

Sociology at Samuel Whitbread Academy

Intent	<p>At Samuel Whitbread Academy we aim to enable pupils to participate in society with understanding and humanity. Through the study of Sociology, we aim to equip students with knowledge of the importance of the social structure and recognise patterns of human behaviour. Students will look critically at different social groups and their experiences in areas including education and the criminal justice system and will be supported in addressing how far individuals have agency over their life course. The Sociology A level is designed and delivered to nurture thoughtful and motivated young people, who can act responsibly as active citizens.</p> <p>The Sociology curriculum challenges pupils to set aside their own personal beliefs and consider a variety of different theoretical perspectives which, in turn, prepares them to live and work in an increasingly diverse and integrated world. The study of sociology increases students' willingness and ability to try to see the world from other people's perspectives.</p> <p>Through the study of Sociology, students will acquire knowledge and a critical understanding of contemporary social processes and social changes. Students will be challenged to look beyond a common sensical understanding of the workings and patterns of society and apply intellectually challenging ideas and concepts. The essential skills of critical thinking are embedded throughout the course. Additionally, students will develop an understanding of sociological methodology and a range of research methods in order to fully understand the processes involved in social research. Sociology enthuses pupils to reflect on modern social situations and their complexities and develop a lifelong interest in social issues.</p>
Implementation	<p>The Sociology A Level at Samuel Whitbread Academy follows the AQA specification and is split into four main topics; Family and Households, Education with theory and methods, Crime and deviance with theory and methods and Beliefs in society. Whilst only two of the topic areas name theory and methods specifically, the main theoretical perspectives run through all of the topic areas, as do many of the key concepts.</p> <p>Each topic area has carefully chosen assessments from previous exam papers embedded within the delivery to allow for regular and pertinent application and review of learning. Students are supported in developing the ability to self and peer review assessments as well as receiving timely formative feedback from our staff.</p> <p>At Samuel Whitbread Academy, our Sociology students are provided with a prep booklet to support them throughout the course which details a range of review tasks to help embed learning outside of the classroom. Additionally, fortnightly reading tasks are set to encourage students to engage with wider reading around the topic areas. Students are able to choose from multiple articles in order to support them in engaging with contemporary materials and widen their learning experience.</p> <p>Discussion and active engagement are key within the classroom for Sociology and we pride ourselves on using a variety of teaching and learning strategies. We also have a key focus on developing pupil's literacy and therefore regularly review key terminology and challenge students to make full use of these terms in their written and verbal responses.</p> <p>All subject material for Sociology is highly accessible for students through Google Classroom and our A-Level Learning Platform. Additionally, sub-topic review sheets are provided for students to complete in order to help organise notes and routinely produce revision materials.</p>

Implementation	Key Stage 5: Year 12	<p>At Year 12, we begin with the Family and Household topic, this looks at changing patterns of the family including rates of divorce, marriage and childbearing along with theoretical perspectives of the role of the family. We also explore the concept of childhood and how far it is socially constructed by our society. In doing this we consider cross-cultural and historical examples of the experiences of children and question how far children’s experiences have improved. The role of the state and the welfare system in relation to the family is also considered within this topic. Globalisation is a huge feature of modern society and we therefore also explore the role of migration in society and the impact on family and societal structures. Following this, we move onto Education with theory and methods. Here we consider the patterns of achievement in education and question how far certain groups are supported or hindered by the experience of education. We address internal and external explanations for underachievement by specific groups and look at the impact of relationships between peers and teacher-student relationships on learning. Additionally, we consider the broader theoretical perspectives which explore the role of education. Whilst the functionalist approach is very positive about the role of education believing it creates a well-functioning economy and cohesive society, other theorists propose that education reinforces significant social divisions. Alongside the education topic is an exploration of the key research methods and their use in investigating the education setting.</p> <p>Towards the end of Year 12 we begin the Crime and deviance with theory and methods unit starting with explanations for the causes of crime and looking at patterns of offending.</p>
	Key Stage 5: Year 13	<p>In year 13 we continue with the Crime and deviance topic looking at crime prevention and the role of punishment. The impact of globalisation is also explored looking at ways in which this has led to crime evolving and spreading. The role of the media is further studied considering its creation, detection and misrepresentation of crime. Contemporary concerns of green crime and state crime are explored within this topic using case studies as real-life examples. The theoretical element of Sociology is explored in a lot more depth within this topic and encourages students to consider wider sociological questions including how far sociology can be considered a science, the role of values in research and the relationship between sociology and social policy.</p> <p>Beliefs in society is the final topics students’ study at Samuel Whitbread Academy and provides an exciting opportunity to consider the role and impact of religion in modern society. This topic provides thought provoking questions including how far religion can be used as a force for social change and to what extent religion can be a cause of conflict in society. It questions how far religion controls individual and group behaviour and whether religion serves to liberate or suppress. The extent and nature of secularisation is explored looking at both supporting and rejecting evidence from the UK and society as a whole.</p>

Impact

Our Intent and Implementation aim to ensure that all Sociology students gain knowledge and understanding of how the world works, as well as developing the ability to evaluate and critically analyse contemporary issues in society.

Students are regularly assessed to check their understanding and progress within each of the units they are taught in Key Stage 5.

Our assessments include:

- Regular exam question practice marked by teachers
- Peer and self-assessment of lesson tasks.
- IPE exams throughout Year 12 and 13.

Sociology continues to be a strongly performing subject within Samuel Whitbread Academy and our students speak positively and enthusiastically about their learning experiences. Many of our students go on to study sociology in further education.