

Sociology and Health & Social Care at BHASVIC

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A Level Sociology
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What topics will we cover and when?

In the first term (Sept – Dec) of the first year we study unit 1A about socialisation, culture and identity then unit 1B on youth subcultures. After this we will study unit 3A Globalisation and the digital social world. In the summer term students will prepare to sit a full mock exam paper and then begin unit 2A on research methods and complete a project, which engages in some sociological research. In year two students will study units on social inequality and crime and deviance and then finally prepare for three external examinations.

How is the course organised?

Each unit of the syllabus is divided into “topics”. Each topic provides one week’s work, although some topics may need further time, guidance will be provided by your teacher. Study skills and exam skills are developed steadily as the course continues.

What will lessons be like?

Lessons will be 1 hour 30 minutes long. They will usually give you the chance to get involved in some way, for example in small group work. Whilst studying each topic you will have opportunities to explore key issues and debates, develop your skills, focus on your particular strengths and weaknesses and demonstrate your understanding and skills. The course is designed around **flipped learning** (students prepare for that week’s lessons by completing homework tasks the previous week) so it is essential that you prepare for the lessons by doing your homework notes and then you will be able to fully participate in the classroom activities.

What do I need to provide?

- A4 paper (with holes)
- 2 x large hard backed files with dividers (10 part) to store your work
- Highlighter pens are essential for identifying key points in the reading packs
- Bring your reading pack and homework to every lesson

What resources will I have?

A **reading pack** for each unit. The reading pack is your key resource and can be highlighted and annotated in ways that suit you. The pages can be separated and integrated with your personal notes. Specific guidance materials on revision will be issued when you need them.

The **VLE (Virtual Learning Environment)** is also an excellent resource. Reading packs and associated activities and information can be found on this Sociology department section of the VLE. This includes **Extended Reading** suggestions which you should use if you are targeting the top grades as this will develop your understanding. The VLE also provides you with links to key sites and information about the course, careers and higher education. Staff may post homework or lesson resources on the VLE so you can check what has been set and catch up if you are absent. Messages about enrichment and unusual college closures (e.g. snow days) will be on the VLE.

What if I'm away?

Lessons will follow the structure of the packs so you can easily make your own notes at home and keep up to date. You must remember **it is your responsibility to catch up when you have missed a lesson, teachers will not chase you.** Vital material could be missed, that may appear in the final exam, avoid getting left behind by being proactive. Use your peers for support when sharing notes, resources and information.

What enrichment opportunities are there?

All enrichment trips are optional. In the autumn term of the first year we run a trip to London. This trip may include a visit to a musical such as **Billy Elliot** which includes themes such as gender and class identity, which link to our first unit. At the end of the year we run a **trip to Brighton/Sussex University** to hear a taster of lectures and have a tour of the campus to see what a Sociology degree might be like. In the second year we have taken students to **Lewes Prison** to link with our topic of Crime and Deviance. We sometimes have visiting speakers so you can meet sociologists that we have studied. There may be other opportunities which arise during the year.

What is expected of me?

The key thing is to be positive, enthusiastic and willing to learn. Take an interest in current affairs, keep an open mind and be willing to listen to others. Base your opinions on evidence not prejudice. Show us you can work independently: work should be submitted on time and you should attend all lessons punctually unless there is a very good reason. Keep your notes neat, well organised and up to date. If you are away, work missed needs to be caught up with promptly.

What study skills do I need?

A successful A level student has a broad range of skills such as independence, note taking, analysis, evaluation, questioning techniques, interpretation, application of sources, understanding theory and methods. While we will be explicit about these skills and how you can improve them, ultimately it is you that will be responsible for doing.

How much homework will be set and what will it be like?

You will be asked to complete a range of homework tasks in the reading pack, these will range from defining concepts, making notes, planning exam questions, watching documentaries, contributing to forums and extended reading. Students at BHASVIC are expected to **do 4.5 hours of homework a week**, this is equivalent to the amount of time you will have in lessons. Homework tasks are clearly laid out at the end of each topic, if you are absent you can prepare for the next lesson. You need to set aside a regular time for the homework to be done as this is a significant undertaking. If you are struggling to plan your time talk to your teacher, tutor or peers. The first few weeks will be crucial for you to adapt to the demands of A Levels at BHASVIC, our advice is to be hardworking and proactive to make this transition as smooth as possible.

How will I know how I'm getting on? How will I be assessed by BHASVIC?

You will be set **tracking tests**, either in class or for homework which will test your understanding of sociological theories and concepts. These are short multiple choice quizzes that will be completed on the VLE and automatically electronically marked. You will be set **exam questions called assessments**; these will be completed in class under exam conditions, meaning no notes and timed. These will be formally marked and can be used by you to assess your progress. Also, once a term you will get the opportunity to reflect on your progress and discuss it with your teacher in a Subject Review where you will agree a "target" grade and identify key targets for improving your work. At all times the emphasis will be on helping you identify the things you need to do to improve the standard of your work. You will be given progress sheets that will allow you to record your progress as you go through the course. There will be mock exams prior to the final unit exams.

What about coursework?

There is no coursework.

How will my work be assessed by the exam board?

You will sit three exams at the end of year 2. Each exam is worth either 30% (unit 1) or 35% Unit 2 & 3. Unit 1 is 1 hour and 30 minutes long and unit 2 & 3 are 2 hours and 15 minutes each. It is worth noting that students who drop out of the course at any time before these final exams will not receive a qualification of any kind.

How can I get extra help?

Students will be encouraged to seek support from their teachers, who can be contacted personally (room 108 – College house) or via e-mail. Each week the department offers a lunchtime subject extension, these are drop in sessions where students can get support from any course teachers in order to help them progress. We would encourage peers to support each other by setting up study groups (perhaps using social media) which allow you support each other, you're all in the same boat and two or more brains is better than one.

How can I get extra information?

The sociology section of the college library is very good, it has a wide range of student textbooks and original works from sociologists that you will be studying. Make sure you check the journal, "***The Sociology Review***". This contains sociology articles for A level students. Physical copies are available but it would be really useful to get the login details to access an electronic catalogue so you can access the information from anywhere. The library staff can assist with this. ***Planet E-Stream*** is a catalogue of documentaries and programmes which interest students; you will need to access this for some homework activities. The Sociology section of the VLE has a wide range of information, resources and links to websites. Just head for the BHASVIC home page in Internet Explorer and select Sociology from the list of subjects.

A Level Sociology Summer Work

Although some of you will have studied Sociology at GCSE most of you will be new to Sociology. In order to get you thinking about the course we would like you to write a short essay. You can hand write or word process this essay, and you should have it ready to hand in during your first sociology lesson in September. The essay should be about 500 words long (around a side). You do **not** need to read any books in order to answer this question.

Essay Topic: 'My Socialisation – which social factors have made me who I am?'

Here are some hints about how to write the essay:

Think about the 6 key agents of socialisation:

- Family, education, friends, media, religion and work.

Which of these agents of socialisation has had an impact on you? Which is most important to you, and why? Has the level of influence these agents have had changed as you have grown older – if so, how and why? You do **not** need to mention every one of the six agents, just discuss the agents you think are important or interesting.

Think also about your key features of identity:

- Gender, ethnicity, age, social class, national and religious identity.

Do you have a clear idea of the roles you should play according to your gender/ethnicity/age etc? How did you learn how to behave as you do, and why? What has made you different to other people? Whom are you similar to, and why? Has your identity changed? Why?

- How much do I write?
- When does it have to be handed in?

We are looking for your ability to write coherently, adhere to deadlines and reflect on your social experiences. This work will not be marked according to any exam criteria but used for us to assess your potential so do as well as you can. **HOWEVER.....do not** spend longer than a couple of hours on this!

Have a *great* summer holiday and come back to BHASVIC refreshed.