

## A Level Sociology Specification (Draft)

Paper	Section	Key Questions	Section	Key Questions
<b>01 Socialisation, Culture and Identity</b>	A Introducing socialisation, culture and identity	1. What is culture? 2. What is socialisation? 3. What is identity?	B Option 1: Families and Relationships	1. How are family life and relationships changing? 2. To what extent are roles and relationships within families and households changing?
			Option 2: Youth Subcultures	1. How are youth subcultures formed? Why do they develop? 2. Why do some young people participate in deviant subcultures?
			Option 3: Media	1. How are different social groups represented in the media? 2. What effect do the media have on audiences?
<b>02 Researching and Understanding Social Inequalities*</b>	A Research methods and researching social inequalities	1. What is the relationship between theory and methods? 2. What are the main stages of the research process? 3. Which methods are used in sociological research?	B Understanding social inequalities	1. What are the main patterns and trends in social inequality and difference? 2. How can patterns and trends in social inequality and difference be explained?
<b>03 Debates in Contemporary Society</b>	A Globalisation and the digital social world	1. What is the relationship between globalisation and digital forms of communication? 2. What is the impact of digital forms of communication in a global context?	B Option 1: Crime and Deviance	1. How are crime and deviance defined and measured in the UK? 2. What are the patterns and trends in crime? 3. How can crime and deviance be explained? 4. How can crime and deviance be reduced?
			Option 2: Education	1. What is the role of education in society? 2. What are the patterns and trends of educational inequalities? 3. How can differential educational achievement and experiences be explained? 4. How has the UK education system changed?
			Option 3: Religion, belief and faith	1. How are religion, belief and faith defined and measured? 2. What is the role of religion, belief and faith in contemporary society? 3. What are the patterns and trends of religion, belief and faith? 4. Is secularisation occurring?

\*Synoptic

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01 Section A: Introducing socialisation, culture and identity	
Key Question	Content
1. What is culture?	<p>The relative nature of culture, norms and values.</p> <p>Types of culture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- subculture</li> <li>- high culture</li> <li>- popular culture</li> <li>- global culture</li> <li>- consumer culture</li> <li>- cultural diversity</li> <li>- cultural hybridity</li> </ul>
01 Section A: Introducing socialisation, culture and identity	
Key Question	Content
2. What is socialisation?	<p>Definitions of primary and secondary socialisation and how they link to agencies of socialisation while being unique for individuals.</p> <p>Agencies of socialisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- family</li> <li>- peer group</li> <li>- media</li> <li>- religion</li> <li>- education</li> <li>- workplace</li> </ul> <p>Formal agencies of social control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- criminal justice system</li> <li>- government</li> </ul> <p>Informal agencies of social control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- family</li> <li>- peer groups/subcultures</li> <li>- media</li> <li>- religion</li> <li>- education</li> <li>- workplace</li> </ul> <p>The overlap of formal and informal social control on work, education and religion.</p>
01 Section A: Introducing socialisation, culture and identity	
Key Question	Content
3. What is identity?	<p>How identities are created and can change.</p> <p>Aspects of identity and the associated cultural characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ethnicity</li> <li>- gender (including non-binary and trans identity)</li> <li>- social class</li> <li>- sexuality</li> <li>- age</li> <li>- disability</li> </ul> <p>Hybrid identities and how identity can be fluid.</p>

01 Section B: Option 1 - Families and Relationships	
Key Question	Content
1. How are family life and relationships changing?	<p>The diversity of family and household types in the contemporary UK including blood and marriage-based relationships as well as chosen relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- nuclear families</li> <li>- extended families</li> <li>- lone parent families</li> <li>- reconstituted families</li> <li>- same-sex families</li> <li>- non-family households</li> <li>- lone-person households</li> </ul> <p>Changing sociological understanding of family life and diversity in the contemporary UK (the last 30 years), including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- emerging family types</li> <li>- trends in marriage, divorce and cohabitation</li> <li>- same-sex relationships</li> <li>- demographic changes</li> </ul> <p>Consider key demographic changes and the reasons for these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- birth rate</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- family size</li> <li>- age at marriage</li> <li>- age of childbearing</li> <li>- ageing population</li> </ul> <p>Theoretical perspectives, consensus versus conflict and structural debates on the role of the family and the desirability of the nuclear family in contemporary UK society:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- functionalism</li> <li>- New Right</li> <li>- Marxism</li> <li>- feminism</li> <li>- postmodernism</li> </ul>
<b>01</b>	
<b>Section B: Option 1 - Families and Relationships</b>	
<b>Key Question</b>	<b>Content</b>
<b>2. To what extent are roles and relationships within families and households changing?</b>	<p>Roles and relationships in the family and how they are changing including the application of functionalist, Marxist and feminist theoretical approaches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- domestic division of labour including housework/paid domestic work</li> <li>- paid work (and working practices)</li> <li>- emotional work</li> <li>- childcare/caring for elderly relatives</li> <li>- the 'dark side' of the family</li> <li>- finances/decision making</li> <li>- power and control</li> <li>- the role of children, friends and extended family</li> <li>- the growth of child-centred families</li> <li>- the extension of childhood</li> </ul>

<b>01</b>	
<b>Section B: Option 2 - Youth subcultures</b>	
<b>Key Question</b>	<b>Content</b>
<b>1. How are youth subcultures formed? Why do they develop?</b>	<p>Theoretical views of the role of youth culture and subcultures and how and why they are formed, considering issues of consensus versus conflict, social order and control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- functionalism</li> <li>- Marxism/neo-Marxism</li> <li>- feminism</li> <li>- postmodernism</li> </ul> <p>Subcultures and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- social class</li> <li>- gender</li> <li>- ethnicity</li> <li>- hybridity</li> </ul>

<b>01</b>	
<b>Section B: Option 2 - Youth subcultures</b>	
<b>Key Question</b>	<b>Content</b>
<b>2. Why do some young people participate in deviant subcultures?</b>	<p>Deviant subcultures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- delinquent subcultures</li> <li>- criminal subcultures</li> <li>- anti-school subcultures</li> <li>- urban music subcultures</li> <li>- female subcultures</li> </ul> <p>Patterns within the last 30 years in sociological research and official statistics on youth subcultural deviance in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- social class</li> <li>- gender</li> <li>- ethnicity</li> <li>- location</li> </ul> <p>Explanations for why some young people participate in deviant subcultures, including structural and social action theory as well as issues of gender and ethnic identity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- functionalism/New Right</li> <li>- Marxism/neo-Marxism</li> <li>- interactionism</li> <li>- feminism</li> </ul> <p>The role of the media, contemporary folk devils, moral panics and youth deviance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- deviancy amplification</li> <li>- social/digital media influence</li> </ul>

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### 01 Section B: Option 3 - Media

Key Question	Content
1. How are different social groups represented in the media?	<p>Evidence and explanations for the representation and effects of misrepresentations of the following groups in the media and how far these are changing in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ethnicity</li> <li>- gender (including non-binary and trans identity)</li> <li>- sexuality</li> <li>- social class</li> <li>- age</li> </ul> <p>How these factors can overlap to produce distorted views.</p> <p>Theoretical views on media representations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marxism/neo-Marxism</li> <li>- pluralism</li> <li>- feminism</li> <li>- postmodernism</li> </ul>

### 01 Section B: Option 3 - Media

Key Question	Content
2. What effect do the media have on audiences?	<p>Theoretical views of media effects including hypodermic syringe, two step flow, cultural effects, uses and gratifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- direct</li> <li>- indirect</li> <li>- active audience</li> </ul> <p>The role of the new media and the impact of social media on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- social change</li> <li>- deviancy amplification and the creation of moral panics</li> </ul>

### 02 Section A: Research methods and researching social inequalities

Key Question	Content
1. What is the relationship between theory and methods?	<p>How social research is guided by theory.</p> <p>Positivism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- patterns</li> <li>- trends</li> <li>- objectivity</li> <li>- value freedom</li> <li>- quantitative data</li> </ul> <p>Interpretivism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- meanings and experiences</li> <li>- Verstehen and empathy</li> <li>- rapport</li> <li>- subjectivity</li> <li>- researcher imposition and bias</li> <li>- reflexivity</li> <li>- qualitative data</li> </ul> <p>Key research concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- validity</li> <li>- reliability</li> <li>- representativeness</li> <li>- generalisability</li> </ul>

### 02 Section A: Research methods and researching social inequalities

Key Question	Content
2. What are the main stages of the research process?	<p>Key concepts in the research process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- factors influencing the choice of research topic including funding, the researcher and the funding body</li> <li>- factors influencing the choice of research methods</li> <li>- aims/hypothesis/research questions</li> <li>- primary/secondary data</li> <li>- operationalisation</li> <li>- pilot studies</li> <li>- data collection</li> <li>- longitudinal studies for qualitative and quantitative data</li> <li>- interpretation of data</li> </ul> <p>Sampling process including the ethical, practical and theoretical factors influencing its choice and how this may lead to some groups being over/underrepresented.</p> <p>Sampling techniques and the advantages and disadvantages of each technique</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- random</li> <li>- systematic</li> <li>- stratified</li> <li>- snowball</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- volunteer</li> <li>- opportunity</li> <li>- quota</li> </ul> <p>Access and gatekeeping.</p> <p>Consideration of ethics in the research process.</p>
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### 02 Section A: Research methods and researching social inequalities

Key Question	Content
3. Which methods are used in sociological research?	<p>Research methods in the context of social inequalities and the advantages and disadvantages of each:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- questionnaires</li> <li>- structured interviews</li> <li>- statistical data (official and non-official)</li> <li>- content analysis</li> <li>- observations (participant/non-participant/covert/overt)</li> <li>- unstructured interviews</li> <li>- semi structured interviews</li> <li>- ethnography</li> </ul> <p>Quantitative and qualitative data.</p> <p>Mixed methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- triangulation</li> <li>- methodological pluralism</li> </ul>

### 02 Section B: Understanding social inequalities

Key Question	Content
1. What are the main patterns and trends in social inequality and difference?	<p>Social inequality and difference, how they overlap and how they have changed in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- social class</li> <li>- gender</li> <li>- ethnicity</li> </ul> <p>Evidence of social inequalities from a range of areas of social life including patterns and trends in relation to work and employment.</p>

### 02 Section B: Understanding social inequalities

Key Question	Content
2. How can patterns and trends in social inequality and difference be explained?	<p>The main sociological explanations of social inequality and difference, how useful each theory is in explaining inequality and contemporary forms of inequality in those areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- functionalism</li> <li>- Marxism</li> <li>- feminism</li> <li>- Weberian</li> </ul>

### 03 Section A: Globalisation and the digital social world

Key Question	Content
1. What is the relationship between globalisation and digital forms of communication?	<p>Definitions of globalisation and problems with this.</p> <p>Developments in digital forms of communication in a global society and how they are related to social capital and access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- digital revolution</li> <li>- global village</li> <li>- virtual communities</li> <li>- networked global society</li> <li>- social media</li> </ul> <p>Applying sociological theories to digital forms of communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marxism/neo-Marxism</li> <li>- feminism</li> <li>- postmodernism</li> </ul>

### 03 Section A: Globalisation and the digital social world

Key Question	Content
2. What is the impact of digital forms of communication in a global context?	<p>The impact of digital forms of communication and the positive and negative effects on people's identity, relationships and social inequalities.</p> <p>How people's identity and social inequalities relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- social class</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- gender</li> <li>- age</li> <li>- location</li> </ul> <p>The impact of digital forms of communication on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the digital divide</li> <li>- conflict and change</li> <li>- cultural homogenisation</li> <li>- cultural defence/'glocalisation'</li> </ul>
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### 03 Section B: Option 1 - Crime and Deviance

Key Question	Content
<b>1. How are crime and deviance defined and measured in the UK?</b>	<p>Definitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- crime and deviance</li> <li>- the relativity of crime and deviance over time, between and within societies</li> <li>- the social construction of crime and deviance</li> </ul> <p>Measuring crime including the advantages and disadvantages of each:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- official crime statistics</li> <li>- victim surveys (including CSEW)</li> <li>- self-report studies</li> </ul>

### 03 Section B: Option 1 - Crime and Deviance

Key Question	Content
<b>2. What are the patterns and trends in crime?</b>	<p>The social distribution of offending and victimisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- social class</li> <li>- gender</li> <li>- age</li> <li>- ethnicity</li> </ul> <p>Patterns of crime in a global context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- global organised crime including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o opportunities</li> <li>o how countries in the global south may be used by transnational criminal groups and companies</li> </ul> </li> <li>- green crime</li> </ul>

### 03 Section B: Option 1 - Crime and Deviance

Key Question	Content
<b>3. How can crime and deviance be explained?</b>	<p>Theoretical views of crime and deviance, how useful they are in relation to social class, gender, age and ethnicity, and how relevant they are for understanding crime in contemporary global society:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- functionalism</li> <li>- Marxism</li> <li>- interactionism</li> <li>- realism (left and right)</li> <li>- subcultural theories</li> <li>- feminism</li> </ul>

### 03 Section B: Option 1 Crime and Deviance

Key Question	Content
<b>4. How can crime and deviance be reduced?</b>	<p>Social policy and crime including the effectiveness of crime prevention and control policies using recent examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- social and community crime prevention and punishment</li> <li>- restorative justice</li> <li>- rehabilitation strategies</li> <li>- greater equality in society</li> <li>- situational crime prevention</li> <li>- environmental crime prevention</li> <li>- retributive justice</li> <li>- surveillance</li> </ul>

### 03 Section B: Option 2 - Education

Key Question	Content
<b>1. What is the role of education in society?</b>	<p>Theoretical views on the role of education and how relevant they are today:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- functionalism</li> <li>- Marxism</li> <li>- liberal</li> <li>- social democratic</li> <li>- New Right</li> <li>- feminism</li> </ul> <p>Theoretical explanations of the relationship between education and work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- functionalism</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marxism</li> <li>- New Right</li> </ul>
<b>03</b>	
<b>Section B: Option 2 - Education</b>	
<b>Key Question</b>	<b>Content</b>
<b>2. What are the patterns and trends of educational inequalities?</b>	<p>Differential educational achievement, including the interrelationship between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- social class</li> <li>- ethnicity</li> <li>- gender</li> </ul> <p>Trends over time and issues of measurement and types of evidence in relation to the above areas.</p> <p>The disparity in educational provision around the world, for example between the global North and South.</p>
<b>03</b>	
<b>Section B: Option 2 - Education</b>	
<b>Key Question</b>	<b>Content</b>
<b>3. How can differential educational achievement and experiences be explained?</b>	<p>Explanations for differential educational achievement and experience, including how useful sociological evidence is linking to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- inside and outside school factors</li> <li>- structural, material and cultural factors</li> <li>- social class, gender and ethnicity</li> <li>- theoretical approaches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o functionalism</li> <li>o Marxism</li> <li>o interactionism</li> <li>o social democratic</li> <li>o feminism</li> <li>o New Right</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>03</b>	
<b>Section B: Option 2 - Education</b>	
<b>Key Question</b>	<b>Content</b>
<b>4. How has the UK education system changed?</b>	<p>The diversity of educational provision including different types of institutions and schools.</p> <p>Government policies from 1988 onwards, including vocational and work-based training.</p> <p>Ideological influences on government educational policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New Right</li> <li>- social democratic</li> </ul> <p>The impact of educational policies on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- inclusion, access to education and opportunities</li> <li>- gender, class, ethnicity</li> <li>- competition, diversity and choice</li> <li>- raising standards</li> </ul>

<b>03</b>	
<b>Section B: Option 3 - Religion, belief and faith</b>	
<b>Key Question</b>	<b>Content</b>
<b>1. How are religion, belief and faith defined and measured?</b>	<p>Defining religion, faith and belief.</p> <p>Different types of religious institutions, organisations and movements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- churches and denominations</li> <li>- sects and cults</li> <li>- new religious movements</li> <li>- new age movements</li> <li>- religious fundamentalism</li> </ul> <p>Ways in which religion, faith and belief are measured:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- religious belief</li> <li>- participation</li> <li>- religiosity</li> <li>- belief without belonging</li> </ul>
<b>03</b>	
<b>Section B: Option 3 - Religion, belief and faith</b>	
<b>Key Question</b>	<b>Content</b>
<b>2. What is the role of religion, belief and faith in contemporary society?</b>	<p>Theoretical views on the role of religion, belief and faith for the individual and for society, including whether it is a positive or negative and whether it is a conservative force or a force for change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- functionalism</li> <li>- Marxism/neo-Marxism</li> <li>- Weberianism</li> <li>- feminism</li> <li>- postmodernism</li> </ul> <p>Sociological views on the growth of fundamentalist groups and how these may challenge traditional theory.</p>

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	<p>Theoretical views of the relationship between religion and social change including conflict, revolution, fundamentalist ideologies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- functionalism</li> <li>- Marxism/neo-Marxism</li> <li>- Weberianism</li> </ul>
<b>03</b> <b>Section B: Option 3 Religion, belief and faith</b>	
<b>Key Question</b>	<b>Content</b>
<b>3. What are the key patterns and trends of religion, belief and faith?</b>	<p>Patterns and trends including reasons for the appeal of particular religions to different groups in society and in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- social class</li> <li>- gender</li> <li>- ethnicity</li> <li>- age</li> <li>- location</li> </ul> <p>Religion, belief, and faith in a global context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- change in the significance of religion in societies including its resurgence and decline</li> <li>- differences in the significance of religion between societies</li> <li>- links between industrialisation, migration and technology on levels of religiosity</li> </ul>
<b>03</b> <b>Section B: Option 3 Religion, belief and faith</b>	
<b>Key Question</b>	<b>Content</b>
<b>4. Is secularisation occurring?</b>	<p>Debates on the extent of secularisation in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- belief</li> <li>- practice</li> <li>- fundamentalism</li> <li>- the influence of religion in society including global patterns of religion in relation to the secularisation debate</li> </ul> <p>Theoretical views on secularisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- pro-secularisation theorists</li> <li>- anti-secularisation theorists including postmodern views</li> </ul> <p>Government policy/direction on religious equality, discrimination and freedom.</p>