Sociology

Sociology is the study of society and individuals. It is suitable for students who have an open, enquiring mind and enjoy debating contemporary issues. A number of theoretical and political perspectives are applied to the study of topics such as education, families and households, mass media and crime and deviance

A wider knowledge and understanding of the society in which we live is essential and students must be keen on keeping up to date with the news and current affairs. As members of society all students should come to the course equipped with some knowledge of the social world, but through the study of sociology they will develop a deeper understanding and examine issues that directly affect life in Britain and other areas of the world. Students learn how to conduct experimental and nonexperimental research, and even carry out and report on their own sociological investigations. Students will learn through arguing, guided reading, discussing, writing essays, group work, videos, class presentations and internet research.

Course Structure & Content

Year 1
Optional Topics in Sociology; Families and Households This unit includes an examination of different conceptions of culture, including sub culture, mass culture, high and low culture, popular culture, global culture. The unit also considers the relationship of the family to the social structure and social change, including topics such as marriage, divorce and childhood. Students also focus on the social indicators of poverty, wealth and income.
Compulsory content: Education; Methods in Context; Research Methods This unit looks at the role and purpose of education and the issue of social class differences in achievement. It also considers health, illness, disability and the body as social and as biological constructs. Students examine the unequal social distribution of health and illness in the United Kingdom by social class, age, gender, ethnicity and region, and internationally. Data collection and analysis is also used, including questionnaires, interviews, participant and non-participant observation, experiments, documents, and official statistics; and the students review the strengths and limitations of these sources.

Year 2
Optional; Beliefs in Society; Students are expected to be familiar with sociological explanations of the ideology, science and religion, including both Christian and non-Christian religious traditions. Consider the relationship between social change and social stability, and religious beliefs, practices and organisations. Research religious organisations, including cults, sects, denominations, churches and New Age movements, and their relationship to religious and spiritual belief and practice. Study the relationship between different social groups and religious/spiritual organisations and movements, beliefs and practices. Consider the significance of religion and religiosity in the contemporary world, including the nature and extent of secularisation in a global context, and globalisation and the spread of religions. Compulsory Content; Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods This unit includes the study of different theories of the nature and distribution of power. Different theories of stratification, including stratification by social class, gender, ethnicity and age are evaluated. Students also look at theory and methods critically, improving their knowledge from AS. The main focus of the unit is a detailed study of crime and deviance, considering explanations of crime including the role of the media in amplifying deviance in society.

Entry Requirements

Grade 5 in Sociology. If not taken, grade 5 in English Language , English Literature or a Humanities subject.

Assessment

This course would be useful for pursuing careers in the field of social sciences. Sociology can prepare students for careers in the media, education, social work, law, the police and criminology