

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

for the award of

BA/BSc Sociology

Managed by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Delivered by the Department of Social Sciences

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| Date approved: | June 2015 |
| Applies to students commencing study in: | September 2018 |

RECORD OF UPDATES

| Date amended* | Nature of amendment** | Reason for amendment** |
|----------------------|------------------------------|---|
| February 2017 | Major change | Sections 4.1 and 4.2 to reflect addition of new Level 5 module <i>Culture and Everyday Life</i> |
| Feb 2018 | Major change | Sections 4.1 and 4.2 to reflect new Level 6 module The Sociology of Emotions and new Level 5 module Work-based Learning in Sociology. |

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

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| Awarding body: | Oxford Brookes University |
| Teaching institution and location: | Oxford Brookes University, Oxford, UK |
| Language of study: | English |
| Final award: | BA/BSc (Hons) Combined Honours |
| Programme title: | Sociology |
| Interim exit awards and award titles available: | DipHE; CertHE |
| Brookes course code: | SO |
| UCAS code: | Sociology combined with: Anthropology LL36 Mod/SOAN Communication, Media and Culture PL93 Mod/ SOHQ Criminology L3L3 Education Studies XL33 Mod/SOWD History of Art LV33 Mod/SOHA International Relations LLF3 Mod/SORL Philosophy LV35 Mod/SOPQ Politics LL32 Mod/SOPO |
| JACS code: | L300 |
| HECoS code: | 100505 |
| Mode of delivery: | Full-time (face to face/on-campus) Part-time (face to face/on-campus) |
| Mode/s and duration of study: | Full-time: 3 years Part-time: up to 6 years |
| QAA subject benchmark statement/s which apply to the programme: | Sociology, 2007 |
| Professional accreditation attached to the programme: | N/A |
| University Regulations: | The programme conforms to the University Regulations for the year of entry as published/archived at: http://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/ |

SECTION 2: WHY STUDY THIS PROGRAMME?

Sociology is a wide-ranging subject concerned with analysing social relationships and social institutions and the ways in which they shape people's lives. It can be studied as part of a combined degree with a choice of 8 other subjects such as Anthropology, Communication, Media and Culture, Criminology, Education Studies, History of Art, International Relations, Philosophy and Politics,.

Sociologists at Oxford Brookes have expertise in a variety of topics ranging from global social transformations to changing identities and personal relationships. Our flexible course allows students to pursue their own areas of interest within Sociology while also providing them with a solid foundation in the discipline and a range of personal and professional skills which will serve as a springboard for their future career development. The programme is carefully designed to enable students to gradually develop their knowledge and skills during the course of a three-year degree and enable them to acquire a 'sociological imagination.' Links between research and undergraduate teaching are an important and distinctive feature of the programme, and the combined research experience and competencies of staff have shaped its design, content and delivery. Students will be a part of the international community of learners and lecturers who make up Oxford Brookes University. Sociology staff profiles can be found here:

<http://www.social-sciences.brookes.ac.uk/People/Academic/>

The aims of the Sociology programme are as follows:

- a. To provide a flexible programme of study which encourages and enables intellectual, personal and professional development in response to the needs, interests and aptitudes of individual students.
- b. To encourage and enable students from a wide range of backgrounds to develop as independent learners through the provision of a student-centred education which harnesses the experiences and knowledge which they bring to the programme as both a catalyst and resource for their learning experience.
- c. To encourage the development of a sociological imagination directed towards the critical examination of the nature of, and explanations for, the diverse range of personal and public beliefs, actions, institutions and practices which are found in human societies and the processes of their transformation.
- d. To increase a critical awareness of sociological perspectives and their relevance to other areas of study.
- e. To enable students to acquire the skills, competencies, flexible knowledge-base, and study habits required for lifelong learning.

SECTION 3: PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of the programme, graduates will demonstrate the following Brookes Attributes:

3.1 ACADEMIC LITERACY

- a. Understand key concepts and theoretical approaches that have developed and are developing within Sociology.
- b. Appreciate the social nature of the relationship between individuals, groups and social institutions.
- c. Critically evaluate competing explanations of human behaviour, social situations and events.
- d. Be aware of the distinctive character of sociological knowledge and evidence in relation to other forms of understanding, such as other disciplines and everyday explanations.

3.2 RESEARCH LITERACY

- a. Understand the nature and appropriate use of research strategies and methods in gaining and critiquing sociological knowledge.

- b. Formulate and investigate sociologically informed questions using a range of research strategies and methods of sociological enquiry.
- c. Conduct sociological research in a preliminary way.
- d. Appreciate the ethical implications of social research.

3.3 CRITICAL SELF-AWARENESS AND PERSONAL LITERACY

- a. Become a reflective, autonomous and independent learner.
- b. Set goals and manage time and tasks effectively.
- c. Communicate fluently and effectively in speech and writing.
- d. Work collaboratively in diverse groups.
- e. Manage complex situations by assessing different perspectives and strategic options.

3.4 DIGITAL AND INFORMATION LITERACY

- a. Gather, organise and deploy a variety of digital sources pertaining to Sociology.
- b. Use communication and information technology for the retrieval and presentation of primary and secondary sources of information.

3.5 ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

- a. Appreciate the complex connections between local, national and transnational forces in the shaping of social settings and institutions.
- b. Be aware of social diversity and inequalities and their impact on the lives of individuals and groups.
- c. Examine the relevance of sociological knowledge to social life and public policy in domestic and international contexts.
- d. Acquire the ability to actively engage with social issues and groups at the local and global levels.

SECTION 4: CURRICULUM CONTENT & STRUCTURE

4.1 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS:

| Code | Module Title | Credits | Level | Status | Coursework: Exam ratio |
|---|---|---------|-------|---|------------------------------|
| Level 4 Modules | | | | | |
| U26101 | Social Differences and Divisions | 15 | 4 | Compulsory | Coursework: 40% Exam: 60% |
| U26103 | Researching the Social World | 15 | 4 | Compulsory | Coursework: 100% |
| U26102 | Foundations of Social Theory | 15 | 4 | Compulsory | Coursework: 40% Exam: 60% |
| U26104 | Contemporary Societies: Structure and Change | 15 | 4 | Recommended | Coursework: 40% Exam: 60% |
| Level 5 Modules | | | | | |
| U26124 | Social Research Methods | 15 | 5 | Compulsory for Degree/Honours Degree and Named DipHE | Coursework: 100% |
| Alternative Compulsory Modules [must pass a minimum of two modules from this list for Degree/Honours Degree and Named DipHE] | | | | | |
| U26133 | Gender and Society | 15 | 5 | Alternative Compulsory | Coursework: 100% |
| U26134 | 'Race', Ethnicity and Inequality | 15 | 5 | Alternative Compulsory | Coursework: 50% Exam: 50% |
| U26137 | Global Sociology | 15 | 5 | Alternative Compulsory | Coursework: 100% |
| U26152 | The Sociology of Work | 15 | 5 | Alternative Compulsory | Coursework: 50% Exam: 50% |
| U26125 | Sociology of Health and Illness | 15 | 5 | Alternative Compulsory | Coursework: 40% Exam: 60% |

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|---|--|----|---|------------------------|------------------------------|
| U26126 | Culture and Everyday Life | 15 | 5 | Alternative Compulsory | Coursework: 50% Exam: 50% |
| Additional Acceptable Sociology Module | | | | | |
| U26122 | Current Issues in Sociology This module is designed for delivery of occasional modules offered by visiting lecturers or by Sociology Staff for trial runs of new modules. Students should not sign up for this module unless there has been a formal announcement from the Sociology Subject Coordinator that it will be available. | 15 | 5 | Acceptable | Variable |
| Acceptable Modules from other programmes | | | | | |
| U23124 | State and Society in Europe (Politics) | 15 | 5 | Acceptable | Coursework: 100% |
| U23133 | Understanding Europe: History, Culture and Political Economy (Politics) | 15 | 5 | Acceptable | Coursework: 100% |
| U70724 | The Social World of Childhood (Education Studies) | | 5 | Acceptable | Coursework: 100% |
| U71723 | Educational Inequalities: Schooling and Youth (Education Studies) | 15 | 5 | Acceptable | Coursework: 100% |
| U26165 | Work-based Learning in Sociology | 15 | 5 | Acceptable | Coursework: 100% |
| Level 6 Modules | | | | | |
| U26170 | The Theory and Practice of Human Rights | 15 | 6 | Acceptable | Coursework: 100% |
| U26180 | Theorising Society | 15 | 6 | Acceptable | Coursework: 50% Exam: 50% |
| U26172 | Racialised Identities in Super-Diverse Societies | 15 | 6 | Acceptable | Coursework: 100% |
| U26173 | Gendering Intimate Relationships | 15 | 6 | Acceptable | Coursework: 40% Exam: 60% |
| U26174 | The Sociology of Migration | 15 | 6 | Acceptable | Coursework: 100% |
| U26188 | Independent Study | 15 | 6 | Acceptable | Coursework: 100% |
| U26179 | The Political Sociology of Crime and Disorder (Politics) | 15 | 6 | Acceptable | Coursework: 100% |
| U26175 | The Sociology of Emotions | 15 | 6 | Acceptable | Coursework: 100% |
| U26199 | Dissertation | 30 | | Compulsory | Coursework: 100% |

4.2 PROGRESSION AND AWARD REQUIREMENTS

The Sociology curriculum has been designed to ensure that the progressive development of students' knowledge and skills is evident throughout the programme. All modules have been designed to comply with the standards published in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ). Evidence of progression is also achieved through the use of pre-requisite, co-requisite and compulsory modules and their placing in particular years and semesters.

Year 1 – Level 4

We offer four basic modules that provide our students with a sound understanding of the key concerns of the discipline and opportunities to develop the disciplinary knowledge and skills essential for advanced

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and honours level work. Three of these are compulsory for combined honours Sociology students, and one is recommended. Social Differences and Divisions (U26101, compulsory) introduces students to the different ways in which sociological analysis makes sense of the social world. Key concepts and approaches in Sociology are introduced through a focus on the relationship between individuals, groups and social institutions. Foundations of Social Theory (U26102, compulsory) offers a general introduction to the principle themes and concerns of social theory, including classical sociological theory and contemporary developments, debates and approaches. Researching the Social World (U26103, compulsory) provides an introduction to the principles of research design and the methodological issues associated with different types of research. Contemporary Societies: Structure and Change (U26104, recommended) provides an overview of a range of social and political developments shaping contemporary societies through a focus on the relationship between the economy, the state and society. All basic modules are designed to help students appreciate both the scope and distinctiveness of the discipline, and enable them to acquire a 'sociological imagination'. They also place a particular emphasis on the teaching, practise and assessment of a range of disciplinary and transferable skills.

Year 2 – Level 5

Two basic (Level 4) compulsory modules, U26101 and U26102, serve as pre-requisites for all Level 5 Sociology modules, while Researching the Social World (U26103) serves as an additional prerequisite for Social Research Methods (U26124). U26124 helps students develop practical skills in sociological research, including the design of questionnaires and interviews, analysis and interpretation, and the presentation of research findings. It is compulsory for all Sociology students, and serves as a prerequisite for all Level 6 modules in Sociology. At Level 5, students will also be required to pass at least two modules from the following alternative compulsories: Gender and Society (U26133), 'Race,' Ethnicity and Inequality (U26134), Global Sociology (U26137), The Sociology of Work (U26152), Sociology of Health and Illness (U26125), and Culture and Everyday Life (U26126). These modules have been designed to address many of the key research areas within the discipline while extending and deepening students' achievement of the programme's aims and learning outcomes.

Year 3 – Level 6

In the third year (Level 6), students take a range of specialised honours modules. The modules offered at advanced and honours levels are developed around the research interests and expertise of Sociology staff members. Furthermore, students are encouraged to undertake their own small research projects as part of the dissertation and independent study modules. Students can choose amongst the following Sociology honours modules: Theorising Society (U26180), Gendering Intimate Relationships (U26173), The Sociology of Migration (U26174), Racialised Identities in Super-diverse Societies (U26172), The Theory and Practice of Human Rights (U26170), Political Sociology of Crime and Disorder (U23179), The Sociology of Emotions (U26175) and Independent Study (U26188). All single honours Sociology students also take the Sociology Dissertation module (U26199).

Opportunities to study abroad are also available, and Sociology students may spend a semester or more abroad while obtaining credits toward their degree programmes. These include links with a number of European universities through the Erasmus programme and International Exchanges in the U.S, Australia and Canada.

For information on how the award classification is calculated, please follow this link:

<http://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/current/core/a1/a1-1-6/>

SECTION 5: TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

The methods of teaching, learning and assessment used in the Sociology programme are designed to offer students the support they need to achieve the programme aims and learning outcomes.

Teaching and Learning

A variety of teaching and learning methods are used across the programme. This ensures that students are exposed to a range of learning opportunities and helps to maintain student motivation and interest. Some of the key teaching methods we use are as follows:

- Lectures are designed to introduce students to the main themes, key theoretical approaches, and significant research findings relevant to the module content.

- Seminars and workshops encourage students to engage in discussion with tutors and peers to further develop their knowledge and understanding of the module content, apply ideas and develop a range of graduate attributes.
- Tutorials consist of one-to-one or small group conversations between tutors and students. The function of a tutorial can vary but it is likely to cover such things as advice on essay preparation, guidance on key readings, or return and discussion of assessed work.
- Library training sessions are provided to help students develop learning, research and IT skills.
- Computer workshops enable students to obtain the hands-on experience necessary to use data analysis techniques.

Typical contact time will be 24 hours per module. Students are expected to undertake 126 hours of independent study per module.

Assessment Strategy

In devising the assessment strategy we seek to achieve the following aims and objectives:

- Use a range of assessment methods including exams, essays, individual and group presentations, critical reviews, portfolios, and biographical interviews. The variety in the forms of assessment ensures that students are exposed to different forms of learning and are given the opportunity to show their abilities across a number of different skill sets.
- Use formative and summative assessment methods to assess the learning outcomes of the subject.
- Provide students with transparent and detailed marking criteria, and ensure that assessment is seen as an integral part of their learning experience.
- Provide various structures to support assessment, including essay clinics, assessment workshops and preparatory classroom based activities (e.g. exam workshops).
- Conform to the benchmark statement for Sociology, the National Qualifications Framework, quality assurance standards, and the Brookes Assessment Compact.

Graduate attributes

The development of the following five graduate attributes is central to teaching, learning and assessment in the Sociology subject:

- a) Academic literacy encompasses disciplinary and professional knowledge and skills which enable students to understand the 'landscape' of Sociology. Module content and assessment practices are designed to help students become aware of the distinctive character of sociological knowledge and evidence in relation to other forms of understanding, such as other disciplines and everyday explanations.
- b) Research literacy enables students to understand the nature and appropriate use of research strategies and methods in gaining and critiquing sociological knowledge. The programme promotes undergraduate research literacy through two compulsory modules focused on developing research skills (*Researching the Social World* and *Social Research Methods*). The independent study and dissertation modules provide students with the opportunity to undertake small-scale research on a topic of their choosing.
- c) Critical self-awareness and personal literacy is encouraged in all Sociology modules through teaching and assessment structures that require students to take personal responsibility for their own learning. Students develop an understanding of the process of learning and the ability to assess the work of oneself and others. Group work in modules including *Sociology of Work* and *Sociology of Health and Illness* provides students with opportunities to work collaboratively in diverse settings.
- d) Digital and information literacy is achieved through the use of a wide-range of online resources. Students are expected to use information technology both as a resource and research tool in all Sociology modules. Library training sessions (*Social Differences and Divisions*) and computer workshops (*Social Research Methods*) ensure that students develop the skills and practices necessary to become confident and agile users of a range of technologies for personal, academic and professional use.

- e) Active citizenship promotes an awareness of social diversity and inequalities as well as the local and global contexts that shape social relations. These are central concerns of Sociology as a discipline, and they are addressed in all modules. Modules including *Contemporary Societies: Structure and Change* and *Global Sociology* encourage students to explore the impact of global social change and the connections between British society and the global context.

SECTION 6: ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAMME

6.1 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

For minimum entry requirements, please follow this link

http://www.brookes.ac.uk/studying/applications/entry_requirements/undergraduate

6.2 DBS AND OTHER PRE-COURSE CHECKS REQUIRED

Not applicable

SECTION 7: PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

A Sociology degree from Oxford Brookes University opens up a wide range of career options in the public and private sectors. Recent sociology graduates have successfully pursued careers in management, international development organisations, research in private firms and in universities, education, local government and social work. Many sociology graduates also go on to postgraduate courses in a variety of areas of specialisation.

The Sociology subject promotes the employability of our graduates by providing opportunities such as the following:

- Alumni Career events provide students with opportunities to meet recent Brookes Sociology graduates and hear about their employment experiences.
- Visiting speakers representing different employers including government, teaching, international and non-governmental organisations and charities are invited to give career talks to students
- Opportunities for work-based learning are available
- Researchers from national and international institutions are invited to a weekly seminar series hosted by our Centre for Global Politics, Economy and Society
- The University Careers and Employment Centre hosts events on topics including CV writing, interview skills and career networking