

OxfordAQA

International A-level

Sociology (9690)

A2 Scheme of work

For teaching from September 2026 onwards

For International AS exams in June 2028 onwards

For International A-level exams in June 2028 onwards

Introduction

These outline schemes of work are intended to help teachers plan and implement the second year of teaching of the OxfordAQA International A level Sociology specification. The purpose of these outline schemes is to provide advice and guidance to teachers, not to prescribe or restrict their approach to the specification. Each scheme has been produced by a practising subject expert. There are many other valid ways of organising the course content and there is no requirement to use this scheme.

Suggested timings are indicative only. Teachers should select learning activities that are appropriate for their students, their local context and the curriculum time available. Teachers should aim to balance activities between discussion, written work, use of data and applied sociological examples to ensure that students develop the knowledge, skills and confidence required for questions in the written examinations.

The order in which topics are presented is not prescriptive, and centres may choose to adapt or reorganise the sequence of content to suit their learners.

The resources suggested throughout the scheme are indicative rather than exhaustive. Other suitable materials may be equally effective. Where relevant, teachers should carry out appropriate risk assessments. All links and references were correct at the time of publication. Centres are encouraged to make consistent use of sociological terminology as outlined in the specification and to ensure that students are confident using this terminology accurately in examination responses.

Assumed coverage and teaching hours.

This scheme of work assumes that the second year of OxfordAQA International A-level Sociology is taught over one year with approximately 135 hours of guided learning hours, in line with specification guidance. This equates to around 4 and a half hours of teaching per week although this may vary according to local timetabling arrangements and students' prior experience of sociology.

Work will also need to be completed outside of lessons. The amount of independent study required will depend on curriculum time, the pace of delivery and the extent to which assessment practice and consolidation activities are incorporated into timetabled lessons.

For guidance on how to teach the OxfordAQA International AS course, which forms the first year of the A-level, please see the AS scheme of work on the OxfordAQA website.

International focus

Sociology is studied within an explicitly international context in this specification. Students are expected to apply sociological concepts, theories and evidence to **their own society or to societies they are familiar with** and to recognise similarities and differences between societies around the world.

Throughout the course, students should be encouraged to draw on local, national and global examples to illustrate sociological ideas. This scheme of work therefore supports comparative

thinking and the application of sociology to a wide range of cultural, social and economic contexts. All examination responses must be written in English.

With regard to the specification content listed below, please bear in mind the types of questions set and the assessment objectives. 40 of the 50 marks available on each A2 paper are for extended answer essay style questions which will require evaluation of a view or theory or ask about the extent to which something is the case. The learning outcomes below often use terms such as “understood”; this also covers being able to analyse and evaluate.

Students should also be able to include in their answers a range of evidence and examples. Where appropriate these can be from their own society or even their own experience. Teachers should encourage students to apply what they are learning to their lives and experience, applying their sociological imagination to identify connections between personal experiences and public issues.

The content of the specification means that all students will be familiar with some of the ideas they encounter, but may not yet have thought in a sociological way about them. For example, they will be familiar with the idea that some people have pets, or that road accidents happen. Some of the “Possible teaching and learning activities and resources” are designed to show students that they already have some relevant knowledge and to give them confidence, but to push them into using their sociological imagination and to provide them with wider contexts. This will help them develop all of the skills required in the Assessment Objectives.

There will constantly be new ideas, evidence and examples related to the topics in this part of the A level. Although questions in examinations will not be about these, students can use these in examinations to show how they are able to apply the sociology they have learned to what they can see around them in society. It is recommended that teachers help students by providing up to date material on the topics, and encouraging students to bring to class what they find themselves.

Course aims and rationale

The International A-Level Sociology course aims to:

- develop students’ understanding of sociological theories, concepts and methods
- encourage critical thinking and evaluation of competing perspectives
- enable students to apply sociological knowledge to their own society or one they know well
- build extended writing skills appropriate to AS level
- develop confident engagement with quantitative and qualitative data.

A central feature of this specification is its international dimension. Students are required, in extended responses, to draw on examples from their own society or one they know about. This is explicitly required in 20-mark questions.

Therefore, throughout the course, teachers should:

- regularly integrate comparative examples
- encourage students to apply concepts to local contexts
- practise structured evaluative writing using societal evidence.

Assessment structure

Students sit three written examinations for the OxfordAQA International A2:

Unit 3: People and development

- Exam: 1 hour 30 minutes
- Total marks: 50
- 20% of International A-level

Question structure

- 2-mark outline
- 8-mark 'Explain'
- Two 20-mark Evaluate (with societal application)

Unit 4: People and the environment

- Exam: 1 hour 30 minutes
- Total marks: 50
- 20% of International A-level

Question structure

- 2-mark outline
- 8-mark 'Explain'
- Two 20-mark Evaluate (with societal application)

Unit 5: People and technology

- Exam: 1 hour 30 minutes
- Total marks: 50
- 20% of International A-level

Question structure

- 2-mark outline
- 8-mark 'Explain'
- Two 20-mark Evaluate (with societal application)

Assessment objectives

Knowledge precision (AO1)

- Accurate use of sociological terminology
- Confident reference to named sociologists
- Clear understanding of concepts

Application (AO2)

- Use of local societal examples
- Interpretation of quantitative data
- Application of theory to context

Evaluation (AO3)

- Compare perspectives
- Assess strengths and limitations

In 20-mark questions:

- AO1 = 6
- AO2 = 7
- AO3 = 7

This means:

- students must do more than describe
- societal application is essential
- evaluation must be sustained and comparative.

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3.2.1 People and Development

Weeks One to Two: The great divergence

Specification content: 3.2.1.1

- How a gap developed between countries that developed quickly and those that have developed more slowly.
- Imperialism: the European empires; exploration and trade; enslavement; colonialism; neo-colonialism.
- Industrialisation, urbanisation and capitalism.
- Reasons why Europe industrialised: modernisation theory; the Protestant work ethic (Weber); dependency theory; enslavement.
- Legacies of colonialism and enslavement; neo-colonialism.
- Factors and changes associated with development: life expectancy; living standards/ greater affluence and reduced poverty; education; health; rights of women and other groups; human rights; democracy.

Learning outcomes

Students should:

- understand how a gap developed between countries that developed quickly and those that have developed more slowly, as a result of imperialism, industrialisation urbanisation, capitalism and associated changes.
- understand the terms used to describe these differences and what these terms imply: First, Second and Third Worlds; majority and minority worlds; Global South and Global North; developed, undeveloped and underdeveloped countries; very high, high, medium and low human development.
- know in outline the growth, extent and power of the main European colonial powers; how early exploration and trade developed into colonialism; the growth, extent, consequences and end of enslavement, including the triangular trade.
- understand the nature of industrialisation, urbanisation and capitalism and their roles in the development of Europe.
- understand explanations of why these changes happened first in Europe; modernisation theory; the Protestant work ethic (Weber); dependency theory; the role of enslavement.
- understand how these processes continue to affect countries, and the differences between countries; neo-colonialism.
- understand how the concept of development can include a range of factors and changes, know in outline how these differ around the world and have changed or are changing, and how they can be measured. Factors to be considered are:
 - life expectancy
 - living standards/greater affluence and reduced poverty
 - economic indicators such as Gross National Product
 - education, health and well-being
 - rights of women and other groups such as ethnic minorities
 - human rights, democracy and political rights
 - sustainability.

Suggested timing

8-10 hours

Possible teaching and learning activities and resources

In addition to establishing and consolidating learning through regular reading, research, note-making and discussion, you may wish to consider the following teaching and learning activities and resources in your teaching this part of the specification:

Vocabulary for this section: provide students with separate lists of terms and definitions and ask them to match them up. Suggested terms: development, industrialisation, urbanisation, colonialism, neo-colonialism, capitalism, enslavement, reparations. This can be revisited later as a revision exercise, giving students the terms and asking them to give the definition/explanation.

Learning from data: students study data on some indicators of development, comparing their own country to one or more others (including a highly developed country), noting similarities and differences for discussion. Suggested sources: Human Development Reports and Human Development Index (<https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/human-development-index>), Our World in Data (<https://ourworldindata.org/>). Suggested indicators: economic (e.g. GNP per capita), life expectancy, literacy, mean years of schooling.

Describing the divergence: students discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using these sets of terms: First, Second and Third Worlds; majority and minority worlds; Global South and Global North; developed, undeveloped and underdeveloped countries; very high, high, medium and low human development. Students draw a table to summarise findings and decide which they think best and why. They could also be asked to suggest their own alternatives.

Students construct a timeline from lesson notes or other sources of the main stages in the history of development and colonialism, covering early exploration and trade, colonialism, growth of European empires and enslavement, industrialisation and urbanisation, end of colonialism/political independence. Students can add important events from their country's history and from world history and their timelines could be illustrated for display.

Students list possible factors that led to the Industrial Revolution and the Great Transformation happening first in Europe, discuss these and put them in rank order, with reasons for the ranking. This could be done as a group exercise.

Students discuss to what extent colonialism continues to shape their society today, considering economic (e.g. what kinds of work people do and how well off they are), political (e.g. alliances with other countries, political system) and cultural factors (e.g. languages spoken).

Development indicators: students recap their knowledge of indicators used in the Human Development Index and then draw up a list of other factors they think should be considered. If necessary prompt them to consider happiness (e.g. Bhutan's Gross National Happiness), absence of war and conflict, environmental issues (e.g. Happy Planet Index <https://happyplanetindex.org/>), gender equality.

Weeks Three to Six: Globalisation – what is meant by it and who is involved?

Specification content: 3.2.2.2 - 3.2.2.3

- Different types of globalisation, including cultural, political and economic.
- Cultural globalisation: languages; religious beliefs; popular culture; the internet and global communication; the global village; cultural imperialism.
- Political globalisation: democracy, human rights, and gender equality.
- Economic globalisation: the global spread of capitalism and global trade; transnational corporations; global activism.
- The extent to which different types of globalisation have happened and are happening.
- Theoretical views on globalisation: neo-liberal (positive globalist); negative globalist; transformationalist.
- Ways in which globalisation has benefitted or negatively affected different countries and people.
- The global and the local, including how the local survives; glocalisation.
- The roles in globalisation of:
 - nation states, including those that are more developed and those that are less developed;
 - transnational corporations;
 - transnational and United Nations (UN) agencies;
 - non-governmental organisations (NGOs);
 - “grassroots” movements;
 - indigenous peoples.
- Arguments for and against development aid.

Learning outcomes

Students should:

- understand that globalisation can be cultural, political and economic.
- understand how cultural globalisation can include languages, religious beliefs, popular culture (such as music and sport) and the internet and global communication and be able to apply the ideas of the global village and cultural imperialism to cultural globalisation.
- understand how political globalisation includes ideas about democracy, human rights and gender equality.
- understand how economic globalisation refers to the spread of capitalism, global trade, and transnational corporations.
- evaluate the extent to which these different forms of globalisation have happened or are happening.
- understand three main theoretical perspectives on globalisation:
 - neo-liberal (also called positive globalist)
 - radical or negative globalist
 - transformationalist.
- understand how the different forms of globalisation affect different countries and groups of people.
- understand how the local continues alongside and adapts to the global; be able to apply the concept of glocalisation.

- understand the roles played in globalisation by these actors:
 - nation states, including those that are more developed and those that are less developed
 - transnational corporations
 - transnational and United Nations (UN) agencies including the World Bank and International Monetary Fund
 - non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
 - “grassroots” movements and indigenous peoples.
- evaluate arguments for and against development aid.

Suggested timings

16-20 hours

Possible teaching and learning activities and resources

In addition to establishing and consolidating learning through regular reading, research, note-making and discussion, you may wish to consider the following teaching and learning activities and resources in your teaching this part of the specification:

Vocabulary for this section: provide students with separate lists of terms and definitions and ask them to match them up. Suggested terms: globalisation, cultural imperialism, global village, nation state, glocalization, transnational corporations, transnational organisations, non governmental organisations, indigenous peoples. This can be revisited later as a revision exercise, giving students the terms and asking them to give the definition/explanation.

Give students a list of examples of globalisation (these could be from their own society). Students categorise these as cultural, political or economic (some examples may fit within more than one category).

Divide students into groups and ask each group to work on one of cultural, political and economic globalisation. Each group designs a display showing for their type of globalisation a definition, examples (both general and specific), main actors involved, forms of resistance and an evaluation as to how far globalisation has gone. If possible they should include references to or examples from students' own country.

Theoretical perspectives: in small groups students list the main features of each of the three main theoretical perspectives on globalisation, including concepts and key ideas and names of some writers on that perspective. Then ask students to add evaluative points, both positive (e.g. this perspective is helpful in showing how...) and critical.

Winners and losers from globalisation: provide students with a list of groups of people and ask them to decide to what extent that group benefits or loses out from globalisation (in general or using specific examples). Include groups from students' own society (“students in this school” would be a good starting point, perhaps thinking of boys and girls separately). Other possibilities include older people, farm workers, car owners, wealthy business people etc)

Students draw up a chart to show the main actors in globalisation: nation states, TNCs, transnational organisations (such as the UN, World Bank and IMF), NGOs, resistance movements, with examples, descriptions of their roles and assessment of their importance in globalisation.

Week Seven to Eight: Demographic changes - migration and diasporas

Specification content: 3.2.1.4

- How and why people have migrated and still do so: push and pull explanations.
- Internal and international migration.
- Borders, passports and visas.
- Refugees; forced migration; economic migrants; undocumented workers; digital nomads.
- Growth and development of diasporas and transnational networks.
- Effects on migration of climate change.

Learning outcomes

Students should understand:

- that migration has always been and continues to be an important part of human experience.
- explanations of migration, including push and pull factors.
- internal and international migration.
- how borders, passports and visas affect migration.
- why some people become refugees, including the roles of poverty, war and environmental problems, and how some migration is forced.
- the role of economic migrants (including importance of remittances to home country) and problems they may face, including being undocumented.
- how diasporas and transnational networks have developed and been maintained.
- how and why climate change affects migration.

Suggested timing

8-10 hours

Possible teaching and learning activities and resources

In addition to establishing and consolidating learning through regular reading, research, note-making and discussion, you may wish to consider the following teaching and learning activities and resources in your teaching this part of the specification:

Vocabulary for this section: provide students with separate lists of terms and definitions and ask them to match them up. Suggested terms: migration, emigration, immigration, net migration, refugee, asylum seeker, economic migrant, remittances, forced migration, diasporas, transnational networks, passport, visa, digital nomads. This can be revisited later as a revision exercise, giving students the terms and asking them to give the definition/explanation.

Give students a list of factors and ask them to work out in what ways these may affect migration. Possible factors: lack of jobs, educational opportunities, poverty, war and conflict, family connections, citizenship. Ask them to decide whether these are push or pull factors or can be either or both depending on circumstances.

Passports and visas: several websites provide information which allows comparison of the strength of passports of different countries and for which countries visas are required. <https://www.passportindex.org/byRank.php>

Reading practice: ask students to read this BBC article
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/travel/article/20240925-the-evolution-of-the-digital-nomad>

and write a brief summary explaining why there has been an increase in the number of digital nomads, examples of where this has happened and benefits and disadvantages to the host community and to digital nomads.

Remittances: students research the growth of remittances and if possible for their own country find the value of remittances, occupations of migrants sending remittances and countries they are working in.

Climate change and migration: give students examples of countries affected strongly by climate change (such as small island states threatened by rising sea levels) and ask students to use news sources to research recent migration within and from those countries.

Weeks Nine to Ten: Obstacles to progress

Specification content: 3.2.1.5

- Modernisation theory view: persistence of values and practices.
- Marxist views: globalisation and capitalism.
- Feminist views: globalisation and patriarchy.
- Reasons for persistence of inequalities, including in health and education.
- The role of globalisation in the climate crisis and environmental problems; sustainable development.
- Effects of wars and conflicts on development.

Learning outcomes

Students should understand:

- how modernisation theorists see “traditional” values and ways of life as obstacles to progress and what they see as necessary for modernisation
- how Marxist and dependency theorists see the global capitalist system as the cause of underdevelopment and what they see as ways forward
- how feminists see patriarchy and gender inequalities as obstacles to progress and what they see as ways forward, including views of eco-feminists
- reasons suggested for the persistence of inequalities
- the role of globalisation in climate crisis and environmental problems
- what is meant by sustainable development
- ways in which wars and conflicts can affect development.

Suggested timing

8-10 hours

Possible teaching and learning activities and resources

In addition to establishing and consolidating learning through regular reading, research, note-making and discussion, you may wish to consider the following teaching and learning activities and resources in your teaching this part of the specification:

Vocabulary for this section: provide students with separate lists of terms and definitions and ask them to match them up. Suggested terms: traditional values, modern values, underdevelopment, sweatshops, patriarchy, feminism, eco-feminism, sustainable development, development sovereignty; Sustainable Development Goals; This can be revisited later as a revision exercise, giving students the terms and asking them to give the definition/explanation.

Students draw up a table comparing and contrasting modernisation theory and dependency theory on key points such as importance of history, how development can be achieved, what holds back development etc

Students research eco-feminism and the relationship between gender and development by finding out about the life and work of e.g. Vandana Shiva and Wangari Maathai.

As this is the final section of the topic, students can at this point do revision activities including exam style questions, making consolidated notes and checking understanding of concepts.

3.2.2 People and the Environment

Weeks Eleven to Twelve: The built human environment

Specification content: 3.3.2.1

- Nomadic lifestyles.
- Rural areas: peasants and landless labourers, rural depopulation.
- Urbanisation; social life in cities: 'slums' and informal housing; suburbia; segregation; gated communities; megacities; non-places.
- Power and inequalities in rural and urban areas.
- Cities and changing environment and climate.
- Demographic transition theory.

Learning outcomes

Students should understand:

- nomadism, be able to distinguish it from migration (taught in People and Development), and understand three main types of nomadic lifestyle: hunter-gatherer, pastoral and trader
- main features of rural life, groups such as peasants and landless labourers, and rural depopulation as a problem
- urbanisation (introduced in People and Development), scale and extent of urbanisation including growth and features of megacities; the main features of life in 'slums' and informal settlements in cities and in suburbia
- issues of power and inequality in cities shown in segregation of classes and ethnic groups, and the existence of gated communities
- non-places such as shopping malls as social spaces
- power and inequalities between and within urban and rural areas
- how cities affect and are affected by changing environment and climate
- world population growth and the implications for population of the demographic transition.

Suggested timing

8-10 hours

Possible teaching and learning activities and resources

In addition to establishing and consolidating learning through regular reading, research, note-making and discussion, you may wish to consider the following teaching and learning activities and resources in your teaching this part of the specification:

Vocabulary for this section: provide students with separate lists of terms and definitions and ask them to match them up. Suggested terms: Nomadism, rural, urban, peasants, landless labourers, depopulation, megacities, informal settlements, suburbia, gated communities, non-places, demographic transition. This can be revisited later as a revision exercise, giving students the terms and asking them to give the definition/explanation.

Urbanisation: give each student or small group an example of a megacity and ask them to research how and why that city has grown, where people live and work, use of resources etc. Possible examples include Mumbai, Jakarta, Lagos, Manila, Bangalore, Dhaka, Johannesburg. Findings could be presented as posters for wall display.

Life in informal settlements: examples of these where information is widely available and can be researched by students include Dharavi (Mumbai, India) and Kibera (Nairobi, Kenya). Issues that could be looked at include ways of making a living, land ownership issues, everyday life, access to resources such as clean water, risks of disease.

Non-places: this term is associated with the French anthropologist Marc Augé. Non-places include airports, shopping centres, international hotels and highways. Ask students to think about what connects these (they may need some images to assist if they do not have direct experience). Ideas to draw out include anonymity and impersonality, lack of interaction other than essential, constant flows of people and consumption. Ask students whether they can think of other contexts that share some of these. They could also compare with alternatives e.g. how is the experience of shopping in a mall different from shopping in a small local shop.

Demographic transition: the view that at a certain point of development, societies move from high birth and death rates to lower birth and death rates. The transition period is when the death rate falls but birth rates are still high, leading to population growth. Ask students to research examples of countries where the transition has happened or is happening and find out what factors may have contributed. Ask students to draw a flow diagram showing three stages (before, during and after transition) with commentary.

Weeks Thirteen to Sixteen: Human impacts on environment

Specification content: 3.2.2.2

- Views of the relationship between people and the natural world: exploitation for human use; romanticism; conservation; media representations of ideas about the environment.
- Future generations and 'the long now'.
- Consumption; sustainability; energy sources.
- Agriculture and food: effects of what people eat and use on the environment.
- Effects of human movement: mass transport and commuting; tourism and over-tourism.
- Environmental problems: air, land and water pollution; plastics, e-waste.
- Changing landscapes: desertification; deforestation; extraction and mining; national parks and protected areas; oceans.
- The climate crisis: global heating; wildfires.
- Social construction of the environment and climate crises as social problems. Responses to the climate crisis: scepticism and denialism; governments and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change; environmental movements.
- Sociological views: ecological modernisation theory; green Marxism.
- Inequalities between and within countries and inequalities in the effects of environmental and climate changes and in access to acting sustainably.
- Environmental and climate justice.

Learning outcomes

Students should understand:

- views of the relationship between people and the natural world:
 - natural world as separate and available to be exploited
 - romanticism: appreciation of natural beauty and rejection of industrialism and modernity
 - conservation and environmentalism: the natural world as needing protection, the idea of giving standing to nature, people as custodians of nature, people as part of nature
- the ideas of future generations and of deep time and the 'long now' (thinking of very long term consequences of actions) as ways of protecting the natural world
- effects of consumption on the environment, including the idea of sustainability and use of energy sources
- how agriculture and food production affects both people (e.g. by providing employment) and the environment
- effects of human movement on the environment – mass transport and commuting, tourism and 'overtourism'
- causes and extent of environmental problems: air, land and water pollution; plastics, e-waste
- how landscapes are changing:
 - deforestation
 - extraction/mining
 - national parks and protected areas
 - wilderness
 - changing oceans – rising temperatures, loss of reefs, rising sea levels

- the idea of the climate crisis, changing weather patterns, global heating and the increase in wildfires
- how the environment and climate crises can be seen as being socially constructed as social problems
- responses to the climate crisis: scepticism, denialism and alarmism; government and inter-governmental responses (including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change); environmental and climate activism and movements such as Greta Thunberg's Fridays for Future (schools strikes)
- sociological views of the environment and climate change: ecological modernisation theory, green Marxism
- Inequalities between countries and inequalities in social class, gender and ethnicity in the effects of environmental and climate changes and in access to acting sustainably
- the concepts of environmental and climate justice and how they can be applied.

Suggested timing

16-20 hours

Possible teaching and learning activities and resources

In addition to establishing and consolidating learning through regular reading, research, note-making and discussion, you may wish to consider the following teaching and learning activities and resources in your teaching this part of the specification:

Vocabulary for this section: provide students with separate lists of terms and definitions and ask them to match them up. Suggested terms: romanticism, conservation, environmentalism, future generations, the long now, overtourism, climate scepticism, climate alarmism, climate realism, ecological modernisation theory, green Marxism, environmental justice, International Panel on Climate Change This can be revisited later as a revision exercise, giving students the terms and asking them to give the definition/explanation.

Future generations: Cymru (Wales) was one of the first nations to pass laws making sure that the interests of future generations were always considered. Ask student to find out about how this has been put into practice (<https://futuregenerations.wales/>)

The Long Now: Useful source: <https://longnow.org/>

Ask students to think about how decisions taken now might affect people living many years from now. Examples to think about could include nuclear power stations (and therefore nuclear waste), building of e.g. dams and cities, extraction of fossil fuels and rare minerals.

Students work on the following list, drawing up a table to show specific examples of human actions leading to these environmental changes and any actions taken to mitigate them: deforestation; extraction/mining; pollution of different types; rising temperatures and heatwaves; wildfires.

Sustainability: ask students in small groups to come up with ways in which they could bring sustainable practices into their daily lives e.g. at home or in school. How easy or difficult would these be to carry out? Why? What groups of people might find them easier or more difficult than others and why?

Theoretical perspectives: in small groups students list the main features of each of these views: climate scepticism, climate alarmism and climate realism. Then ask students to add evaluative points, both positive (e.g. this view is helpful in showing how...) and critical.

Weeks Seventeen to Nineteen: People and animals

Specification content: 3.2.2.3

- The zoological connection (Bryant); views of relationship between humans and animals.
- Animal welfare; animal cruelty and animal rights.
- Domestication: working animals; livestock: production and slaughter of animals for food.
- Pets: companion animal-human relationships and the therapeutic use of animals.
- Health: relationships between animals and diseases affecting people including zoonotic diseases.
- The Columbian Exchange.
- Biodiversity: extinctions; reduction in numbers including megafauna; hunting and fishing; 'invasive species'.
- Attempts to counter biodiversity loss, including conservation, zoos, rewilding, reintroduction of species, and de-extinction.
- Biotechnology and genomics; animal experimentation.

Learning outcomes

Students should understand:

- the importance of Clifton D. Bryant's zoological connection for acceptance of the need for sociology to study interaction between people and animals
- different views of animals, for example as below humans in a hierarchy or having rights
- the concepts of animal welfare, animal cruelty and animal rights and why they relevant to sociology
- interactions between people and domesticated animals:
 - working animals
 - livestock including the use of animals for food
 - pets
 - companion animals and therapeutic use of animals
- health problems arising from interactions between humans and animals, including zoonotic diseases
- how human activities have helped the movement of animals (and plants) so that some species have spread geographically and understand the Columbian Exchange as a significant example of this
- how people have caused the nature crisis; the ideas of extinction, reduction in numbers, endangered species and loss of biodiversity, the role of people in causing these and their significance and extent, including the role of hunting and fishing
- how people apply labels to species including 'invasive species'
- attempts to address the reduction of biodiversity including
 - conservation
 - zoos
 - rewilding
 - reintroduction of species
 - de-extinction, including ethical considerations
- the use of animals in research and arguments for and against this, including concerns arising from biotechnology, genomics and genetics.

Suggested timing

12-15 hours

Possible teaching and learning activities and resources

In addition to establishing and consolidating learning through regular reading, research, note-making and discussion, you may wish to consider the following teaching and learning activities and resources in your teaching this part of the specification:

Vocabulary for this section: provide students with separate lists of terms and definitions and ask them to match them up. Suggested terms: zoological connection, animal welfare, animal rights, biodiversity, extinction, rewilding, de-extinction, biotechnology, domestication, livestock, companion animals. This can be revisited later as a revision exercise, giving students the terms and asking them to give the definition/explanation.

Pets and other animals: give students a list of animals they are likely to be familiar with, including pets, livestock, working animals and wild animals. You can also include birds, fish, invertebrates etc. Ask them to think about questions such as: What is the most common role this animal plays in human lives? Are there other roles? (e.g. a dog can be a pet or a working animal) How common is this animal? What qualities or abilities are associated with this animal? What reactions do people have to this animal? For each answer they should provide an explanation or evidence.

Ask students to collect images of animals, for example from magazines, and create wall display leaving space around images. Students individually add key words or thoughts around each image.

Biodiversity loss: students carry out interviews with older members of their family or community, asking what changes if any their respondents have seen in nature and wildlife in their lifetime. Groups of students compile their findings and look for patterns (e.g. have some species become more or less common?) and possible explanations of these.

Case study of a species: each student is given one example of a species at risk and has to research it with a focus on interactions with and involvement of people. Examples where information is widely available include chimpanzees, orang-utans, gorillas, elephants, tigers, rhinoceros, polar bear.

Ask students to find about any groups or organisations in the area working on any aspects of nature and biodiversity. Students research the group or organization and compile a report with its nature, size, aims, success to date, finance etc. A link between the school or college and an organization that allows for a speaker or visit for each cohort of students could be set up.

Experiments on animals: Read this article: <https://theconversation.com/animal-research-is-it-a-necessary-evil-95815> The article contains factual information but is putting forward a point of view. Ask students to work in small groups to make a summary of the point of view that Clare Mackenzie is putting forward. Ask students what ideas and evidence could be used against this view? How do these ideas relate to the work at the start of this section on views of the relationship between humans and animals?

As this is the final section of the topic, students can at this point do revision activities including exam style questions, making consolidated notes and checking understanding of concepts.

3.2.3 People and Technology

Weeks Twenty to Twenty One: Pre-and non-digital technologies

Specification content: 3.2.3.1

- Machines: industrialisation and the changing nature of work, including extraction, manufacturing, and service industries.
- Mobilities and mass transport: cars and roads; railways; air travel; effects on people and on the environment.
- Consumerism and conspicuous consumption of material goods.
- Technological determinism; social constructionist views of technology.

Learning outcomes

Students should:

- understand the way that the work people do has changed and associated changes in technology: hunting and gathering, agriculture, extraction, manufacturing and service industry work
- understand the role of technologies in the changing nature of work, including the development of machinery, production lines and automation
- understand the effects of industrialisation, and of the Industrial Revolution, on people's lives
- understand how technologies have led to mass transport and enabled greater mobility, and the effects of these on people's lives and on the environment, including:
 - roads: from use of animals to cars; including public and private transport, urban planning, traffic-related injuries and deaths
 - railways and trains
 - transport by sea including cargo and tankers
 - air travel including its role in global tourism
- understand the role of consumerism in social life, including material goods and the concept of conspicuous consumption, and the extent to which consumer goods are or can be sustainable
- understand different views of technology:
 - the technological determinist view that technology is independent of society and is the sole or main cause of social and cultural change
 - the social constructionist view – the social shaping of technologies.

Suggested timing

8-10 hours

Possible teaching and learning activities and resources

In addition to establishing and consolidating learning through regular reading, research, note-making and discussion, you may wish to consider the following teaching and learning activities and resources in your teaching this part of the specification:

Vocabulary for this section: provide students with separate lists of terms and definitions and ask them to match them up. Suggested terms: machine, automation,

mass transport, consumerism, conspicuous consumption, technological determinism, social shaping of technology. This can be revisited later as a revision exercise, giving students the terms and asking them to give the definition/explanation.

Learning from data: Students visit this page on the Our World in Data web site:

<https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/death-rate-from-road-accidents>

(the map of the world is interactive; you can hover or click on a country to find the death rate). Ask students to compare their own country to others such as the USA, China and India. How safe, relatively, are their roads? Then ask them to make a list of factors that might affect the differences between countries. How relevant are each of these to their own country?

Reading practice: Students to read and make notes on this newspaper article describing some of the problems around commuting in African cities, including how these some of these are related to the colonial period:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/oct/26/commuters-africa-cities-stories>

Ask students to think about how similar or different is commuting in each of the three cities (Lagos, Johannesburg, Abidjan) and what might explain any differences.

Consumption: Give students in small groups one of the following or similar consumer goods and ask them to come up with differences in what is available, what choice people may have and what others may think about them based on their choice (or lack of choice): cars, mobile phones, clothing, trainers (running shoes), jewellery, housing.

Weeks Twenty Two to Twenty Four: 'Traditional' media

Specification content: 3.2.3.2

- Communication: post; telegraph; telephone.
- Information and entertainment: newspapers; broadcasting (radio and television); film/cinema.
- Growth of popular/mass culture.
- Marxist and pluralist views of 'traditional' media.
- Ownership and control of traditional media; media corporations and concentration of ownership.
- 'Traditional' media and misinformation, disinformation and propaganda.
- Representations of social groups according to social class, gender, ethnicity and age.
- Theories of relationships between traditional media and audiences: hypodermic syringe model; two step flow model; cultural effects; uses and gratifications.

Learning outcomes

Students should understand:

- in outline the development of different forms of communication, from post to telegraph to landline and mobile telephones
- in outline the development of 'traditional' media: newspapers and magazines, broadcast media (radio and television) and film/cinema
- the role of media in the growth of popular and mass culture
- pluralist views of 'traditional' media as reflecting public opinion and values
- Marxist views of 'traditional' media as controlled by the powerful and conveying ideology
- views of the ownership and control of 'traditional' media, including the power of media corporations and the concentration of ownership
- ways in which 'traditional' media can spread misinformation, disinformation and propaganda
- ways in which social groups based on social class, gender, ethnicity and age may be represented in 'traditional' media, including through stereotypes and under- and over-representation
- theories of the relationship between traditional media and their audiences:
 - hypodermic syringe model (direct effects on passive audiences)
 - two step flow model (effect mediated by opinion leaders)
 - cultural effects (gradual shaping of views through continuous reinforcement)
 - uses and gratifications (active audiences use media for their own purposes).

Suggested timing

12-15 hours

Possible teaching and learning activities and resources

In addition to establishing and consolidating learning through regular reading, research, note-making and discussion, you may wish to consider the following teaching and learning activities and resources in your teaching this part of the specification:

Vocabulary for this section: provide students with separate lists of terms and definitions and ask them to match them up. Suggested terms: popular culture, mass culture, traditional media, pluralist view of media, ownership, control, concentration of ownership, misinformation, disinformation, propaganda, stereotype, underrepresentation. This can be revisited later as a revision exercise, giving students the terms and asking them to give the definition/explanation.

Theoretical perspectives: in small groups students list the main features of each of pluralist and Marxist views of the media. Feminism could also be included. Note that Marxist views are often divided into manipulative (owners exercising direct control over content) and hegemonic (less direct control, media convey dominant ideology because the ideas are hegemonic). Then ask students to add evaluative points on each perspective, both positive (e.g. this view is helpful in showing how...) and critical.

Misinformation/disinformation: to understand the difference between misinformation and disinformation, give students definitions and then, without saying which they are, some examples. Useful source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z3hhvj6>

Choose one media source that all students will have access to (or show to whole class) e.g. an episode of a drama or comedy. Ask students to make a note of and then comment on how members of the groups studied (based on social class, gender, ethnicity and age) are represented. Ask students: are stereotypes present? do any representations break from the expected? are any groups under- or over-represented?

Students draw a table with the four models of audience-media relationships in one column (hypodermic syringe, two step flow, cultural effects, uses and gratifications); they could also be introduced to Stuart's Hall's idea of dominant, negotiated and oppositional readings. In other columns students add for each model the view of audiences (active or passive), whether effects are immediate or longer term, links to perspectives where appropriate and examples.

Weeks Twenty Five to Twenty Seven: The internet and social and new media

Specification content: 3.2.3.3

- The internet: fast global access to information.
- Social and new media: changes in communication; social media and mental health.
- Ownership and control of new and social media.
- Social media and misinformation and disinformation; conspiracy theories.
- Relationships between social media and audiences: greater audience involvement including as content creators and citizen journalists; social media influencers.

Learning outcomes

Students should understand:

- in outline the growth of the internet and World Wide Web, enabling fast global communication and access to information
- the growth of new media using digital technologies and effects on people's lives with greater interaction between people and media content
- the growth of social media and online social networks and effects on people's lives
- the ownership and control of new and social media and of digital media, including the growth of large media and technology corporations (such as Meta)
- ways in which new and social media can spread misinformation, disinformation and propaganda, including conspiracy theories
- relationships between new and social media and their audiences, including interactivity and the blurring of the distinction between producer and audience, such as greater involvement of people as content creators, citizen journalists and social media influencers
- similarities and differences between 'traditional' and new and social media, including interactivity, changes on relationship between media and audience, ownership and control, ideologies and information.

Suggested timing

12-15 hours

Possible teaching and learning activities and resources

In addition to establishing and consolidating learning through regular reading, research, note-making and discussion, you may wish to consider the following teaching and learning activities and resources in your teaching this part of the specification:

Vocabulary for this section: provide students with separate lists of terms and definitions and ask them to match them up. Suggested terms: digital technologies, the internet, social media, new media, conspiracy theories, citizen journalism, influencers, content creators, interactivity. This can be revisited later as a revision exercise, giving students the terms and asking them to give the definition/explanation.

Time-line: Group activity (this could be a wall chart to which students add their points): Traditional media and new media: continuity or change? Students add to chart ways in which there has been continuity (e.g. domination by large corporations) or change (e.g.

these are mainly different corporations). Each student to then write an answer with an conclusion justified by the evidence and examples.

Weeks Twenty Eight to Twenty Nine: Digital technologies

Specification content: 3.2.3.4

- Digital/online games.
- Ways 'traditional' media are adapting to the digital age.
- Use of technologies for health and fitness, including quantification and gamification of social life.
- Use of technologies for surveillance.
- Illegal and anti-social uses: cybercrimes and cyber security; hacking.
- Inequalities in access to digital technologies; digital divides.

Learning outcomes

Students should understand:

- the development of digital and online games and their influence on people's lives, including multi player roleplaying games and online communities
- some ways in which 'traditional' media are adapting to changes, such as newspapers moving online
- uses of digital technologies for health and fitness, including quantification and gamification and effects on people's lives
- the use of digital technologies for surveillance, including physical (e.g. CCTV) and online tracking
- illegal and anti-social uses of digital technologies, including cybercrimes such as online scams and fraud and online stalking; the growth of cyber security; hacking including ethical hacking
- inequalities in access to digital technologies, including global differences and digital divides based on social class, gender, age and location.

Suggested timing

8-10 hours

Possible teaching and learning activities and resources

In addition to establishing and consolidating learning through regular reading, research, note-making and discussion, you may wish to consider the following teaching and learning activities and resources in your teaching this part of the specification:

Vocabulary for this section: provide students with separate lists of terms and definitions and ask them to match them up. Suggested terms: multi role-player games, online communities, quantification, gamification, surveillance, cybercrime, cyber security, hacking, ethical hacking, digital divides. This can be revisited later as a revision exercise, giving students the terms and asking them to give the definition/explanation.

Ask students to make a record of and share their use of a digital device e.g. for a mobile phone this could include playing games, monitoring fitness, surveillance (such as where friends or family area), sharing information, one to one communication.

Divide students into several groups and ask each group to research how new media have changed one of these or other areas: education in schools, access to news, health and fitness, crime and crime prevention. Share findings with rest of class.

Week Thirty: Artificial intelligence and cyborgs

Specification content: 3.2.3.5

- Differences between types of AI.
- Algorithms: issues of power and inequality.
- The extent to which people and organisations are using AI and effects of this.
- Emerging technologies that merge the human and machine/technology.
- Robots and cyborgs.

Learning outcomes

Students should understand:

- different types of artificial intelligence, such as narrow and general AI, large language models
- the importance of algorithms in shaping what content audiences encounter and the role of algorithms in amplifying views and ideologies
- the extent to which people and organisations are using AI of different types and the effects of this, for example on work and education
- how technologies are now merging the human and the machine e.g. cyborgs, implants, prostheses, and the implications of these changes for human agency and autonomy
- how robots and cyborgs affect people's lives.

Suggested timing

4-5 hours

Possible teaching and learning activities and resources

In addition to establishing and consolidating learning through regular reading, research, note making and discussion, you may wish to consider the following teaching and learning activities and resources in your teaching this part of the specification:

Vocabulary for this section: provide students with separate lists of terms and definitions and ask them to match them up. Suggested terms: artificial intelligence, Turing Test, narrow AI, general AI, large language models, algorithms, cyborgs, robots, prostheses, black boxing. This can be revisited later as a revision exercise, giving students the terms and asking them to give the definition/explanation.

Algorithms: Ask students what it means to say that algorithms are “black boxes”. Once this is understood, ask students how this idea points to what some people say are problems or dangers arising from the use of algorithms.

AI: How is AI being reported in news and other media? Ask students to find some examples and evaluate them. For example, is it said that it is inevitable that AI will dramatically change something (this would be technological determinism)? Is it implied that AI is helpful or that it is a problem or danger? Then consider the findings in the light of work earlier in this chapter on ownership and control of the media and theoretical views of the media.

Reading: The philosopher Carissa Veliz has written about AI. Her answers in this interview from 2019 provide some useful ideas about AI. Ask students to make

summary notes for themselves of what she says (they can pass over the question about philosophy). <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/think/article/artificial-intelligence-and-data-harvesting-an-interview-with-carissa-veliz/DB6B762742DAD68A7B0F922E5CD5A0EA>

Véliz C, Law S. Artificial Intelligence and Data Harvesting: An Interview with Carissa Véliz. *Think*. 2023;22(63):59-62. doi:10.1017/S1477175622000215

Robots: Ask students to list any tasks or other activities that robots can already do. For example, they may already be familiar with robot cleaners and lawnmowers or have seen videos of robots dancing and running. Ask them to then list other tasks that they think robots are likely to be able to do soon. Then assess the implications for people, as workers and consumers.

Agency and autonomy: Ask students to think of examples in everyday life where some human agency is being shared with digital technologies or machines. For example, the use of a satnav. Are there risks in people giving up some of their agency? Students draw a table to show the possible advantages and disadvantages and decide which case they think is the stronger and why.

As this is the final section of the topic, students can at this point do revision activities including exam style questions, making consolidated notes and checking understanding of concepts.