



Kings Langley School

Unlocking Potential for Life

Sociology A level Course handbook

2022-23



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What is expected of me in Year 12?

A level is different to GCSEs in that you are expected to be more of an **independent learner** and the standard is obviously higher. This means taking charge of your learning outside of the classroom. With a subject like Sociology there is a **lot of new key concepts** to learn which you would not be familiar with having not learnt the subject from Year 7. A good way of getting to know these well is to **make lists of key concepts** for each topic as you begin each one and constantly check your understanding of them. They are the building blocks for answering short and long questions and doing well. Non-specialist but sophisticated vocabulary used in Sociology can be perfected by using your Bedrock account.

You are expected to get a **subject folder with dividers** for arranging your notes on each topic where you will also file this booklet, the course outline, revision trackers, marked assignments and topic tests with feedback. You are expected to **respond to this feedback** from your teacher in order to develop your progress in Sociology. This means re-writing answers to questions that you perform poorly on. This will ensure your success.

You are also expected as a minimum to read and **study all the topics covered in your set textbook**. Wider reading and other tasks are found in the **Super Curriculum** booklet (given out separately). This will ensure deeper and wider discovery of the subject, giving ideas for EPQs as well as possible career options in the field of Sociology.

As well as **coming to lessons on time** and immediately doing your quick start in silence at the beginning of your lesson, you are expected to **read at least one topic ahead in your textbooks**. This is preparation to consolidate understanding of lesson content and to enable you to ask questions. In your timetabled private study periods you are expected to **revise key concepts** and make either mind maps or flash cards as a **revision summaries** for each topic as we go through them, recording this progress on your **revision trackers**.

You are expected to use the **Cornell note taking method** in your notes, which has been shown by research to produce better student results. This involves using a wider hand drawn margin and recording extra notes to self on points or examples discussed in class. Examples appear in **Appendix A**. This method will also be discussed in class. All these expectations of you as a sixth form student will be assessed each term using **10 criteria** on the **Academic check tracker, Appendix B**.

In summary, you are expected to :

1. Be an independent learner – in charge of progressing your learning outside the classroom.
2. Write lists of key concepts for each topic and revise them as you go.
3. Complete your Bedrock tasks to improve your use of non-specialist vocabulary.
4. Keep a subject folder with the course specification, dividers for notes on each topic, assignments, revision resources, revision trackers and topic tests.
5. Come to lessons on time and complete the quick start task in silence, ready to learn and complete all classroom lesson tasks for ongoing assessment for learning.
6. Read at least one topic ahead of lessons to familiarise yourself with the topic.
7. Use the Cornell note taking method in lessons.
8. Use your private study periods to read your textbook and use it to; complete key concept lists and learn them, make revision resources and use them to memorise key points, access the Super Curriculum to deepen your knowledge of the subject.



What support will I receive from my teachers?

Your teachers will deliver the full exam board specification in **lessons via power point presentations, handouts and workbooks**. Classwork tasks will be set in each lesson to assess your knowledge in each topic and to practice answering example style questions which meet all of the assessment objectives for Sociology. After delivering lessons, **power points slides** will be made available for reference **on Teams**.

You will be **assessed via a topic test after covering each topic** which will be taken from exam board papers to provide a realistic assessment of your knowledge and progress in the subject and prepare you for full exam papers.

You will receive **specific feedback** on your progress that will enable you to respond to improve your performance. This feedback will allow you to **respond and practice what an A style answer** would be in line with the mark schemes from the exam board and be able to constantly raise your grades in line with your targets.

Your teacher will conduct an **academic check once a term** with you where your folders will be assessed for quality of note taking, general organisation and neatness, evidence of responding to feedback, revision resources and work ethic in lessons. You will be awarded an ATL score of 1-4 for each of the 10 criteria for satisfactory performance as well as reviewing your grades. This will help you know exactly how you are doing and alert you to any areas you need to improve on.

Your teachers are available at any time should you wish to approach them with questions for clarification on any aspect of the course or your performance.

In summary, you can expect your teachers to :

1. Deliver the full exam board specification via power point lesson slides, including classroom and homework assessment tasks to assess your knowledge and understanding as you learn.
2. Make power point slides available on Teams at the end of a topic for references as well as other relevant resources.
3. Give you a topic test that assesses your knowledge of each topic with questions from exam board papers that will increase your exam technique.
4. Provide you with detailed written and verbal feedback on how to increase your performance in line with the top mark bands.
5. Conduct an academic check with you once a term to monitor your progress on 10 criteria for success in the subject and give you feedback to improve your performance.

Course overview

A copy of the AQA specification for A level Sociology (v. December 2016) will be handed out to you separately to file in your folders.

The course is a linear A level course which is taken over two years. Final exams are written at the end of the two year course. However, you will write trial exams in January during Year 12 and Finals in June in Year 12. You will also write trial exams in January during Year 13.

Final Exam paper breakdown

- There will be three final exam papers at the end of Year 13



- Each paper is 2 hours long and worth 80 marks in total
- Each paper is worth 33.3% of the final A level mark

Assessments

Paper 1: Education with Theory and Methods	+	Paper 2: Topics in Sociology	+	Paper 3: Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods
<p>What's assessed</p> <p>Compulsory content 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3</p>		<p>What's assessed</p> <p>Section A: one from option 1: 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3 or 4.2.4</p> <p>Section B: one from option 2: 4.2.5, 4.2.6, 4.2.7 or 4.2.8</p>		<p>What's assessed</p> <p>Compulsory content 4.3.1, 4.3.2</p>
<p>Assessed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 hour written exam • 80 marks • 33.3% of A-level 		<p>Assessed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 hour written exam • 80 marks • 33.3% of A-level 		<p>Assessed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 hour written exam • 80 marks • 33.3% of A-level
<p>Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education: short answer and extended writing, 50 marks • Methods in Context: extended writing, 20 marks • Theory and Methods: extended writing, 10 marks 		<p>Questions</p> <p>Section A: extended writing, 40 marks</p> <p>Section B: extended writing, 40 marks</p>		<p>Questions</p> <p>Crime and Deviance: short answer and extended writing, 50 marks</p> <p>Theory and Methods: extended writing, 30 marks</p>

How will I be assessed and how can I meet the criteria?

There will be three final exams, each have slightly different weightings in terms of how they assess all three assessment objectives. These are described below in a relevant section from the AQA Specification :

5.2 Assessment objectives

Assessment objectives (AOs) are set by Ofqual and are the same across all AS and A-level Sociology specifications and all exam boards.

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

A-level

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



Assessment criteria breakdown per exam paper

Weighting of assessment objectives for A-level Sociology

Assessment objectives (AOs)	Component weightings (approx %)			Overall weighting (approx %)
	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3	
AO1	15	13	16	44
AO2	11	11	9	31
AO3	8	9	8	25
Overall weighting of components	33.33	33.33	33.33	100

Academic check criteria

Apart from summative and formative assessment of lesson content, your ongoing learning and performance will be assessed by 10 criteria for success in Sociology. Each term you will have an academic check according to these 10 criteria and you will be given a score. This score together with an AFL score of 1-4 for each of the criteria will indicate your progress or lack of performance and either count towards or count against you obtaining a Privilege Pass. This entitles you to go home early some days for home study.

The 10 academic check criteria are :

1. Notes are in Cornell format and are complete
2. Revision resources are made for each topic as it is learned e.g. flash cards or mind maps, using the textbook and notes
3. QS, Summary and Practice questions are completed and marked in green
4. Notes are neatly filed in dividers for each topic
5. Topic tests and homework assessments are filed with green pen annotation for improvements
6. Students have responded to feedback in green pen and re-done answers to questions that scored half marks or less
7. Attendance and Punctuality
8. Engagement and work ethic in lessons
9. Meeting deadlines
10. Evidence of past paper practice

Academic check and folder log

You will be assessed on the above 10 criteria once a term. The result of this check will be recorded on a log (**Appendix B**).

As an independent learner you will then take responsibility to improve the areas you scored low on and bring evidence to your teacher as soon as possible in order to have your score updated.



This empowers you to take charge of your learning and development, a skill you will need at university, college or the workplace where you will be expected to be self-motivated and where there will be less guidance but just as much accountability for your performance.

Revision and revision trackers

Revision is something you need to get started from the beginning of the course. While your note-taking will be useful for initial understanding and building your knowledge of the topics, you will also need to memorise it to write the exams.

As lessons progress through the topics you are expected to make revision resources as you go. This means making a mind map ideally or a flash/cue cards which are summaries of large amounts of information which you can memorise more easily to answer questions in the exam (**Appendix C**).

Important – why make flash cards or mind maps when I can just get a revision guide? The work you have to initially do to make these summaries e.g. reading your notes and the textbook to work out the main points to use as a cue, is the first and most important step in revision. You have to understand something well to be able to summarise it. Then when you start to memorise your summaries you already know the content that much better for having summarised it yourself and will get a better grade. All that learning involved in making your own revision cards or maps is missed out on if you just try and memorise reduced content from a study guide that someone else has produced.

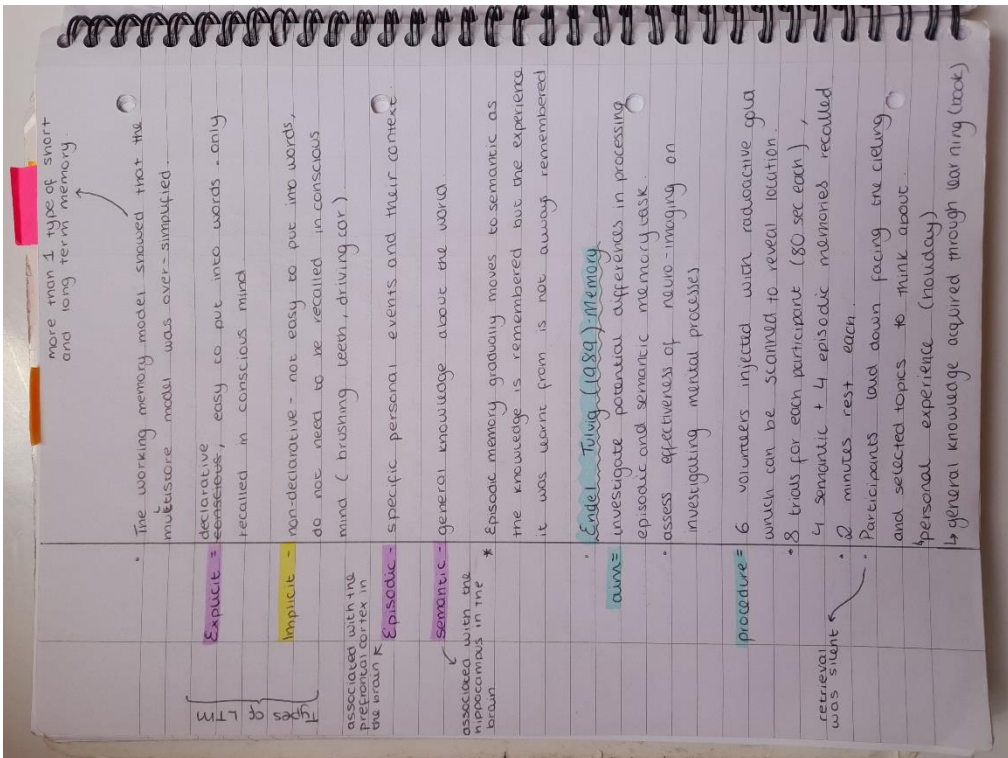
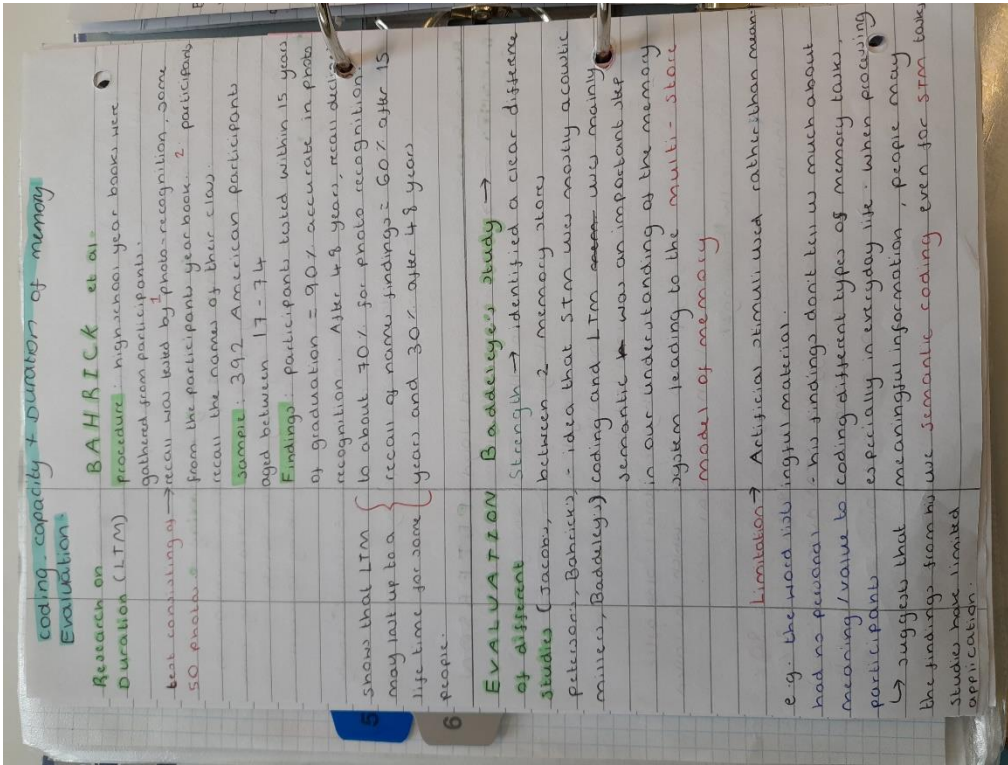
Revision trackers will be given to you separately to file in your folders. These are laid out in a checklist format which will help you organise and track your production of revision resources for each topic.

Additional reading and the Super Curriculum

You are expected to use JSTOR which is a journal database and access the Sociology Super Curriculum (**separate booklet**). Our librarian, Ms Hill has obtained access for staff and students. For a subject like Sociology it is very beneficial to be able to look up the original journal articles for many of the key studies you will learn about in the course. Whether you are planning to study Sociology after school or not, it will help your understanding of the course, especially research methods, to look up at least 5 of the key studies you will be learning about and see how research is reported on for the general public to access.

You will be provided with a log for the Super Curriculum and the articles you look up on JSTOR to record brief notes about what you learnt.

APPENDIX A – Examples of Cornell note taking



APPENDIX B – Academic check and folder log example



Date of Academic check :

Codes :

1	Exceeding expectations
2	Meeting expectations
3	Below expectations
4	Serious concerns

Below are the scores of a fictitious student who comes along to lessons punctually, has good attendance, takes notes, writes topic tests and gets assignments in on time. However, he does not have good academic check scores. He is not meeting the expectations of an A level student which are required to achieve a decent grade. He thinks he is being a good enough student but is only meeting expectations on a few of the criteria. Consequently, he has quite a few targets for improvement to meet.

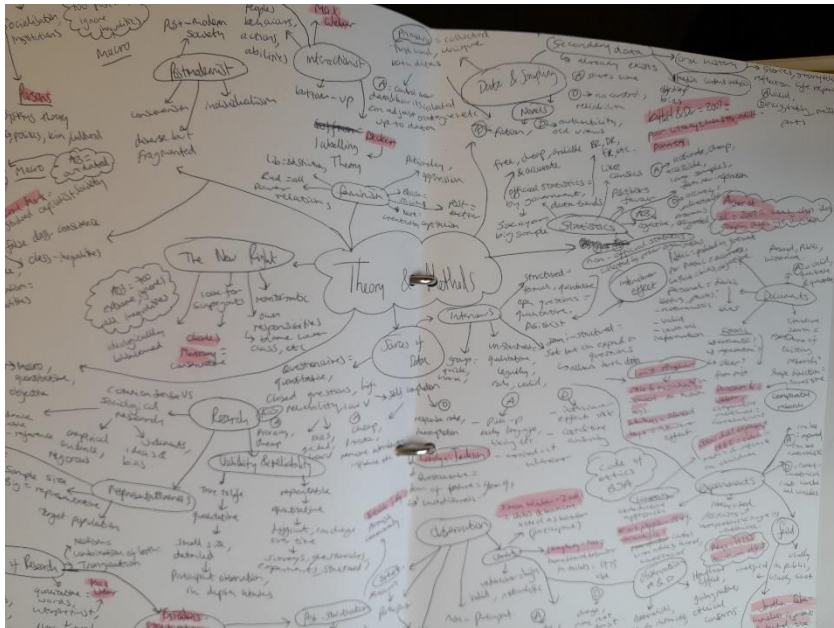
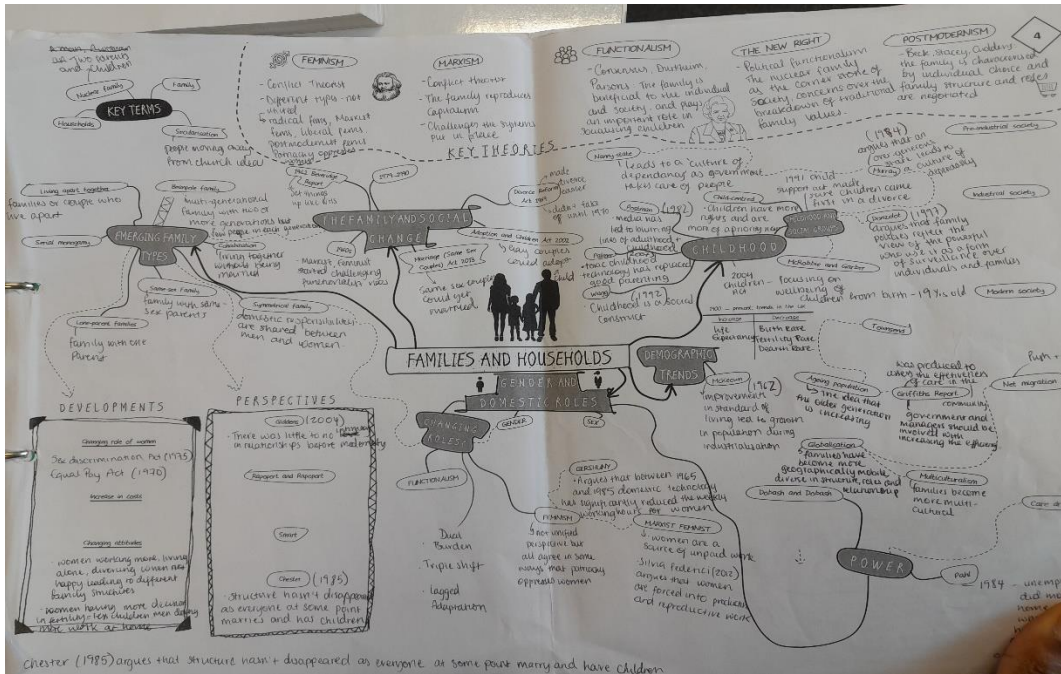
Student Names	1. Notes are in Cornell format and complete	2. Revision resources are made for each topic as it is learned	3. QS, Summary and Practice questions are completed	4. Notes are neatly filed in dividers for each topic	5. Topic tests and homework assessments are filed with green pen annotation for improvements	6. Students have responded to feedback in green pen and re-done answers to questions that scored half marks or less	7. Attendance and Punctuality	8. Engagement and work ethic in lessons	9. Meeting deadlines	10. Evidence of past paper practice and wider reading on log
Joe Blogg	3	4	3	3	2	4	2	2	2	4
Feedback from check	Notes are written but not in Cornell format	No revision resources are made	QS are done and marked but not questions given in class	Notes are stuffed into the back of a writing pad to be filed later	Topic tests were annotated in class with feedback in green pen	No questions have been re-done according to feedback on how to improve	Good	Good	Good	No past paper practice, evidence of wider reading or looking up studies on JSTOR

Targets for improvement :

1. Look at other students' versions of Cornell notes and ask them what works well, implement changes.
2. Start making revision resources using your trackers to keep pace with content covered in lessons.
3. Start completing all questions given in class in writing and marking them in green, do others in the book for practice in private study.
4. Immediately file all your notes according to topic within labelled file dividers.
5. Go back over past tests or assignments and re-do any question you scored half marks or less on.
6. Practice sections of past papers relevant to topics we have covered.
7. Look up journal articles on any key studies we have covered so far, choose something from the Super Curriculum to watch or read.



APPENDIX C – Flash cards and mind map examples



...the family structure is desirable, alternative family structures are acceptable, it is equally successful in raising children where plays a role in family life, both parents may work

1947 - National School, alternatives are unacceptable, decline in crisis = nuclear, breakdown of families as the problem, state has limited role, traditional roles in the family supported

1947 - Knowledge report = development of the welfare state

1948 - Social Security Act = increase in divorce 58, 234 + 14, 023

1970 - Family Relations Act = more discrimination, illegal on the grounds of sex only in both sexes

1975 - Rape became illegal in both sexes

1981 - Civil Partnership Act = **WOL** same marriage as marriage as a positive marriage and allowed

Conservative (then right) government

→ Mainly benefits are back to encourage fathers to take more responsibility for their child

→ Child Support Agency + father is provided reference for child tax & welfare benefits if married

→ **criticised by feminists**

→ blaming the victim

Family & households

→ **Functionalists** claim that the nuclear family was the basic and central family structure, two generations living together with a biologically related children, heterosexual couple.

→ **Household** = group of people living together without being related

→ **Postmodernists** = Ulrich Beck says there is no such thing as a family today as things change and are more optional to the individual

→ **Individualism** = no place in nuclear life, focus on the individual on the meanings given to a particular life choice

THE NEW RIGHT nuclear, traditional, conservative values are in the parent, resulting in traditional roles in the family as a consequence

→ women have to make choice of feminism, individualism, patriarchy

→ **feminists** criticise = oppressive to women

→ **FUNCTIONALISM** = dominant emphasis, the important role in creating value consensus, shared values that are considered important, function properly to society = important

→ social solidarity, collective conscience

→ **Parsons (1951)** = everyone family has become more specialised, resulting in carrying out two main roles, primary socialisation & stabilisation (household view) + criticised for not looking at the bad things

MARXISTS = claim that the family is simply a way to maintain a capitalist society

→ **Marx** = women are commodities

→ **Fredrick Engels** = family entered the ruling class, stayed powerful and wealthy = men's son (primogeniture)

→ **monogamous nuclear family** = necessary (1886) providing capital, labour & reinforces capitalism

FEMINISTS = views on patriarchy

→ **Marxist** = feminism = women are doubly oppressed by patriarchy and capitalism

→ **Radical** = domestic work, child bearing, says women are forced into productive and reproductive labour

→ **Radical feminists** = inequalities in the home are the result of how men are allowed to socialise in a oppression, women's care needs for husband & children

→ **Difference feminists** = criticised other feminists for taking them into account of the nature of different types of masculinities, social class, race, sexual orientation

→ **Labour feminists** = Ann Oakley, are optimistic about gender inequalities between men & women

→ **Intersectional** = a shift in attitudes towards women, taken into account the complexity of race, social class and ethnicity of colour