same across all GCSE Sociology specifications and all exam boards.

The exams will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives.

- AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods.
- AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding of sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods.
- AO3: Analyse and evaluate sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods in order to construct arguments, make judgements and draw conclusions.

4.2.1 Assessment objective weightings for GCSE Sociology

Assessment objectives (AOs)	Component weightings (approx %)		Overall weighting (approx %)
	Paper 1	Paper 2	
AO1	20	20	40
AO2	20	20	40
AO3	10	10	20
Overall weighting of components	50	50	100

4.3 Assessment weightings

The marks awarded on the papers will be scaled to meet the weighting of the components. Students' final marks will be calculated by adding together the scaled marks for each component. Grade boundaries will be set using this total scaled mark. The scaling and total scaled marks are shown in the table below.

Component	Maximum raw mark	Scaling factor	Maximum scaled mark
The sociology of families and education	100	x1	100
The sociology of crime and deviance and social stratification	100	x1	100
Total scaled mark:			200

5 General administration

You can find information about all aspects of administration, as well as all the forms you need, at aqa.org.uk/examsadmin

5.1 Entries and codes

You only need to make one entry for each qualification – this will cover all the question papers and certification.

Every specification is given a national discount (classification) code by the Department for Education (DfE), which indicates its subject area.

If a student takes two specifications with the same discount code:

- further and higher education providers are likely to take the view that they have only achieved one of the two qualifications
- only one of them will be counted for the purpose of the *School and College Performance tables* – the DfE's rules on 'early entry' will determine which one.

Please check this before your students start their course.

Qualification title	AQA entry code	DfE discount code
AQA GCSE in Sociology	8192	TBC

This specification complies with:

- Ofqual *General conditions of recognition* that apply to all regulated qualifications
- Ofqual GCSE qualification level conditions that apply to all GCSEs
- Ofqual GCSE subject level conditions that apply to all GCSEs in this subject
- all other relevant regulatory documents.

The Ofqual qualification accreditation number (QAN) is 603/0798/5.

5.2 Overlaps with other qualifications

There are no overlaps with any other AQA qualifications at this level.

5.3 Awarding grades and reporting results

The qualification will be graded on a nine-point scale: 1 to 9 – where 9 is the best grade.

Students who fail to reach the minimum standard grade for grade 1 will be recorded as U (unclassified) and will not receive a qualification certificate.

5.4 Resits and shelf life

Students can resit the qualification as many times as they wish, within the shelf life of the qualification.

5.5 Previous learning and prerequisites

There are no previous learning requirements. Any requirements for entry to a course based on this specification are at the discretion of schools and colleges.

5.6 Access to assessment: diversity and inclusion

General qualifications are designed to prepare students for a wide range of occupations and further study. Therefore our qualifications must assess a wide range of competences.

The subject criteria have been assessed to see if any of the skills or knowledge required present any possible difficulty to any students, whatever their ethnic background, religion, sex, age, disability or sexuality. Tests of specific competences were only included if they were important to the subject.

As members of the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) we participate in the production of the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments: General and Vocational qualifications*. We follow these guidelines when assessing the needs of individual students who may require an access arrangement or reasonable adjustment. This document is published at jcq.org.uk

Students with disabilities and special needs

We're required by the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments to remove or lessen any disadvantage that affects a disabled student.

We can make arrangements for disabled students and students with special needs to help them access the assessments, as long as the competences being tested aren't changed. Access arrangements must be agreed **before** the assessment. For example, a Braille paper would be a reasonable adjustment for a Braille reader.

To arrange access arrangements or reasonable adjustments, you can apply using the online service at aqa.org.uk/eaqa

Special consideration

We can give special consideration to students who have been disadvantaged at the time of the assessment through no fault of their own – for example a temporary illness, injury or serious problem such as family bereavement. We can only do this **after** the assessment.

Your exams officer should apply online for special consideration at aqa.org.uk/eaqa

For more information and advice visit aqa.org.uk/access or email accessarrangementsqueries@aqa.org.uk

5.7 Safeguarding

Some of the content within this curriculum may generate discussions or disclosures from students which raise safeguarding concerns. If this happens, please follow your centre's safeguarding policy to arrange support.

5.8 Working with AQA for the first time

If your school or college hasn't previously offered our specifications, you need to register as an AQA centre. Find out how at [aqa.org.uk/becomeacentre](https://www.aqa.org.uk/becomeacentre)

5.9 Private candidates

This specification is available to private candidates.

A private candidate is someone who enters for exams through an AQA approved school or college but is not enrolled as a student there.

A private candidate may be self-taught, home schooled or have private tuition, either with a tutor or through a distance learning organisation. They must be based in the UK.

If you have any queries as a private candidate, you can:

- speak to the exams officer at the school or college where you intend to take your exams
- visit our website at [aqa.org.uk/privatecandidates](https://www.aqa.org.uk/privatecandidates)
- email privatecandidates@aqa.org.uk

6 Appendix A: key terms and concepts

These key terms and concepts are not restricted to the specialist language of sociology. They're intended to indicate the wider range of ideas that students will need to learn to engage meaningfully with the subject content.

Students will be asked to identify definitions for selected key terms as used by sociologists and to make use of appropriate specialist language in their answers. They will not be expected to be familiar with key terms other than those included here.

Terms relating to sociological perspectives and research methods have been integrated into the relevant sections (families, education, crime and deviance, social stratification).

6.1 Families

- Adolescence
- Agency of socialisation
- Arranged marriage
- Attitude survey
- Bias
- Bigamy
- Blended (or reconstituted) family
- Canalization
- Case study
- Census
- Child rearing
- Childhood
- Class deal (in relation to working-class women)
- Closed question
- Cohabitation
- Commune
- Competition (in a variety of contexts)
- Confidentiality
- Conformity
- Conjugal relationships
- Conjugal role
- Consensus
- Content analysis
- Continuity
- Conventional family
- Covert observation
- Crisis of masculinity
- Data
- Data analysis

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- Data protection
 - Dependent family members
 - Discrimination
 - Divorce
 - Domestic division of labour
 - Double shift (women in marriage)
 - Double standards (as applied to the behaviour of men and women in society)
 - Dual career family
 - Dysfunctional families
 - Economic function (of families)
 - Economy
 - Egalitarian
 - Empty nest family
 - Empty shell marriage
 - Ethical considerations
 - Ethnic diversity
 - Ethnic group
 - Ethnic minority
 - Ethnicity
 - Ethnography
 - Expectations
 - Expressive role (functions of the family)
 - Extended family
 - Family
 - Family diversity
 - Feminism
 - Feminists
 - Focus group
 - Functionalism
 - Functionalists
 - Functionally important roles
 - Gender
 - Gender deal (in relation to working class women)
 - Gender roles
 - Glass ceiling (in relation to women in employment)
 - Hypothesis
 - Idealisation
 - Image
 - Immigrant
 - Immigration
 - Income
 - Informed consent
 - Instrumental role (functions of the family)
 - Integrated conjugal roles
 - Interactionism
 - Intergenerational
 - Interview
 - Isolation (social and family)

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- Kibbutz
 - Kin
 - Kinship
 - Life chances
 - Life expectancy
 - Lifestyle
 - Lone parent family
 - Longitudinal study
 - Male domination (of society)
 - Marriage
 - Marxism
 - Marxist
 - Mass media
 - Matriarch
 - Matriarchal family
 - Middle class
 - Mixed methods research
 - Monogamy
 - New man
 - News value
 - Non-participant observation
 - Norms
 - Nuclear family
 - Observation
 - Open question
 - Participant observation
 - Particularistic standards
 - Patriarchal family
 - Patriarchy
 - Pluralism
 - Polyandry
 - Polygamy
 - Polygyny
 - Popular press
 - Population
 - Primary data
 - Primary socialisation
 - Principle of stratified diffusion
 - Privatised (nuclear family)
 - Privatised instrumentalism (social relationships centred on the home)
 - Propaganda
 - Qualitative data
 - Quality press
 - Quantitative data
 - Questionnaire
 - Quota sample
 - Racial discrimination
 - Racism

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- Random sample
 - Reconstituted (or blended) family
 - Reliability
 - Representative data/sample
 - Research
 - Respondent
 - Role conflict
 - Roles
 - Rural
 - Sample
 - Sampling frame
 - Secondary data
 - Secondary socialisation
 - Secularisation
 - Segregated conjugal roles
 - Selective use of data
 - Separate spheres (in relation to the role of women)
 - Serial monogamy
 - Sex (gender) discrimination
 - Sex (gender) equality
 - Sexism
 - Snowball sample
 - Social change/changing social attitudes
 - Social class/socio-economic class
 - Social cohesion
 - Social construct
 - Social control (formal and informal)
 - Social convention
 - Social exclusion
 - Social inequality
 - Social mobility
 - Social network
 - Social order
 - Social stigma
 - Social stratification
 - Socialisation
 - Socially defined behaviour
 - Society
 - Status
 - Step parent
 - Stereotype
 - Survey
 - Symmetrical family
 - Systematic sample
 - Technological change
 - Theoretical perspective
 - Traditional family roles
 - Trend (in relation to data)

- Triangulation (in relation to social research)
- Unrepresentative data/sample
- Unstructured interview
- Universal standards
- Urban
- Validity
- Value consensus
- Values
- Welfare state
- Work life balance
- Working class
- World view
- Youth culture.

6.2 Education

- Academy
- Achievement (in education)
- Anti-school sub-culture
- Attitude survey
- Bias
- Case study
- Census
- Citizenship
- Closed question
- Competition (in a variety of contexts)
- Comprehensive school
- Compulsory state education
- Confidentiality
- Conformity
- Consensus
- Content analysis
- Continuity
- Correspondence principle
- Counter school subculture
- Covert observation
- Cultural capital
- Cultural deprivation
- Cultural values
- Culture
- Curriculum
- Dark figure of crime
- Data
- Data analysis
- Data protection
- De-schooling
- Discrimination

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- Economy
 - Education
 - Education reform
 - Egalitarian
 - Eleven plus
 - Employment
 - Ethical considerations
 - Ethnic diversity
 - Ethnic group
 - Ethnic minority
 - Ethnicity
 - Ethnocentric curriculum
 - Ethnography
 - Ethos (of the school)
 - Exclusion (from school)
 - Expectations
 - Fee paying, public, independent or private school
 - Feminism
 - Feminists
 - Focus group
 - Formal curriculum
 - Formal education
 - Free school
 - Functionalism
 - Functionalists
 - Functionally important roles
 - Further education
 - Gender
 - Gender roles
 - Gendered curriculum
 - Glass ceiling (in relation to women in employment)
 - Hidden curriculum
 - Higher education
 - Home tuition
 - Hypothesis
 - Image
 - Immigrant
 - Immigration
 - Inclusion (in education)
 - Income
 - Informal education
 - Informed consent
 - Institutional racism
 - Intelligence quotient
 - Interactionism
 - Interest groups
 - Interview
 - Labelling

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- League tables in education
 - Life chances
 - Lifestyle
 - Lone parent family
 - Longitudinal study
 - Marketization of education
 - Marxism
 - Marxist
 - Mass media
 - Master status
 - Middle class
 - Mixed ability
 - Mixed methods research
 - News value
 - Non-participant observation
 - Norms
 - Observation
 - Ofsted
 - Open question
 - Organised religion
 - Participant observation
 - Particularistic standards
 - Pluralism
 - Popular press
 - Primary data
 - Privatisation (economy)
 - Propaganda
 - Public examinations
 - Qualitative data
 - Quality press
 - Quantitative data
 - Questionnaire
 - Quota sample
 - Racial discrimination
 - Racism
 - Random sample
 - Reliability
 - Representative data/sample
 - Research
 - Respondent
 - Role conflict
 - Roles
 - Rural
 - Sample
 - Sampling frame
 - Sanctions
 - SATs
 - Secondary data

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- Secondary socialisation
 - Selective schools
 - Selective use of data
 - Self-fulfilling prophecy
 - Setting in education
 - Sex (gender) discrimination
 - Sex (gender) equality
 - Sexism
 - Snowball sample
 - Social change/changing social attitudes
 - Social class/socio-economic class
 - Social cohesion
 - Social construct
 - Social control (formal and informal)
 - Social convention
 - Social exclusion
 - Social inequality
 - Social mobility
 - Social network
 - Social stratification
 - Socialisation
 - Socially defined behaviour
 - Society
 - Special school
 - Specialist school
 - Status
 - Stereotype
 - Subculture
 - Survey
 - Systematic sample
 - Teacher expectations
 - Technological change
 - Theoretical perspective
 - Trend (in relation to data)
 - Triangulation (in relation to social research)
 - Tripartite system
 - Unrepresentative data/sample
 - Unstructured interview
 - Universal standards
 - Urban
 - Validity
 - Value consensus
 - Values
 - Vocationalism in education (work related curriculum)
 - Welfare state
 - Working class
 - World view
 - Youth culture.

6.3 Crime and deviance

- Agenda setting (and the media in relation to crime/deviance)
- Agent of social control
- Alienation
- Anomie
- Anti-social behaviour
- Attitude survey
- Bias
- Case study
- Census
- Chivalry thesis
- Closed question
- Community service
- Confidentiality
- Conformity
- Consensus
- Content analysis
- Continuity
- Control theory (in relation to women and crime)
- Corporate crime
- Covert observation
- Crime
- Crime rate
- Criminal justice system
- Criminal subculture
- Dark figure of crime
- Data
- Data analysis
- Data protection
- Delinquency
- Deviance
- Deviancy amplification
- Deviant career
- Discrimination
- Economy
- Established (state) church
- Ethical considerations
- Ethnic diversity
- Ethnic group
- Ethnic minority
- Ethnicity
- Ethnography
- Expectations
- Feminism
- Feminists
- Focus group

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- Folk devils
 - Functionalism
 - Functionalists
 - Functionally important roles
 - Fundamentalism
 - Gender
 - Gender and criminality
 - Gender deal (in relation to working-class women)
 - Gender roles
 - Hypothesis
 - Identity
 - Identity theft
 - Image
 - Indictable offence
 - Informed consent
 - Injustice
 - Institutional racism
 - Intelligence quotient
 - Interactionism
 - Interview
 - Judiciary
 - Labelling
 - Law
 - Legislation
 - Legislative process
 - Legislature
 - Life chances
 - Longitudinal study
 - Magistrate
 - Male domination (of society)
 - Marxism
 - Marxist
 - Mass media
 - Master status
 - Media amplification
 - Media stereotype
 - Miscarriage of justice
 - Mixed methods research
 - Moral panic
 - National curriculum
 - News value
 - Non-indictable offence
 - Non-participant observation
 - Norms
 - Observation
 - Official crime statistics
 - Open question
 - Participant observation

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- Pluralism
 - Police caution
 - Popular press
 - Poverty (linked to crime)
 - Primary data
 - Prison system
 - Privatisation (economy)
 - Probation system
 - Propaganda
 - Qualitative data
 - Quality press
 - Quantitative data
 - Questionnaire
 - Quota sample
 - Racial discrimination
 - Racism
 - Random sample
 - Recorded crime
 - Reliability
 - Reported crime
 - Representative data/sample
 - Research
 - Respondent
 - Right of appeal
 - Role conflict
 - Roles
 - Rural
 - Sample
 - Sampling frame
 - Sanctions
 - Scapegoat
 - Secondary data
 - Selective use of data
 - Self-fulfilling prophecy
 - Self-report study
 - Sex (gender) discrimination
 - Sex (gender) equality
 - Sexism
 - Snowball sample
 - Social change/changing social attitudes
 - Social class/socio-economic class
 - Social cohesion
 - Social construct
 - Social control (formal and informal)
 - Social convention
 - Social exclusion
 - Social order
 - Social stigma

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- Social stratification
 - Socialisation
 - Socially defined behaviour
 - Society
 - Status
 - Status frustration
 - Stereotype
 - Subculture
 - Surveillance
 - Survey
 - Systematic sample
 - Technological change
 - Terrorism
 - Theoretical perspective
 - Trend (in relation to data)
 - Triangulation (in relation to social research)
 - Unrepresentative data/sample
 - Unstructured interview
 - Unwritten rules
 - Urban
 - Validity
 - Value consensus
 - Values
 - Victim survey
 - Welfare scrounger/benefit cheat
 - White collar crime
 - World view
 - Youth crime.

6.4 Social stratification

- Absolute poverty
- Achieved status
- Affluence
- Ageism
- Aristocracy
- Ascribed status
- Assimilation
- Asylum seeker
- Attitude survey
- Authority
- Bias
- Bourgeois
- Bourgeoisie
- Bureaucracy
- Bureaucratic authority
- Capitalism

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- Capitalist
 - Case study
 - Caste
 - Censorship
 - Census
 - Charismatic authority
 - Class alignment
 - Class dealignment
 - Class struggle
 - Classless society
 - Class struggle
 - Classless society
 - Closed question
 - Communism
 - Community
 - Competition (in a variety of contexts)
 - Confidentiality
 - Conformity
 - Consensus
 - Constituency
 - Content analysis
 - Continuity
 - Covert observation
 - Culture of dependency
 - Cycle of deprivation
 - Dark figure of crime
 - Data
 - Data analysis
 - Data protection
 - Deferential
 - Dictatorship
 - Direct action
 - Discrimination
 - Distribution (of power and of wealth)
 - Economy
 - Egalitarian
 - Elite
 - Embourgeoisement
 - Emigration
 - Employment
 - Environmental poverty
 - Ethical considerations
 - Ethnic diversity
 - Ethnic group
 - Ethnic minority
 - Ethnicity
 - Ethnography
 - Expectations

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- False class consciousness
 - Fascism
 - Feminism
 - Feminists
 - Feudalism
 - First past the post (electoral system)
 - Focus group
 - Functionalism
 - Functionalists
 - Functionally important roles
 - Gatekeeper (mass media)
 - Gender
 - Gender roles
 - Glass ceiling (in relation to women in employment)
 - Hypothesis
 - Image
 - Immigrant
 - Immigration
 - Income
 - Industrial dispute
 - Informed consent
 - Institutional racism
 - Interactionism
 - Interest groups
 - Intergenerational
 - Interview
 - Isolation (social and family)
 - Left and right wing
 - Legal rational authority
 - Liberal democratic values
 - Life chances
 - Life expectancy
 - Lifestyle
 - Longitudinal study
 - Lumpenproletariat
 - Male domination (of society)
 - Market situation (in relation to Weber on class)
 - Marxism
 - Marxist
 - Mass media
 - Means of production
 - Means testing
 - Member of Parliament
 - Meritocracy
 - Middle class
 - Migration
 - Mixed methods research
 - Monarchy

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- Multiculturalism
 - Nation state
 - Neo-conservatism
 - Neo-liberalism
 - New Right
 - New social movement
 - News value
 - Non-participant observation
 - Norms
 - Observation
 - Oligarchy
 - Open question
 - Organised religion
 - Participant observation
 - Patriarchy
 - Petty Bourgeoisie
 - Pluralism
 - Political party
 - Political socialisation
 - Popular press
 - Poverty
 - Poverty trap
 - Power
 - Prejudice
 - Pressure group
 - Primary data
 - Prime Minister
 - Privatisation (economy)
 - Proletarianisation
 - Proletariat
 - Propaganda
 - Proportional representation
 - Qualitative data
 - Quality press
 - Quantitative data
 - Questionnaire
 - Quota sample
 - Racial discrimination
 - Racism
 - Random sample
 - Relative deprivation
 - Relative income standard of poverty
 - Relative poverty
 - Reliability
 - Representative data/sample
 - Research
 - Respondent
 - Role conflict

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- Roles
 - Ruling class ideology
 - Sample
 - Sampling frame
 - Secondary data
 - Selective benefits
 - Selective use of data
 - Sex (gender) discrimination
 - Sex (gender) equality
 - Sexism
 - Slavery
 - Snowball sample
 - Social change/changing social attitudes
 - Social class/socio-economic class
 - Social cohesion
 - Social construct
 - Social control (formal and informal)
 - Social exclusion
 - Social inequality
 - Social mobility
 - Social network
 - Social order
 - Social security
 - Social stratification
 - Socialisation
 - Socialism
 - Society
 - State standard of poverty
 - Status
 - Subjective class
 - Subjective poverty
 - Surplus wealth
 - Survey
 - Systematic sample
 - Technological change
 - Theoretical perspective
 - Trade union
 - Traditional authority
 - Trend (in relation to data)
 - Triangulation (in relation to social research)
 - Underclass
 - Under-employment
 - Unemployment
 - Universal benefits
 - Unrepresentative data/sample
 - Unstructured interview
 - Upper class
 - Validity

- Value consensus
- Values
- Wage
- Wealth
- Welfare benefits
- Welfare reform
- Welfare scrounger/benefit cheat
- Welfare state
- White collar worker
- Work life balance
- Working class
- World view.

7 Appendix B: texts and summaries

This is a list of readily available classic and seminal texts that will help introduce students to sociology, stimulate their 'sociological imagination' and develop their ability to compare and contrast different sociological perspectives.

These are not the only texts that can be studied. We encourage teachers to discuss examples of more up to date research with their students whenever possible, but it's not expected.

7.1 Families

Delphy C and Leonard D, *Familiar Exploitation*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1992

Writing from a feminist perspective Delphy and Leonard emphasise the importance of work. In their view it is men, rather than capitalists as such, who are the prime beneficiaries of the exploitation of women's labour. They believe that the family has a central role in maintaining patriarchy; the family is an economic system involving a particular set of labour relations in which men benefit from and exploit the work of women. Women are oppressed because their work is appropriated within the family eg when wives have paid employment outside the home they still have to carry out household tasks which are not equally shared with their male partners.

Oakley A, 'Conventional families' in Rapoport et al. (eds), *Families in Britain*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982

Writing from a feminist perspective, Oakley addresses the idea of the conventional family which she defines as 'nuclear families composed of legally married couples, voluntarily choosing the parenthood of one or more children'. She explores the power of this idea, including its origins and explanations; reviews contemporary research; examines the 'strains' of being conventional and social control. Her paper predates civil partnerships and same sex marriages; however, she concludes that 'there are signs that official stereotypes are being felt to be increasingly archaic and that ... certain groups in the community may be moving towards a more open appraisal of other ways of living – both in and without families'.

Parsons T, 'The social structure of the family' in Anshen R N (ed.), *The Family: its Functions and Destiny*, New York, Harper and Row, 1959

Writing from a functionalist perspective Parsons held the view that the American family retained two basic and irreducible functions which are common to all families in all societies, these are the primary socialisation of children and the stabilisation of adult personalities eg to give and receive emotional support. Later authors have criticised his work as presenting an idealised picture of family life centred on the middle-class experience.

Rapoport R and Rapoport R N, 'British families in transition' in Rapoport et al. (eds), *Families in Britain*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982

Pioneering family researchers working in both Britain and America, they described five different aspects of family diversity: organisational (eg internal divisions of domestic labour), cultural (beliefs and values), class (eg how the family's position in the social class system affects the availability of resources), life course (stage in the family life cycle) and cohort (historical period). Their work predates the emergence of gay and lesbian households as a more open and accepted feature of society.

Willmott P and Young M, *The Symmetrical Family*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1973

Writing from a functionalist perspective and based on a large scale social survey (nearly 2,000 people were interviewed in Greater London and surrounding areas) Young and Willmott used the term symmetrical family to describe the Stage 3 (home centred) nuclear family. In such families 'symmetry' refers to the similar contributions made by each spouse to the running of the household eg shared chores and shared decisions. Conjugal roles are not interchangeable but they are of equal importance, an arrangement that they found to be more common in working class families; they advanced the theory that this reflected the nature of work as often boring and uninvolved leading manual workers to focus on family life. The 'Principle of Stratified Diffusion' is the theory that what happens at the top of the stratification system today will diffuse downwards tomorrow. The 'managing director family' (Stage 4) cited in their research was work-centred rather than home-centred, with the wife responsible for home and children. The theory has been criticised by feminists who saw little evidence of either 'symmetry' or a move towards Stage 4 amongst working class families.

Zaretsky E, *Capitalism, the Family and Personal Life*, London, Pluto Press, 1976

Writing from a Marxist perspective Zaretsky takes the view that modern capitalist society has created an illusion that the 'private life' of the family is separate from the economy. Zaretsky does not believe that the family is able to provide for the psychological and social needs of the individual. Whilst cushioning the effects of capitalism it perpetuates the system and cannot compensate for the general alienation produced by such a society. He believes that the family has become a prop to the capitalist economy (eg the system depends on the domestic labour of housewives who reproduce future generations of workers) whilst also serving as a vital unit of consumption. In his view only socialism will end the artificial separation of family and public life, and make possible personal fulfilment.

7.2 Education

Ball S J, *Beachside Comprehensive. A Case Study of Secondary Schooling*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981

Ball gives an account of the experience of schooling based on three years fieldwork as a participant observer in a south coast comprehensive school; this is a participant observation study in the tradition of Colin Lacey's *Hightown Grammar* and David Hargreaves *Social Relations in a Secondary School*. The study, based on Ball's doctoral thesis, describes a school in the process of

change and raises questions about the selection and socialisation experienced by two cohorts moving through the school, one banded by ability and the other taught in mixed ability classes.

Ball S J, Bowe R and Gerwitz S, 'Market forces and parental choice' in Tomlinson S (ed.), *Educational Reform and its Consequences*, London, IPPR/Rivers Oram Press, 1994

A study of fifteen schools in neighbouring LEAs with different population profiles (eg class and ethnicity). The study evaluates the impact of parental choice and the publication of league tables, eg the pressure to reintroduce streaming and setting and the tendency for some schools to focus on the more able.

Bowles S and Gintis H, *Schooling in Capitalist America*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976

Writing from a Marxist perspective Bowles and Gintis argue that the major role of education in capitalist societies is the reproduction of labour power. They argue that there is a close correspondence between the social relationships which govern interactions in the work place and social relationships in the education system eg the creation of a hardworking, docile, obedient, and highly motivated workforce, which is too divided to challenge the authority of management. They reject the view that capitalist societies are meritocratic and believe that class background is the most important factor influencing levels of attainment.

Durkheim E, *Moral Education*, Glencoe, Free Press, 1925 (republished 1973)

Durkheim saw the major function of education as the transmission of society's norms and values. He believed that it is a vital task for all societies to weld a mass of individuals into a united whole. Education, and in particular the teaching of history, provides the link between the individual and society – children will come to see that they are part of something larger than themselves and will develop a sense of commitment to the social group. He believed that the school provides a context in which children learn to cooperate with those who are neither their kin nor their friends, in his view rules should be strictly enforced in order for children to learn self-discipline and to see that misbehaviour damages society as a whole.

Halsey A H, Heath A and Ridge J M, *Origins and Destinations*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1980

Based on a sample of over 8,000 males born between 1913 and 1952 the authors found evidence of clear class inequalities in education. The sample was divided into three main groups (based on the father's occupation):

1. the service class (professionals, administrators and managers)
2. the intermediate class (clerical or sales workers, the self-employed and lower grade technicians and foremen)
3. the working class including manual workers in industry and agriculture.

The authors found that an individual from the service class, as compared to one from the working class, had four times as great a chance of being at school at 16, eight times the chance at 17 and ten times the chance at 18. Whilst the chance of an individual from the service class attending university was eleven times greater than one from the working class. It should be noted that the research excluded females and this might have made a significant difference to the findings.

Parsons T, 'The school class as a social system' in Halsey et al., *Education, Economy and Society*, New York, The Free Press, 1961

Writing from a functionalist perspective Parsons believed that the school acts as a bridge between the family and society, taking over as the main agency of socialisation and preparing children for adult life. Parsons argued that the schools operate on meritocratic principles: status is achieved on the basis of merit. In this way the school represents the wider society where, Parsons believed an individual is judged on universalistic standards, which are applied to all members regardless of kinship ties (within the family particularistic standards apply – the child is not judged on standards that can be applied to every individual in society). He believed that schools socialise children into the basic values of the wider society, maintaining a value consensus that emphasised achievement and equality of opportunity. Moreover, Parsons believed that schools functioned as an important mechanism for the selection of individuals for their future role in society. His functionalist perspective has been criticised by those who argue that the values of the education system may simply be those of the ruling elite, or that equality of opportunity is an illusion in an unequal society where wealth and privilege are more important than individual merit.

Willis P, *Learning to Labour*, Farnborough, Saxon House, 1977

Writing from a Marxist perspective, Paul Willis focused on the existence of conflict within the education system. He rejects the view that there is a direct relationship between the economy and the way that the education system operates. Unlike Bowles and Gintis he believes that education is not a particularly successful agency of socialisation, he also holds the view that education can have unintended consequences that may not be beneficial to capitalism. His book is based on a study of a school in the Midlands situated in a working class housing estate; he used observation and participant observation, recording group discussions, informal interviews and diaries. Willis attempts to understand the experience of schooling from the students' point of view. He described the existence of a counter culture, which was opposed to the values of the school. The members of this counter culture felt superior both to the teachers and to conformist students. Their main objective was to avoid attending lessons and they resented the school's attempts to control their time. They neither deferred to authority nor were they obedient and docile. However, Willis concluded that their rejection of the school made them suitable candidates for male dominated, unskilled or semi-skilled manual work (relatively easily obtained in the 1970s).

7.3 Crime and deviance

Becker H S, *Outsiders*, New York, The Free Press, 1963

Writing from an interactionist perspective Becker argued that an act only becomes deviant when others define it as such. Whether the 'label' of deviancy is applied depends on who commits the act, when and where it is committed, who observes the act, and the negotiations that take place between the various actors involved in the interaction. If, for example, the actions of young people are defined as delinquent and they are convicted for breaking the law, those young people have been labelled. The agents of social control, for example the police and the courts, have the power to make the label stick. The label applied to the individual becomes a master status; the young people have become criminals and this label will affect how others see them and respond to them. Assumptions will be made that the individuals concerned have the negative characteristics normally associated with the label. As a consequence the individuals will begin to see themselves in terms of the label, producing a self-fulfilling prophecy. The individual who has been publicly labelled as deviant is rejected from certain social groups on the basis of various negative assumptions about their future behaviour; this may well encourage further deviance, which in turn

begins what Becker describes as the deviant career. This career is completed when the individual joins an organised deviant group which develops a deviant subculture, this subculture develops beliefs and values which rationalise, justify and support deviant identities and behaviours.

Carlen P, *Women, Crime and Poverty*, Milton Keynes, Open University Press, 1988

Written from a feminist perspective, Carlen studied a group of mostly working class women aged between 15 and 46 who had been convicted of one or more crimes. She carried out in-depth, unstructured interviews with each of the women, a number of whom were in prison or youth custody at the time. Carlen uses control theory as the basis for her approach, this starts from the assumption that human beings are neither naturally good nor bad but will make a rational decision to turn to crime when the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. In Carlen's view, working-class women have been controlled through the promise of rewards. They make a class deal which offers respectable working class women consumer goods in return for their wage. They make a gender deal for the psychological and material rewards offered by male breadwinners in return for their love and domestic labour. When these rewards are not available or prove to be illusory, then criminality becomes a viable alternative. Carlen's work was based on a relatively small sample (39 women) but it supports the view that criminal behaviour becomes more likely when social control breaks down.

Cohen A, *Delinquent Boys*, Glencoe, The Free Press, 1955

Writing from a functionalist perspective Cohen argues that working class boys hold the same success goals as the wider society, but that as a consequence of educational failure and poor employment prospects, they have little or no opportunity to realise those goals. Cohen holds the view that cultural deprivation accounts for working class boys' lack of educational success. They become stuck at the lowest level of the stratification system and as a consequence of their lack of opportunity, they suffer from status frustration. They turn to criminality as an alternative route to success, becoming members of a criminal subculture which values activities such as stealing, vandalism and truancy. Those who perform well, in terms of the values of the subculture (the successful thief for example), are rewarded by recognition and prestige in the eyes of their peers. Cohen's ideas have been criticised by, for example, those who hold the view that working class youths do not necessarily accept mainstream success goals, but rather that they exhibit delinquent behaviour out of resentment against those whose values they do not share eg teachers and successful middle class students.

Heidensohn F, *Women and Crime*, London, Macmillan, 1985

Writing from a feminist perspective Heidensohn also uses control theory (see above) as the basis for her explanation of why women commit fewer crimes than men. She argues that male-dominated patriarchal societies control women more effectively than men, making it difficult for women to break the law. Women in such societies are closely controlled in the home, where they are expected to spend the majority of their time on housework and childcare. Women who challenge these assumptions risk male violence as an assertion of patriarchal authority. Men as the main or sole breadwinner also have financial power over their wives. Daughters are more closely controlled than sons, they have more limits on when they may leave the home and they are expected to contribute more time to domestic tasks. In public, women are controlled by the threat of male sexual violence and by the idea that inappropriate behaviour may bring loss of reputation and shame upon their families. The idea of separate spheres emphasises women's place as being in the home, those who attempt to raise concerns in public are subject to ridicule and told to return to where they belong. At work women are controlled by male-dominated hierarchies and workers organisations. They are subject to intimidation by various forms of sexual harassment. Heidensohn

has been criticised for making generalisations that do not apply to all women and for not always supporting her claims with strong research-based evidence.

Merton R K , *Social Theory and Social Structure*, New York, The Free Press, 1938 (republished in an enlarged edition in 1968)

Writing from a functionalist perspective Merton argued that deviance results from the culture and structure of society. He starts from the standard functionalist position of value consensus – all members of society hold the same values (see above). However, because members of society have different positions in the social structure, for example in terms of social class, Merton believed that they did not have the same opportunity to realise their shared goals. He also believed that American society was unbalanced because greater importance was attached to success, than to the ways in which that success was achieved. In the search for success by almost any means the danger is that the usual rules governing behaviour in society are abandoned, a situation of anomie results, where ‘anything goes’ in pursuit of wealth and material success.

He described five possible ways in which individuals could respond to success goals in American society.

1. **Conformity:** this describes individuals who work towards achieving success by conventionally accepted means, eg by gaining educational qualifications which in turn give them access to secure, well paid employment. Other conventional routes to success include talent, hard work and ambition.
2. **Innovation:** this describes individuals who are unable to succeed using conventionally accepted routes and turn to deviant means, usually crime. Merton believed that this route was most likely to be taken by individuals who came from the lower levels of society and who are denied the usual routes to success because they are, for example, less likely to gain the necessary educational qualifications.
3. **Ritualism:** this describes middle class individuals who are deviant because they abandon conventional success goals. They are unable to innovate because they have been strongly socialised to conform, but they have little opportunity for advancement and remain stuck in low paid, low status ‘respectable’ jobs where they may exhibit an enthusiasm for rules and petty bureaucracy.
4. **Retreatism:** this describes individuals from any social class position who are deviant because they abandon both success goals and any means of achieving them. They ‘drop out’ of society; this response can be applied to explain the behaviour of social outcasts of all kinds including vagrants and drug addicts.
5. **Rebellion:** this describes those individuals who reject success goals and the usual means of achieving them, but then replace those that they have rejected with different goals and means. They are deviant because they wish to create a new society, in Merton’s view they are typically members of a ‘rising’ social class who may well attempt to organise a revolution.

Merton has been criticised for not taking into account power relations in society, for example by failing to consider who makes the laws and who benefits from them. He has also been criticised for his assumption that there is such a thing as a ‘value consensus’ in American society. Furthermore, it has been suggested that his ‘deterministic’ view fails to adequately explain why only some individuals who experience anomie become criminals and that his theory exaggerates working class crime and underestimates middle class, ‘white collar’ crime.

7.4 Social stratification

Davis K and Moore W E, 'Some principles of stratification' in Bendix R and Lipset S M (eds), *Class, Status and Power*, 2nd edition, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1945 (republished 1967)

Writing from a functionalist perspective, Davis and Moore argued that social stratification was a 'universal necessity' for every known human society. They believed that for any society to survive and operate efficiently it was necessary for the following to happen:

1. all roles must be filled
2. they must be filled by those best able to perform them
3. necessary training must take place
4. roles must be performed conscientiously.

The 'mechanism' that allows these things to take place was, in their view, a system of social stratification that attached unequal rewards and privileges to the different positions in society. They believed that this system served to match the most able people with the functionally most important positions in society, those that required the highest levels of skill and/or the greatest responsibility to direct and organise others. By attaching the high rewards to those functionally important positions, those with ambition will be encouraged to compete for them with the most talented achieving success.

The theory is open to a number of criticisms, for example, occupations which carry less prestige or lower economic rewards can also be seen as functionally important to society (are lawyers more important than nurses?). Differences in status and pay between different occupational groups may be due to differences in their power (are Members of Parliament worth more than nurses?). Furthermore there is no proof that exceptional talent is required for important positions in society, nor for that matter is there an agreed method of measuring talent and ability, for example there is no formal educational requirement for Government ministers. The number of talented individuals in society may be far greater than Davis and Moore suggest and unequal rewards may not be the best method of harnessing that talent. The Prime Minister, for example, is paid far less than the chief executive of a typical major corporation.

Devine F, *Affluent Workers Revisited*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1992

Devine tested Lockwood's idea that 'privatized instrumentalism' would become typical amongst the working class. This term refers to social relationships centred on the home with work only as a means to an end, when affluent workers joined with their workmates Lockwood believed that they did so as self-interested individuals to improve their wages and working conditions rather than as an act of collective solidarity.

During the late 1980s Devine interviewed a sample of male manual workers employed at the Vauxhall car plant in Luton and their wives. By returning to Luton she was able to make a direct comparison with the work of Goldthorpe and Lockwood in the 1960s (*The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure*, 1969). She did not find evidence to support the idea of 'privatized instrumentalism', whilst the lifestyle of her sample was not as communal as that of the traditional working class neither was it as home centred and privatized as had been predicted. She also rejected the idea of the 'new working class' and denied that affluent workers had been persuaded to accept capitalism uncritically. Amongst her sample she found evidence of rising living standards and of aspirations as consumers, but many of those she interviewed continued to resent the

privileges of inherited wealth and held a sense of injustice at the existence of extreme class inequalities. However, whilst they retained many of the values of the traditional working class her respondents had generally lost faith in the ability of the Labour Party to deliver a more just and equal society.

Marx K, (selected writings 1857–1867) in McLellan D, *Karl Marx Selected Writings*, 2nd edition, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000

Marx saw social stratification as a mechanism which allows a privileged few to exploit the many. Marx believed that systems of stratification arose from the relationships of social groups to the means of production (land, capital, labour power, buildings and machinery). His theory of history described Western society as developing through four main epochs: primitive communism, ancient society, feudal society and capitalism. Marx believed that as agriculture developed it produced surplus wealth and the accumulation of private property, the precondition for the emergence of a class of non-producers (a ruling class) who gained control of the means of production thereby obliging others to work for them (a subject class).

Marx held the view that political power came from economic power, the power of the ruling class is rooted in its ownership and control of the means of production. Ruling class ideology seeks to justify ruling class domination through the use of ideas such as ‘the free market’ which distorts reality to create a positive image of capitalism as normal and natural. To a Marxist those members of the subject class who accept this status quo are victims of false class consciousness. Marx believed that class struggle was the driving force for social change. Furthermore he believed that capitalist society was by its very nature unstable, as at its heart lay a basic conflict of interest between the workers whose labour is exploited and the capitalists who exploit that labour.

Marx believed that as a consequence of the natural development of capitalism, the gap between the workers (the proletariat) and the capitalist class (the bourgeoisie) would become greater and the differences more extreme (polarisation). Writing in 19th-century Britain, Marx hoped that this process would produce a proletarian revolution and an ideal communist society. Some sociologists believe that his theories still provide the best explanation of the nature of capitalist society. Alternatively New Right theorists are critical of Marxist theory and emphasise, for example, the benefits of capitalism and the opportunities for social mobility.

Murray C, *Losing Ground*, New York, Basic Books, 1984

Murray argued that American society had a growing underclass. He believed that government policies have encouraged the members of this underclass to become dependent on benefits. In his view American welfare reforms which resulted in increased levels of benefit, discouraged self-sufficiency and led a growing number of single parents and young people to lose interest in getting jobs. According to Murray the growing membership of the underclass posed a threat to the economic and social fabric of American society because its members were a burden on tax payers and responsible for a rising crime rate.

Murray visited Britain at the end of the 1980s (after the publication of this book) and argued that Britain too was developing an underclass. He identified rising rates of illegitimacy, a rising crime rate and an apparent unwillingness amongst some of Britain’s youth to seek employment as signs of the development of an underclass. He believed that traditional values such as honesty, family life and hard work were being undermined by the members of the underclass, to be replaced by an alternative value system that tolerated crime and various forms of anti-social behaviour.

Murray’s cultural definition of the underclass (in terms of their behaviour) largely ignores any economic reasons that may create such a class. His work has been criticised for its poor evidence base, for example, much of the research evidence suggests that the benefit system does not have the effect that he claims and that many of the so-called underclass actually have conventional

attitudes and want stable relationships and paid employment. Viewed more sympathetically members of the underclass can be seen as the victims of social inequality rather than the cause of social problems. Murray's analysis of the underclass is closely associated with New Right theories which also blame the benefits system for producing groups who are unable or unwilling to earn their own living.

Townsend P, *Poverty in the United Kingdom*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1979

Townsend identified three ways of defining poverty:

1. The state's standard of poverty on which official statistics are based. This was calculated on the basis of an individual entitlement to claim certain benefits and Townsend believed this to be arbitrarily determined by the government of the day.
2. The relative income standard of poverty based on identifying those households whose income falls below the average for similar households. Again he believed this measure to be arbitrary, potentially misleading (it did not account for the level of welfare payments available) and inadequate (it did not account for the lifestyles available to those who are relatively materially disadvantaged).
3. Relative deprivation, his preferred measure. Townsend believed that individuals, families and groups fall into relative poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in activities and have the living conditions that are widely available in the society in which they live.

Townsend used his preferred definition to measure the extent of poverty in the UK. His research was based on questionnaires issued to over 2,000 households and more than 6,000 individuals located in various geographical areas in the UK. He devised a deprivation index covering a large number of variables including diet, fuel, clothing, housing conditions, working conditions, health, education and social activities. Each household was given a score on this deprivation index and Townsend then calculated a threshold for levels of income below which the amount of deprivation rapidly increased. On this basis he believed more than 22% of the population to be living in poverty in 1968–69, this compared to just over 6% using the state standard and a little over 9% using relative income.

Townsend's methods and conclusions have been criticised by those who argue that his index was inadequate and produced potentially misleading results, for example the absence of fresh meat and cooked meals might not be an indicator of poverty but of individual choice.

Walby S, *Theorizing Patriarchy*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1990

Writing from a feminist perspective Walby argued that the concept of patriarchy is central to our understanding of society. She described six patriarchal structures which restrict women and help to maintain male domination of society:

1. Paid work: whilst in theory the state supports equality between men and women (the *Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts*) women continue to be disadvantaged in the labour market with their opportunities restricted by cultural values (eg expectations regarding the roles of wives and mothers).
2. Patriarchal relations of production: men exploit women by gaining benefit from their unpaid labour in the home.
3. Patriarchal culture: whilst women have gained more freedom they continue to be subject to social expectations which apply different standards to the behaviour of men and women.

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4. Sexuality: whilst women have greater freedom to express their sexuality they do so whilst subject to double standards (for example men with multiple partners are often admired by other men whilst women with multiple partners are frequently condemned).
 5. Male violence towards women: the use or threat of violence discourages women from challenging patriarchal authority.
 6. The state: whilst the state is not as patriarchal as it used to be it continues to do relatively little to protect women from patriarchal power in society eg women still generally receive lower wages than men and equal opportunities laws are seldom enforced.

Walby argued that the nature of patriarchy in Western society has changed, in the past private patriarchy involved the direct control of women by their fathers or husbands. Whilst in contemporary Western society a form of public patriarchy exists, women have access to public life but they are generally segregated into low paid, low status jobs where they are collectively exploited by male-dominated society.

Weber M, *The Theory of Economic and Social Organizations*, New York, Free Press, 1947 (republished 2012)

Weber provides a more complex picture of social stratification than Marx. Writing in the early part of the 20th century (the book was translated into English after his death in 1920) Weber argued that classes develop in market economies in which individuals compete for economic gain. He defined a class as a group of individuals who share a similar position in a market economy (their market situation) and he believed that those who share a similar class situation also share similar life chances.

Like Marx, Weber argued that the major class division lay between those who owned the forces of production and those who did not. However, Weber also saw important differences between the various groups who lacked control of the forces of production, for example professionals who received higher salaries because of the demand for their services. He also differed from Marx in that he saw no evidence to support the polarisation of classes; he argued that the middle class expands rather than contracts as capitalism develops. He rejected the view that a proletarian revolution was inevitable and that political power derives only from economic power. Weber distinguished between three different sources of power: charismatic (devotion to a leader who has exceptional qualities), traditional (based on established customs and inherited status) and rational legal (based on the acceptance of shared impersonal rules).

Collective action, Weber argued, was not only possible as a consequence of class but could also result from a shared status situation (level of prestige or esteem) resulting from individuals shared occupations, ethnicity, religion or lifestyles. Weber also described the process of social closure whereby some individuals can be excluded from membership of a status group (eg the caste system). When groups are specifically concerned with the acquisition of political or social power Weber defined them as parties (he used this term to include groups who could be defined as pressure or interest groups as well as political parties). He did not see the relationship between political groups and class and status as simple and clear cut, party membership he believed could cut across and divide classes and status groups.

There is a longstanding debate between those sociologists who adopt a Marxist perspective on class and those who follow Weber. Both groups have been criticised by New Right theorists who accuse them of bias, ignoring the social mobility and opportunities created by capitalist societies.

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