

# AQA A-Level Sociology

Head of Department: Mr. D. Rushin

## Department Information

Sociology students at CLCC attain exceptionally good grades. In recent years, well over half of Year-13 students attained an A\*, A or B grade, around 75% have hit (or even beaten) their challenging target grades and the department has been judged as 'outstanding' compared to national standards.

## Why study this course?

Sociology offers students insights into social, political, economic and cultural issues. It helps develop a critical understanding of: culture and identity, government policy, family life, inequality, crime, education, childhood, global relations, environmentalism and other aspects of society.

## Aims of the course

A-Level Sociology aims to provide students with a greater understanding of society, and to arouse an interest in human social behaviour and a desire to explain it. As well as preparing students for success in exams, it aims to develop a range of skills that can be useful for a variety of careers.

## Course outline

- **Families and Households** investigates changing patterns of marriage, cohabitation and divorce; the diversity of families and households with reference to gender roles and power; the nature of childhood; and demographic trends in the UK relating to birth rates, death rates and family size.
- **Education** explores the purpose of education; differing achievement between social groups by social class, gender and ethnicity; relationships and processes within schools; and the significance of educational policies including marketization and 'the globalisation of education'.
- **Sociological Methods** explores a range of primary and secondary sociological research methods, including questionnaires, experiments, observation and interviews, and evaluates their usefulness.
- **Global Development** investigates why some societies have modernised while others remain under-developed. A range of concepts and phenomena are also studied, including 'globalisation', over-population, aid & debt, trade, 'urbanisation' and environment.
- **Crime & Deviance** explores definitions of 'crime' and 'deviance'; attempts to explain why some groups seem to commit criminal and deviant acts while others conform to laws and 'social norms'. Other issues include: punishment, globalisation, the criminal justice process and crime-prevention.
- **Theory & Methods** explores sociology's relationship with government policy, and examines whether or not social research can ever be objective, unbiased and 'value free'. It also explores whether or not sociology should be considered a 'science' and whether or not society is 'postmodern'.

## How is it assessed?

At the end of year-13, students sit 3 exam papers, all 2 hours long.

## Where does the course lead?

While some Sociology students enter employment with a greater understanding of social, political and economic processes; many go on to university. Several CLCC Sociologists have gone on to study Sociology, Social Policy, International Relations, Criminology or Human Geography, for example.