

GCSE (9-1)

# WJEC Eduqas GCSE (9-1) in SOCIOLOGY

ACCREDITED BY OFQUAL  
DESIGNATED BY QUALIFICATIONS WALES

## SPECIFICATION

Teaching from 2017  
For award from 2019

Version 2 January 2019



# SUMMARY OF AMENDMENTS

Version	Description	Page number
2	'Making entries' section has been amended to clarify resit rules.	16





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# GCSE SOCIOLOGY

## SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT

### Component 1: Understanding Social Processes

Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes

50% of qualification

This component covers the following topic areas:

- Key concepts and processes of cultural transmission
- Families
- Education
- Sociological research methods

A written assessment with a mix of short answer, structured questions and extended-response questions, all compulsory. The extended response questions will require candidates to draw together different areas of knowledge, skills and/or understanding from across the relevant specification content.

### Component 2: Understanding Social Structures

Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes

50% of qualification

This component covers the following topic areas

- Social differentiation and stratification
- Crime and deviance
- Applied methods of sociological enquiry

A written assessment with a mix of short answer, structured questions and extended-response questions, all compulsory. The extended response questions will require candidates to draw together different areas of knowledge, skills and/or understanding from across the relevant specification content.

This linear qualification will be available for assessment in May/June each year. It will be awarded for the first time in summer 2019.

**Ofqual Qualification Number (listed on [The Register](#)): 603/1045/5**

**Qualifications Wales Designation Number (listed on [QiW](#)): C00/1176/4**

# GCSE SOCIOLOGY

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Aims and objectives

The WJEC Eduqas GCSE in Sociology is designed to foster in learners an understanding and critical awareness of the social world around them. The specification focuses on the importance of social structure in explaining social issues.

Learners will be encouraged to explore and debate contemporary social issues to enable them to challenge taken-for-granted assumptions and to question their everyday understanding of social phenomena. By following this course, learners will develop their own sociological awareness through active engagement with the contemporary social world.

This specification will develop learners' ability to think sociologically in relation to their experience of the social world around them so that they are able to play a positive, active and informed role in society.

This WJEC Eduqas GCSE specification in Sociology requires learners 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 in order 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.

## 1.2 Prior learning and progression

There are no previous learning requirements for this specification. Any requirements set for entry to a course based on this specification are at the school/college's discretion.

This specification provides a suitable foundation for the study of sociology at either AS or A level. In addition, the specification provides a coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study for learners who do not progress to further study in this subject. The knowledge and understanding and skills developed through the study of GCSE Sociology will also provide a basis for further learning and career choices.

## 1.3 Equality and fair access

This specification may be followed by any learner, irrespective of gender, ethnic, religious or cultural background. It has been designed to avoid, where possible, features that could, without justification, make it more difficult for a learner to achieve because they have a particular protected characteristic.

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The specification has been discussed with groups who represent the interests of a diverse range of learners, and the specification will be kept under review.

Reasonable adjustments are made for certain learners in order to enable them to access the assessments (e.g. candidates are allowed access to a Sign Language Interpreter, using British Sign Language). Information on reasonable adjustments is found in the following document from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ): *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments: General and Vocational Qualifications*.

This document is available on the JCQ website ([www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk)). As a consequence of provision for reasonable adjustments, very few learners will have a complete barrier to any part of the assessment.

## 2 SUBJECT CONTENT

This GCSE specification requires learners to:

- study the content in a UK context except where otherwise stated
- study, critically evaluate and compare and contrast theories or explanations, including the key features of each theory or explanation in the context of the specific area of sociology.

In Component 1, learners will consider how human beings acquire their identity and examine the process of passing on culture from generation to generation and in diverse settings. Learners will be encouraged to contemplate how they acquire their individual identity. This theme is continued through a detailed study of two agents of socialisation: families and education, which will provide learners with a deeper, more theoretical understanding of the social world and an awareness that the process of socialisation is contested.

Concepts and theories used throughout Component 1 will be applied to an understanding and analysis of the topic areas in Component 2.

In Component 2, learners will enhance their awareness of the social world through an examination of social structures and their influence on human behaviour. Learners will also develop an understanding of the nature and extent of inequality and will examine competing theories on the causes of inequality through a study of the ideas of the classical sociologists, and a more detailed study of crime and deviance.

In applied methods of sociological enquiry, learners are encouraged to develop their understanding of the research process by studying the stages in carrying out research and in interpreting data. This will assist in their assessment of the evidence used in both components.

### Skills

Both components require learners to demonstrate essential skills developed through their study of sociology; that is, the ability to show their knowledge and understanding of key concepts and issues in the context of sociological theory and methodology. Learners are also expected to select, interpret, evaluate and apply their knowledge and understanding in a range of theoretical and practical contexts.

Learners will also be expected to apply and evaluate this knowledge and understanding to a range of related methodological issues.

This specification requires learners 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 judgement and to draw conclusions
- draw connections between the different topic areas studied.

In addition, the specification requires learners to:

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

## 2.1 Component 1

### Component 1: Understanding Social Processes

Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes

50% of qualification

100 marks

This component focuses on the themes of socialisation, identity and culture. Learners study the key concepts and processes of cultural transmission, including socialisation and the acquisition of identity, and develop these through detailed study of families and education.

Sociological research methods are presented as a separate topic area. However, research methods should permeate the entire course. Learners should be encouraged, when considering the evidence used to support or challenge theories in their study of families and education, to examine the research methods used, their reliability and their appropriateness for that study. This will help learners to understand the importance of assessing the research methods used in evidence gathering.

Sociological theory and its relevance in contemporary society also permeates the course. Learners should be familiar with the theories of named classical sociologists and their relevance to contemporary society.

All theories and studies are to be considered in a UK context except where otherwise stated.

1. Key concepts and processes of cultural transmission	Required content
1.1 Key sociological concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• culture, norms, values, roles, status, identity, sanctions, cultural diversity</li> </ul>
1.2 Debates over the acquisition of identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• nature/nurture including examples of feral children and cultural diversity</li> </ul>
1.3 The process of socialisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• agents of socialisation: family, education, media, peer group</li> <li>• how agents of socialisation pass on culture and identity, for example: gender, class and ethnic identity</li> <li>• informal and formal social control</li> </ul>

2 Families	Required content
2.1 Family diversity and different family forms in the UK and within a global context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what is a family?</li> <li>• nuclear family, extended family, reconstituted family, lone parent family, single sex family, cohabiting family, beanpole family</li> <li>• ethnic minority family forms</li> <li>• global family forms including polygamy, arranged marriages</li> <li>• one-child family policy in China</li> </ul>
2.2 Social changes and family structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• changes in social norms, secularisation, values and laws, feminism, economic factors, technology and immigration and their impact on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ family diversity, including the work of Rapoport</li> <li>○ divorce rates and serial monogamy</li> <li>○ cohabitation, single parent families, later age of marriage</li> <li>○ singlehood</li> <li>○ family size</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2.3 Social changes and family relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• changes in social norms, secularisation, values and laws, feminism</li> <li>• economic factors, technology and their impact on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ segregated and joint conjugal roles, symmetrical families, domestic division of labour</li> <li>○ New Man</li> <li>○ decision making / money management</li> <li>○ dual career families</li> <li>○ leisure activities</li> <li>○ theory of symmetrical family and principle of stratified diffusion, developed from the functionalist perspective of Willmott and Young</li> </ul> </li> <li>• child-rearing patterns and child-centred families</li> <li>• 'boomerang' children</li> <li>• 'sandwich' generation</li> </ul>
2.4 Sociological theories of the role of the family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conflict versus consensus debate on the role of the family</li> <li>• consensus view of Functionalism</li> <li>• Functionalist theory of the role and functions of family, such as Parsons and primary socialisation and stabilisation of adult personalities</li> <li>• conflict view of Marxism</li> <li>• Marxist theory of families serving the interests of capitalism, including the work of Zaretsky</li> <li>• conflict view of Feminism</li> <li>• Feminist critique of family as a patriarchal institution, including the work of Delphy and Leonard and Oakley and the conventional family</li> <li>• New Right views of family</li> </ul>

2.5 Criticisms of family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• loss of traditional functions</li> <li>• lack of contact with wider kinship network</li> <li>• dysfunctional families</li> <li>• status and role of women</li> <li>• isolation and unrealistic expectations</li> <li>• marital breakdown and divorce</li> <li>• the dark side of family life including domestic violence</li> <li>• decline of the traditional family</li> </ul>
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3 Education	Required content
3.1 Sociological theories of the role of education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conflict versus consensus debate on the role of education</li> <li>• consensus view of Functionalism</li> <li>• Functionalist theory of education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ serving the needs of society and the economy facilitating social mobility and fostering social cohesion including the work of Durkheim on education as the transmission of norms and values</li> <li>○ achieved status and education operating on meritocratic principles, with reference to the work of Parsons</li> </ul> </li> <li>• conflict view of Marxism</li> <li>• Marxist theory of education serving the needs of capitalism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ education maintaining inequality, including the work of Bowles and Gintis on the correspondence theory</li> </ul> </li> <li>• conflict view of Feminism</li> <li>• Feminist theory of education perpetuating patriarchy, including the work of Becky Francis on the patriarchal nature of schools</li> </ul>
3.2 Processes inside schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• processes within schools affecting educational achievement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ labelling, including the work of Hargreaves</li> <li>○ hidden curriculum</li> <li>○ streaming, banding</li> <li>○ anti-school sub-cultures including the work of Willis</li> <li>○ teacher expectations, including the work of Ball</li> <li>○ self-fulfilling prophecy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
3.3 Patterns of educational achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• patterns of attainment by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ gender</li> <li>○ social class</li> <li>○ ethnicity</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

3 Education (cont.)	Required content
3.4 Factors affecting educational achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• social class               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ contribution of material factors, including the work of Halsey on class based inequalities</li> <li>○ cultural factors</li> <li>○ labelling</li> <li>○ catchment areas</li> <li>○ types of school, including the work of Ball on streaming, choice and competition between schools</li> <li>○ counter school cultures, including the work of Willis</li> </ul> </li> <li>• ethnicity               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ contribution of material and cultural factors</li> <li>○ curriculum</li> <li>○ labelling</li> <li>○ racism</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
3.5 Factors affecting educational achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gender               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ contribution of more employment opportunities for females</li> <li>○ feminism</li> <li>○ feminisation of schools</li> <li>○ crisis of masculinity</li> <li>○ peer pressure and sub cultures</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

4 Sociological research methods	Required content
4.1 Usefulness of different types of data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• primary and secondary data</li> <li>• qualitative and quantitative data</li> <li>• sources of secondary data, including diaries, journals, official and non-official statistics</li> <li>• usefulness of these types of data to sociologists</li> </ul>
4.2 Methods of research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• qualitative and quantitative methods including               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ questionnaires</li> <li>○ structured and unstructured interviews</li> <li>○ different types of observations</li> </ul> </li> <li>• the value, practical application and strengths and weaknesses of different methods in terms of               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ validity,</li> <li>○ reliability,</li> <li>○ ethics</li> <li>○ representativeness</li> </ul> </li> <li>• mixed methods approaches</li> </ul>
4.3 Sampling processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• representative and non-representative sampling techniques</li> </ul>

<b>4 Sociological research methods (cont.)</b>	<b>Required content</b>
4.4 Practical issues affecting research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• access to subjects of research</li><li>• gatekeeper to allow access</li><li>• time and cost of research</li></ul>
4.5 Ethical issues affecting research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• informed consent</li><li>• confidentiality</li><li>• harm to participants</li><li>• deception</li><li>• strategies used by sociologists to address issues</li></ul>

## 2.2 Component 2

### Component 2: Understanding Social Structures

Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes

50% of qualification

100 marks

The focus in this component is on social differentiation, power and stratification. This includes the theme of power, issues of social order and social control, studied through crime and deviance. Learners also study applied methods of sociological enquiry.

Learners' knowledge and understanding of sociological research methods studied in Component 1 will be reinforced by considering the research methods used to gather evidence for the theories studied in Component 2.

In applied methods of social enquiry, learners are encouraged to further develop their understanding of the research process by considering the stages in carrying out research and in interpreting data. This will assist them in their assessment of the evidence used to support or challenge theories in both components.

5 Social differentiation and stratification	Required content
5.1 Sociological theories of stratification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conflict versus consensus debate on stratification</li> <li>• consensus view of Functionalism</li> <li>• Functionalist theory of stratification               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Davis and Moore's theory on the role of stratification in terms of effective role allocation and performances linked to the promise of rewards</li> <li>○ meritocracy</li> </ul> </li> <li>• conflict view of Marxism</li> <li>• Marxist theory of social stratification               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ socio-economic classifications and two class system</li> <li>○ power of bourgeoisie to exploit the proletariat and to maintain their position</li> <li>○ false class consciousness</li> </ul> </li> <li>• conflict view of Weber</li> <li>• Weberian theory of stratification               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ socio-economic classifications</li> <li>○ theory of class, status and party</li> </ul> </li> <li>• conflict view of Feminism               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Feminist views on patriarchy and stratification</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5.2 Different forms and sources of power and authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• formal and informal sources of power</li> <li>• agencies of social control</li> <li>• Weberian theory of authority:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ traditional</li> <li>○ charismatic and</li> <li>○ rational-legal</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

5 Social differentiation and stratification (cont.)	Required content
5.3 Equality/inequality in relation to class, gender, ethnicity, age, disability and sexuality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evidence and examples should be used to demonstrate equality/inequality in contemporary UK drawn from the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ education</li> <li>○ crime</li> <li>○ income and wealth</li> <li>○ health</li> <li>○ family</li> <li>○ work</li> <li>○ media</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5.4 Factors which may influence access to life chances and power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• factors which may influence class, gender, ethnicity, age, disability and sexuality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ social construction of identity/roles, status</li> <li>○ prejudice, discrimination</li> <li>○ stereotyping, labelling</li> <li>○ scapegoating</li> <li>○ media representation</li> <li>○ legislation</li> <li>○ moral panics</li> <li>○ sub-cultures</li> </ul> </li> <li>• with specific reference to social class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ private schooling</li> <li>○ old boys' network</li> <li>○ affluent worker, including the work of Devine</li> </ul> </li> <li>• with specific reference to gender <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ sexism</li> <li>○ glass ceiling</li> <li>○ patriarchy, including the work of Walby</li> <li>○ crisis of masculinity</li> </ul> </li> <li>• with specific reference to ethnicity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ racism, institutional racism</li> </ul> </li> <li>• with specific reference to age <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ ageism</li> </ul> </li> <li>• with specific reference to disability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ medical and social models of disability</li> </ul> </li> <li>• with specific reference to sexuality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ homophobia</li> </ul> </li> <li>• religion and belief</li> </ul>
5.5 Poverty as a social issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• absolute and relative poverty, including the work of Townsend on relative deprivation</li> <li>• material deprivation</li> <li>• groups prone to poverty</li> <li>• culture of poverty, including the work of Murray on the underclass</li> <li>• cycle of deprivation</li> <li>• social exclusion and inclusion</li> <li>• impact of globalisation</li> </ul>

6 Crime and deviance	Required content
6.1 Social construction of concepts of crime and deviance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what is crime?</li> <li>• what is deviance?</li> <li>• historical and cultural variations</li> <li>• social construction of crime and deviance</li> </ul>
6.2 Social control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• informal and formal social control and unwritten rules</li> <li>• agencies of informal social control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ family</li> <li>○ peer group</li> <li>○ education</li> <li>○ religion</li> <li>○ media</li> </ul> </li> <li>• sanctions</li> <li>• formal social control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ role of the police and courts</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
6.3 Patterns of criminal and deviant behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• patterns of criminal behaviour by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ social class</li> <li>○ ethnicity</li> <li>○ age</li> <li>○ gender</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
6.4 Sociological theories and explanations of deviance and criminal behaviour (structural, subcultural, interactionist and feminist)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conflict versus consensus debate</li> <li>• consensus view of Functionalism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ functions of crime</li> <li>○ anomie, including the work of Merton and strain theory</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Subcultural theory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Albert Cohen and delinquent sub-cultures</li> </ul> </li> <li>• conflict view of Marxism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Chambliss and differential enforcement of the law</li> <li>○ white collar and corporate crime</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Interactionism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ notion of the typical offender</li> <li>○ labelling</li> <li>○ self-fulfilling prophecy, including the work of Becker and the deviant career</li> <li>○ moral panics</li> </ul> </li> <li>• conflict view of Feminism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ social control, including the work of Heidensohn on female conformity in a male dominated society</li> <li>○ women and poverty including the work of Carlen</li> <li>○ chivalry thesis</li> </ul> </li> <li>• ethnicity and crime <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ racism</li> <li>○ institutional racism</li> <li>○ scapegoating</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

6 Crime and deviance (cont.)	Required content
6.5 Sources of data on crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• patterns and trends of criminal behaviour</li> <li>• official statistics</li> <li>• victim and self-report studies</li> <li>• usefulness of sources of data on crime               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ dark figure of crime</li> <li>○ unreported and unrecorded crime</li> <li>○ police bias and labelling</li> <li>○ moral panics</li> <li>○ invisible crime</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

7 Applied methods of sociological enquiry	Required content
7.1 The process of research design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• choosing a research area</li> <li>• establishing an aim and/or hypothesis</li> <li>• choosing a method</li> <li>• use of pilot study</li> <li>• selection of sampling techniques</li> <li>• analysis of data</li> <li>• usefulness of mixed methods approach</li> </ul>
7.2 Interpreting data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to interpret graphs, diagrams, charts and tables in order to discern patterns and trends</li> </ul>

# 3 ASSESSMENT

## 3.1 Assessment objectives and weightings

Below are the assessment objectives for this specification. Learners must:

### 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.

The table below shows the weighting of each assessment objective for each component and for the qualification as a whole.

	<b>AO1</b>	<b>AO2</b>	<b>AO3</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Component 1</b>	20%	20%	10%	50%
<b>Component 2</b>	20%	20%	10%	50%
<b>Total</b>	40%	40%	20%	100%

In each examination series, a minimum of 15% of the available marks will be awarded for learners' knowledge and understanding in relation to Research Methods.

## 4 TECHNICAL INFORMATION

### 4.1 Making entries

This is a linear qualification in which all assessments must be taken at the end of the course. Assessment opportunities will be available in May/June each year, until the end of the life of this specification. Summer 2019 will be the first assessment opportunity.

A qualification may be taken more than once. Candidates must resit all examination components in the same series.

The entry code appears below.

WJEC Eduqas GCSE Sociology: C200QS

The current edition of our *Entry Procedures and Coding Information* gives up-to-date entry procedures.

### 4.2 Grading, awarding and reporting

GCSE qualifications are reported on a nine point scale from 1 to 9, where 9 is the highest grade. Results not attaining the minimum strand for the award will be reported as U (unclassified).