

OxfordAQA

International GCSE

Sociology (9292)

Switching guide

Switching from Cambridge International Examinations to OxfordAQA Examinations

For this new International GCSE Sociology specification, OxfordAQA has designed an engaging and effective introduction to sociology where students will learn the fundamentals of the subject and learn to understand their own societies and those of other people. They will also develop skills valued by higher education (HE) and employers, including critical analysis and independent thinking.

Our aim with this specification is to make this important subject accessible to young people around the world. To do this we have tried to build on the foundations of the subject set down by sociologists in the past, adding to these by taking account of recent developments and by bringing in new evidence and examples to help students grasp the complexities of social life and social changes,

We have created opportunities for students to apply what they learn in sociology to their own lives and to the societies they live in. We hope that students will be engaged by what they learn and will be inspired to study the subject at a higher level.

Summary of differences

Specification Content

- Topic organisation differs: OxfordAQA divides content into five thematic areas (Families, Education, Research Methods, Differences & Inequalities, Socialisation & Social Control), while Cambridge structures content into six areas (Research Methods, Identity, Inequality, Family, Education, Crime & Deviance).
- Research methods: OxfordAQA embeds research methods in both papers, including data-response tasks in each; Cambridge concentrates research methods in Paper 1 with a compulsory question.
- Sociological theorists: there is broad alignment between much of the specification content in both specifications, though there are some differences. For example, OxfordAQA suggests particular sociologists that students could study as part of each specification area, whereas these are not explicitly named in the Cambridge specification.
- OxfordAQA explicitly requires students to apply examples from “their own society or a society they know about”, emphasising application of sociology to their everyday lives.

Assessment Structure and objectives

- Exam time: OxfordAQA’s assessments are comprised of 2x1h30 papers, with three sections in each paper; Cambridge’s exams are two longer papers (2h and 1h45).
- Compulsory vs optional content: OxfordAQA requires all students to study all five content areas; Cambridge requires all students to study Paper 1 topics but allows choice of two out of three topics in Paper 2.
- Question types: OxfordAQA mixes short-answer, structured, and extended responses across both papers; Cambridge uses similar question types, though as part of structured questions with extended writing and a compulsory data-response research methods question in Paper 1.
- AO weighting: OxfordAQA gives AO1 and AO2 equal highest weighting (46% and 21% overall), with AO3 at 33%; Cambridge distributes AO1 and AO2 equally (39% each) and AO3 at 22%.

OxfordAQA specification (9292)	Cambridge International Examinations specifications (O-level – 2251; iGCSE – 0495)
Overall structure	
<p>Paper 1: Introducing Sociology Three compulsory sections:</p> <p>Section A Families</p> <p>Section B Education</p> <p>Section C Research methods</p> <p>Paper 2: Exploring Sociology Three compulsory sections:</p> <p>Section A Differences and inequalities</p> <p>Section B Socialisation and social control</p> <p>Section C Research methods</p>	<p>Paper 1: Research Methods, Identity and Inequality There are three topics in Paper 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Research methods 2 Identity: self and society 3 Social stratification and inequality. <p>All three topics are fundamental to the study of sociology and provide a foundation for studying the topics in Paper 2. Teachers should teach all three topics in Paper 1.</p> <p>Paper 2: Family, Education and Crime There are three topics in Paper 2:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Family 5 Education 6 Crime, deviance and social control. <p>Teachers should teach two of these, as students must answer questions on two of the topics.</p>

OxfordAQA specification (9292)	Cambridge International Examinations specifications (O-level – 2251; iGCSE – 0495)
Paper-by-paper breakdown	
<p>Assessment overview Two externally assessed written examinations</p> <p>Paper 1 Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes, 60 marks, 50% of GCSE</p> <p>Three compulsory sections:</p> <p>Section A - Families 22 marks - short and extended response questions.</p> <p>Section B - Education 22 marks - short and extended response questions.</p> <p>Section C - Research methods 16 marks - short questions and a structured question based on data about an unseen issue of global sociological significance.</p> <p>Paper 2 Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes, 60 marks, 50% of GCSE</p> <p>Three compulsory sections</p> <p>Section A - Differences and Inequalities 22 marks - short and extended response questions</p> <p>Section B - Socialisation and Social Control 22 marks - short and extended response questions</p> <p>Section C - Research methods 16 marks - short and extended response questions</p>	<p>Assessment overview Two externally assessed written examinations</p> <p>Paper 1 Written exam: 2 hours, 80 marks, 50% of iGCSE/O-level</p> <p>Students will answer a compulsory structured question on research methods, which will include questions using source materials (AO2 and AO3), and a combination of other question types including short answer questions and essay style questions (AO1, AO2 and AO3).</p> <p>Students will then answer one of two optional structured questions on either Identity: self and society or social stratification and inequality. These questions have six parts, including combination of question types such as short answer questions and essay style questions (AO1, AO2 and AO3).</p> <p>Paper 2 Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes, 80 marks, 50% of iGCSE/O-level</p> <p>Students will answer two optional structured questions from a choice of three. Questions will focus on the following topics:</p> <p>Question 1 Family Question 2 Education Question 3 Crime, deviance and social control</p> <p>These questions have six parts, including combination of question types such as short answer questions and essay style questions (AO1, AO2 and AO3).</p>

OxfordAQA specification (9292)	Cambridge International Examinations specifications (O-level – 2251; iGCSE – 0495)
Paper-by-paper breakdown	
OxfordAQA specification (9292)	Cambridge International Examinations specifications (O-level – 2251; iGCSE – 0495)
Assessment Objectives	
<p>AO1 (46%) Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of sociological theories, concepts and evidence.</p> <p>AO2 (21%) Interpret sociological evidence and data and apply sociological theories, concepts, evidence and research methods to a range of issues</p> <p>AO3 (33%) Analyse and evaluate sociological theories, concepts, evidence and research methods in order to present arguments, make judgements and draw conclusions.</p>	<p>AO1 (39%) Knowledge and understanding Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of sociological concepts, theories, evidence, views and research methods.</p> <p>AO2 (39%) Interpretation and application Apply relevant sociological concepts, theories, evidence, views and research methods to support points or develop arguments.</p> <p>Explain how sociological concepts, theories, evidence, views and research methods apply to a particular issue or question.</p> <p>AO3 (22%) AO3 Analysis and evaluation Analyse and evaluate sociological theories, evidence, views and research methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain the strengths and limitations of sociological theories, views and research methods • construct, develop and discuss sociological arguments • reach conclusions and make judgements based on a reasoned consideration of evidence.

OxfordAQA specification (9292)	Cambridge International Examinations specifications (O-level – 2251; iGCSE – 0495)
Topic by topic comparison	
3.1.1 Families	
3.1.1.1 Families, marriage and kinship	Similar content covered in sections 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.4, 4.1.5 and 4.3.4 of the Cambridge specification
3.1.1.2 Perspectives on families and the relationship between families and society	Similar content covered in sections 4.2.1, 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 of the Cambridge specification
3.1.1.3 Social change and changing families	Similar content covered in sections 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3 and 4.3.5 in the Cambridge specification
3.1.1.4 Gender, age and the experience of family life	This content is broadly covered by in sections 4.2 (dealing with functional, Marxist and feminist views of the family) and 4.3.5 of the Cambridge specification.
<i>Note: The OxfordAQA specification suggests that in their study of section 3.1.1, students would benefit from studying the work of the following sociologists: Engels, Oakley, Parsons, Smart, Stacey and Therborn.</i>	These sociological theorists are not explicitly named in the Cambridge specification.
3.1.2 Education	
3.1.2.1 Education and schooling	<p>Similar content covered in section 5.1.1 of the Cambridge specification.</p> <p>The OxfordAQA specification includes a section on 'Levels of education: nursery/pre-school; primary; secondary; tertiary.' This is not explicitly named in the Cambridge specification.</p>

OxfordAQA specification (9292)	Cambridge International Examinations specifications (O-level – 2251; iGCSE – 0495)
3.1.2.2 Perspectives on education and the relationship between education and society	Similar content covered in sections 5.2.1, 5.2.2, and 5.2.3 of the Cambridge specification.
3.1.2.3 Relationships and processes in schools	Similar content covered in sections 5.3.3 and 5.3.4 of the Cambridge specification.
3.1.2.4 Educational attainment	<p>Similar content covered in sections 5.3.1 – 5.3.4 and section 5.3.6 of the Cambridge specification.</p> <p>While both specifications broadly cover the same content in relation to educational attainment, there is some difference in language and emphasis. For example, under issues in measuring attainment: the OxfordAQA spec contains 'examinations; IQ tests, Credentialism' which are not explicitly mentioned in the Cambridge specification.</p>
3.1.2.5 Global education	Similar content covered in section 5.3.5 of the Cambridge specification.
The OxfordAQA specification suggests that in their study of section 3.1.2, students would benefit from studying the work of the following sociologists: Becker, Bourdieu, Davis and Moore, Freire, Illich and Samson.	These sociological theorists are not explicitly named in the Cambridge specification.

OxfordAQA specification (9292)	Cambridge International Examinations specifications (O-level – 2251; iGCSE – 0495)
3.1.3 Research methods	
3.1.3.1 Approaches to research	Similar content covered in sections 1.1.1, 1.1.2 and 1.2.1 of the Cambridge specification.
3.1.3.2 Main research methods and their strengths and limitations	Similar content covered in sections 1.1.3, 1.2.2, 1.3.3 and 1.3.4 of the Cambridge specification.
3.1.3.3 Issues in research	Similar content covered in sections 1.1.1, 1.1.4, 1.3.2, 1.3.5 and 1.3.6 of the Cambridge specification.
3.1.3.4 Interpretation of data	Similar content covered in sections 1.2.3 and 1.3.3 of the Cambridge specification.
3.2.1 Differences and inequalities	
3.2.1.1 Differences	There is some overlap between the OxfordAQA and Cambridge specifications, though there are differences in language and emphasis due to the differences in the ways the content is arranged for in both specs for this topic.
3.2.1.2 Inequalities	Similar content covered in sections 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 of the Cambridge specification.
3.2.1.3 Social class	There is some overlap between the OxfordAQA and Cambridge specifications, though there are differences in language and emphasis due to the differences in the ways the content is arranged for in both specs for this topic.
3.2.1.4 Gender	There is some overlap between the OxfordAQA and Cambridge specifications, though there are differences in language and emphasis due to the differences in the ways the content is arranged for in both specs for this topic.
3.2.1.5 Ethnicity	There is some overlap between the OxfordAQA and Cambridge specifications, though there are differences in language and emphasis due

OxfordAQA specification (9292)	Cambridge International Examinations specifications (O-level – 2251; iGCSE – 0495)
	to the differences in the ways the content is arranged for in both specs for this topic.
3.2.1.6 Attempts to reduce/ eliminate inequalities	Similar content covered in section 3.2.4 of the Cambridge specification.
The OxfordAQA specification suggests that in their study of section 3.2.1, students would benefit from studying the work of the following sociologists Connell, Crenshaw, du Bois, Marx, Walby and Weber.	These sociological theorists are not explicitly named in the Cambridge specification.
3.2.2 Socialisation and social control	
3.2.2.1 Individuals and society	There is some overlap between the OxfordAQA specification and section 2.1.1 of the Cambridge specification, though there are differences in language and emphasis due to the differences in the ways the content is arranged for in both specs for this topic. For example, the Cambridge specification does not explicitly mention the Mills and the Sociological imagination.
3.2.2.2 Socialisation	Similar content covered in 2.1.3-2.1.5 of the Cambridge specification.
3.2.2.3 Social identities and social change	Similar content covered in 2.2.1-2.2.4 and 6.3.1 and 6.3.2 of the Cambridge specification.
3.2.2.4 Social control	Similar content covered in sections 6.1 and 6.2 of the Cambridge specification.
The OxfordAQA specification suggests that in their study of section 3.2.2, students would benefit from studying the work of the following sociologists Stanley Cohen, Fanon, Goffman, Mead, Mills and Zuboff.	These sociological theorists are not explicitly named in the Cambridge specification.