

The top half of the page is decorated with a collage of human head silhouettes. Each silhouette is filled with crumpled paper of various colors, including shades of brown, tan, grey, and blue. The silhouettes are arranged in a dense, overlapping pattern, creating a textured and artistic background.

Subject Benchmark Statement: Sociology

The Basics

This summary is designed to provide a short and accessible overview of the Subject Benchmark Statement for **Sociology** for students, employers and academics. It is not intended to replace or alter the Statement, which should be referred to in the design and approval of courses and when any further detail is required.

Subject Benchmark Statements describe the nature of study and the benchmark academic standards expected of graduates in specific subject areas, and in respect of particular qualifications. They provide a picture of what graduates in a particular subject might reasonably be expected to know, do and understand at the end of their course or programme.

Subject Benchmark Statements are presented in four sections. Section 1 outlines the contextual information - providing the operational landscape,

and boundaries, of subject discipline. This includes consideration of the ways in which the discipline addresses wider social goals, specifically in relation to: equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI); accessibility and the needs of disabled students; education for sustainable development (ESD); enterprise and entrepreneurship; and the impact of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) on the subject.

Section 2 covers distinctive features of the course, including curriculum design, partnership arrangements, flexibility of delivery, progression and ongoing monitoring processes. Section 3 explains any features relevant to teaching, learning and assessment activities for the subject. Section 4 describes the benchmark standards of achievement reached by all graduates with a bachelor's degree with honours in the subject, with some subjects also including achievement at master's level.



Why study a degree in Sociology?

Sociology is the study of how people shape and are shaped by the world they live in and their relations with others. As an established discipline, Sociology draws on evidence to promote a critical understanding and active engagement in society, informing interventions that address social issues locally, nationally and globally. As a result, Sociology graduates are well-prepared for, and make a significant contribution to, a wide and diverse range of roles across the private, public and voluntary sectors.

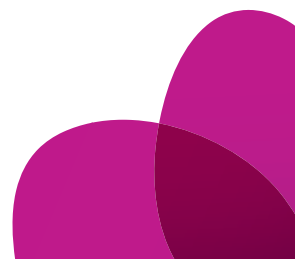
As a core social science discipline, Sociology is concerned with the social world, and the social dimensions of human and non-human interactions. It combines theoretical and evidence-based approaches, with students learning to apply and assess theories and methods in the discipline. Through forming and articulating evidence-based arguments, students are able to develop the critical skills necessary for analysing complex social issues.



What are the main teaching and learning approaches in Sociology?

Teaching, learning and curricula are designed in such a way as to ensure accessibility for all students and to provide evidence that the student has been given the opportunity to attain the required benchmark standards in all areas of performance.

Teaching and learning activities take the form of lectures, seminars, workshops, computing laboratory classes, tutorials, discussions, collaborative uses of diverse digital media, visits to external sites, and group and individual activities and projects. Teaching approaches may encourage students to develop a critical understanding of the impact of GenAI (and other technologies) across a range of areas and associated ethical issues.





How are students assessed?

There are many diverse and inclusive forms of formative and summative assessment that can be used in Sociology, including posters, idea pitches, autoethnography, reflective assessments and group projects, as well as more conventional essays and exams. Approaches to assessment are increasingly facilitated by digital technologies – for example, podcasts, videocasts and recorded presentations - and staff and students should be familiar with local institutional policies and developments regarding the integration of technology into teaching and assessment. GenAI represents an opportunity for developing imaginative assessments, making use of its analytical power.



Benchmark Standards

The minimum threshold standards that a student will have demonstrated when they are awarded an honours and/or master's degree in **Sociology** are outlined on **pages 18-20** of the Subject Benchmark Statement. The vast majority of students will perform significantly better than the minimum threshold standards. Each higher education provider has its own method of determining what appropriate evidence of this achievement will be and should refer to [Annex D in The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies](#). This Annex sets out common descriptions of the four main degree outcome classifications for bachelor's degrees with honours - 1st, 2.1, 2.2 and 3rd.

The full statement was developed by subject experts drawn from across the sector. Details of the Advisory Group can be found on page 22 of the Statement.

Subject Benchmark Statements are published in QAA's capacity as an expert quality body on behalf of the higher education sector.

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