



Sociology

Applicant Study Pack

Introduction	<p>This is an A Level course to be taken alongside another two subjects. The course is externally assessed at the end of the two year programme and includes three papers, each two hours long. The exams include a mixture of short answer and extended writing questions.</p> <p>You will learn a number of skills including the use of evidence to support your arguments, how to investigate facts, and critical thinking. It is relevant to the society you live in so you are bound to enjoy learning about topics that are relevant to everyday life; plus it opens the door to a range of interesting careers.</p> <p>Throughout the course you will study the following topics:</p> <p>Families and Households</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Theory and Methods</p> <p>Crime and Deviance</p> <p>Beliefs in Society</p>
Task 1	<p>In sociological research there are two types of data that sociologists use, primary data and secondary data. Primary data is data that the sociologist has collected themselves (using primary research methods). Secondary data is data that someone else has already collected but another sociologist may also use.</p> <p>Primary research methods include:</p> <p>Questionnaires - a list of short-answer or multiple choice questions that are posted or emailed to respondents to complete on their own. The respondent then returns the questionnaire to the sociologist.</p> <p>Interviews – this is where a researcher will engage respondents in conversation. They will ask them questions relevant to the topic being researched. Generally, interviews are very flexible and allow the respondent (interviewee) to go into detail.</p> <p>Participant observation – this is where a researcher will observe a group’s behaviour by taking an active role in what they are doing. Observations allow the researcher to see how a group behaves and by taking some form of active participation they may be able to better understand them. Participant observations can be covert, this is where the identity of the researcher is kept secret from the group. Or, participant observations can be overt where the identity of the researcher is known.</p> <p>Experiments – this is where subject’s behaviour is observed and monitored in a controlled, artificial setting called a laboratory. Experiments are an unpopular form of research method for many sociologists as the setting is artificial and so the behaviour observed can never truly be classed as natural behaviour.</p> <p>The Amish are a group of traditional Christian worshippers closely related to Mennonite churches. The Amish are well-known for living a simple lifestyle based around hard work; humility and frugality; and in particular a rejection of, or slowness to adapt to, modern technology (such as machinery and electricity). They often live in rural communities where they can remain detached from modern society to the extent they wish.</p>

	<p>As a sociologist, this may be a group you want to study. Make notes on the following questions:</p> <p><i>What sort of things would you like to know about this group?</i></p> <p><i>How, or in what ways, could you discover information about this group?</i></p> <p><i>What difficulties may you encounter attempting to research this group?</i></p> <p><i>How could your own personal beliefs potentially impact the research you carry out on this group?</i></p> <p><i>What specialist skills or knowledge might you require to research this group successfully?</i></p>
Task 2	<p>Using the websites listed below (Further Reading), produce detailed notes for each of the following research methods:</p> <p>Questionnaires</p> <p>Participant Observation</p> <p>Interviews</p> <p>Experiments</p> <p>Secondary research</p>
Further reading / links (maximum 5)	<p>revisesociology.com</p> <p>hecticteacher.com</p> <p>thesociologyguy.com</p>
Call to action	<p>Visit our website – www.clarendon.ac.uk for more information.</p> <p>Attend our New Students Day</p> <p>Join us for enrolment in August. Letters will be sent to all applicants at the end of July with more details.</p>