University of Plymouth

Faculty of Arts & Humanities

School of Law, Criminology & Government

Programme Specification

BSc (Hons) Sociology

This award incorporates an integrated Foundation Year

Definitive Document Approved: 3.5.19

Implementation Date: September 2019

The BSc Sociology with Foundation

The BSc Sociology with Foundation (four years) runs alongside the three-year BSc Sociology.

1. **Final award title:** BSc (Honours) Sociology

Award titles		
Final award title	Level 6	Batchelor of Science Sociology
Intermediate award title	Level 5	Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) (unnamed)
Intermediate award title	Level 4	Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) (unnamed)
	Level 3	Transcript

The approved content of the Foundation Year is described in this Programme Specification, is an integral part of the final award route, and is therefore not reflected in the final award title.

UCAS code: L301
HECOS code: 100505

2. **Awarding Institution:** University of Plymouth
   Teaching institution(s): University of Plymouth

3. **Accrediting body**(ies): N/A

4. **Distinctive Features of the Programme and the Student Experience**
The key features of Sociology at Plymouth are:
Teaching excellence: Sociology has been taught at Plymouth since the 1970s and the modules offered at Plymouth therefore benefit from considerable experience in terms of design and delivery.
Research Activity: The sociology teaching staff are all active scholars with strong research profiles. The team believes in the importance of linking research and teaching. Staff research specialisms are reflected in the modules offered to students.
Research methods training: The programme offers a wide range of opportunities for acquiring sociological research methods skills by learning through practice. This is a particular strength of the programme and is monitored and recorded throughout,

allowing students to graduate with a comprehensive range of skills relevant for a variety of employment and other settings.

Personal tutorials: Regular timetabled small tutorial groups are held throughout Levels 4 and 5, providing a strong source of academic and pastoral support. These are linked with small group work and experiential learning. This support continues in Level 6 through dissertation supervisory meetings.

Volunteering and employment opportunities: Students are encouraged to engage in a range of work placement options throughout the programme, either through a core module at Level 5 or an optional module at Level 6, or through the University based Plymouth Award scheme.

Optional Study Abroad: Students have the opportunity to study a year (or a semester) abroad at Level 5, as part of our exchange programme in one of our partner institutions in Europe or the United States. Students can arrange this via the Erasmus and ISEP programmes.

5.   Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Group(s)

The Sociology programme at Plymouth has been developed with close attention to and in compliance with the QAA subject benchmarks for Sociology. This has been used in developing the Sociology programme at Plymouth to consider defining principles, the nature and scope of the programme, aims and objectives, generic and transferable skills, and appropriate methods for teaching, learning, and assessment. Details of the Sociology Subject Benchmark can be found on the following website: https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/sbs-sociology-16.pdf?sfvrsn=e696f781_12

6.   Programme Structure

Level 3

semester	credits	code	title	requirements
S1	30	LCG001	**Foundational Ideas & Concepts in Law, Government & Society**	39.5% to pass
S1	30	LCG002	**Introduction to Law and Criminal Justice**	39.5% to pass
S2	30	LCG003	**Introduction to Government & Society**	39.5% to pass
S2	30	LCG004	**Work & Employment in the 21st Century**	39.5% to pass

Level 4 – 100 core credits & 20 elective credits

semester	credits	code	title	requirements
S1	20 core	SOC 1513	Key Concepts & Skills for Sociology	39.5% to pass
S1	20 core	SOC 1510	Social Identities & Inequalities	39.5% to pass
S1	20 core	SOC 1512	Social Science Research Methods	39.5% to pass
S2	20 core	GOV1000PP	One Planet? Society & Sustainability	39.5% to pass
S2	20 core	SOC 1511	Introduction to Social Theory	39.5% to pass
S2	20 elective	Elective selected from: CCJS 1112 IRL 102 POL 101	Criminology & Crime Problems International Relations Since 1945 Comparative Democracies	39.5% to pass

Level 5 – 100 core credits and 20 elective credits

semester	credits	code	title	requirements
S1	20 core	SOC 2516	Culture, Structure & Experience	39.5% to pass
S1	20 core	SOC 2526	Work, Employment & Society	39.5% to pass
S1	20 core	SOC 2523	The Social Science Research Process	39.5% to pass
S2	20 core	SOC 2524	Developments in Social Theory	39.5% to pass
S2	20 core	SOC 2525	Gender, Sex & Sexuality	39.5% to pass
S2	20 elective	SOC 2522	Globalisation & International Social Justice	39.5% to pass
S2	20 elective	IRL 201	International Security Studies	39.5% to pass
S2	20 elective	IRL 203	International Relations of the Developing World	39.5% to pass
S2	20 elective	POL203	Civil Society and the Public Sphere	39.5% to pass
All year	20 elective	SOC 2527	Work Based Learning in Sociology	39.5% to pass

Level 6 – 60 core credits and 60 elective credits.

semester	credits	code	title	requirements
AY	40 core	SOC 3546	Dissertation & PDP Review	39.5% to pass
AY	20 core	SOC 3545	Social Theory & Political Action	39.5% to pass
S1	20 elective	SOC 3538	Philosophy of Social Science	39.5% to pass
S2	20 elective	SOC 3543	Health, Healing & Healthcare	39.5% to pass
S1	20 elective	SOC 3544	Food & Foodways	39.5% to pass
S2	20 elective	SOC 3547	Media, State & Society	39.5% to pass
All Year	20 elective	SOC 3548	Work Based Learning in Sociology	39.5% to pass

7.   Programme Aims

The Sociology programme aims to equip graduates with conceptual, analytical and practical skills in sociology and social research.

Level 3 study aims to foster a suitable learning environment to facilitate the success of students from a range of non-standard backgrounds, offering bespoke support, skills training and foundational knowledge development. While providing a broad review of the discipline of sociology, particular attention is played to the role of empirical evidence, and to the relationship between theoretical interpretations and understanding society and social change.

Thereafter the programme progresses, aiming to provide graduates with the ability to collect and analyse evidence, using appropriate theoretical and methodological approaches. Making links between the lived experiences of individuals and the social world in which we live, the programme aims to develop students' knowledge of a variety of approaches to understanding these relationships.

All students will be expected to demonstrate achievement at a threshold level across a broad range of intellectual, cognitive, practical and employment-related skills, with opportunities to specialise. All students will be expected to demonstrate a level of proficiency in the use of quantitative and qualitative data.

The programme aims to produce graduates with intellectual ability, practical skills, and ethical appreciation to support them in a range of future activity through their life.

8. Programme Intended Learning Outcomes

The Sociology programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, cognitive and intellectual skills, key/transferable skills, practical skills and employment-related skills.

8.1. Level 3

The intended learning outcomes of the Foundation Year should be read in conjunction with those of the Level 4-6 award, to demonstrate the full scope of the intended study.

On successful completion of the Foundation Year, students will demonstrate the following intended learning outcomes:

Knowledge and understanding

- Describe the main ideas that have shaped Western societies in the modern period.
- Describe at a basic level the structure and operation of the legal system and criminal justice process
- Describe the main domestic and international governmental institutions and demonstrate basic knowledge and understating of key issues and theories in politics and international relations
- Demonstrate a foundational knowledge and understanding of sociological concepts and theories employed to make sense of the structure and organisation of society
- Describe the nature, characteristics and wider context of an employment sector.

Cognitive skills

- Use the ideas that have shaped Western societies to illuminate the nature of current issues and controversies in modern society
- Draw upon appropriate tools and concepts to analyse the institutions of the legal system and criminal justice process

Key transferable skills

- Communicate through written work at an appropriate standard, and in a clear, concise and accurate way
- Work effectively in groups to research an employment sector and its characteristics
- Orally present research findings in a clear and effective way

8.2 Levels 4-6 Programme Learning Outcomes

(A) Knowledge and Understanding	Teaching/Learning Methods and Strategies

On successful completion graduates should have developed:	Core knowledge and understanding are acquired by students through attendance at **lectures** and **seminars** and through their associated **reading** of texts, journals, policy documents and internet sourced documentation. Lectures identify key issues of sociological enquiry with increasing specialism through the programme's stages. Lectures are accompanied by lecture notes placed on each module's Moodle site, to facilitate note taking and guide future reading.
1) the ability to describe and examine a range of concepts and theoretical approaches within sociology and evaluate their application;	
2) the capacity to provide an analytical account of social diversity and inequality and their effects;	Seminars provide students with space to develop their understanding of sociological concepts and practice through discussion, defined tasks and/or presentations.
3) the capacity to analyse social relationships between individuals, groups and social institutions;	Students at Stage 1 rely on a range of core text, but as they progress through Stages 2 and 3 they are increasingly required to draw on a wider range of sources. By Stage 3 students will pay particular attention to research presented in high quality refereed journals in sociology and cognate social science disciplines.
4) proficiency in assessing the appropriate use of a range of research strategies and methods (quantitative and qualitative);	
5) the ability to examine and explain processes that underpin social change and social stability;	**Assessment Strategy** Knowledge and understanding are inclusively assessed by coursework in the form of **essays**, **portfolios**, **projects**, and **reports.** Practical skills are inclusively **assessed** by students taking part in **presentations** including **posters.** As students develop their knowledge and understanding from Stage 1 and 2 into specialisation at Stage 3, they are increasingly required to present research based, autonomously derived coursework, culminating in the **dissertation**.
6) an understanding of the distinctive contribution made by sociological approaches to understanding the social world, and key elements of its relationship with cognate disciplines;	

(B) *Cognitive and Intellectual Skills*	*Teaching/Learning Methods and Strategies*

On successful completion graduates should have developed:	Cognitive and intellectual skills are embedded throughout the Sociology programme. **Lectures** identify critical thought and encourage deep analysis and **seminars** require students to synthesise theory and practice. Seminar discussion and related preparation provide students with evaluative tools. As students progress from Stage 1 into Stage 2 they develop their analytic skills in class debate and through **reading** critical accounts of sociological issues. The research-led focus of Stage 3 modules means that students are able to synthesise their understanding of the range of modules they have studied through their own **research**. The development in lectures and seminars of cognitive and analytic skills is supported through personal tutoring to advise students on gaining support with the skills they require as they go through their degree programme. **Assessment Strategy** Students' cognitive and intellectual skills are assessed through coursework. In Stages 1 and 2 students' problem solve and apply methodology in hypothetical **research proposals** and **portfolios**. Formative assessments are used, as well as reflective accounts to encourage students in developing these skills. In Stage 3 the **dissertation** requires students to critically analyse a sociological issue through a distinct piece of research. Smaller projects in other modules similarly require critical analysis and evaluation. **Essays** at all Stages assess students' ability to develop and apply analytic frameworks.
1) the ability to evaluate the relationship between argument and evidence in a range of contexts;	
2) a capacity to assess, evaluate and explain the merits of competing explanations of human behaviour, social situations and events;	
3) the ability to draw evidence from a range of different types of sources, and to provide an effective and coherent synthesis of these;	
4) the ability to draw evidence-based and reasoned conclusions and to present these in a coherent argument.	

(C) Key/Transferable Skills	*Teaching/Learning Methods and Strategies*
On successful completion graduates should have developed the ability to:	Key/Transferable skills permeate the student learning experience. Students present their work in **seminars** in both written and oral forms. They work in groups in the seminar setting and

1) the ability to summarise, critically evaluate and explain empirical research data, quantitative and qualitative; 2) a capacity to discuss sociological topics with appreciation of theory, evidence and relation to current application; 3) An ability to communicate effectively with others in a clear and articulate manner, both verbally and in writing; 4) An ability to organise work and carry out tasks independently, with appropriate guidance.	autonomously, collecting information from a range of sources to support both group and individual **research** needs. Presentations in seminars and sometimes in larger settings provide students with the opportunity to self-evaluate academic requirements, while **Personal Development Planning** (PDP) provides this opportunity in a broader context. Attention is given to those students who may feel anxious about these expectations. All Sociology students are assigned a personal tutor in Sociology at stages 1 and 2 and a dissertation supervisor and tutor at Stage 3. Tutors provide a vital support and guidance role to students. At Stages 1 and 2 this includes regular group sessions and a one-to-one session at least once a term. At Stage 3 this forms part of their regular dissertation supervision. Tutors encourage students to engage in personal and professional development, which includes personal reflection. Sociology students also have the option of taking a **work based learning** module at Stage 2 and/or Stage 3 which requires reflective, autonomous practice. **Induction** sessions provided by library staff give students information and guidance on information retrieval systems. Moodle provides the technology enhanced learning environment within which the Sociology programme is delivered. **Assessment Strategy** Assessment of Key/Transferable skills occurs formatively through **tutor contact**, **seminar discussion** and dissertation **formative feedback**. Seminar **presentations** are assessed summatively and formatively, as is the work-based learning **report** that requires a reflective account. Successful autonomous study is identified by the **dissertation** at Stage 3.

(D) Employment Related Skills	Teaching/Learning Methods and Strategies
On successful completion graduates should have developed: 1) the capacity to identify and comment on the contribution and value of sociological work with regard to social, public and civil policy issues; 2) Effective communication skills, in written and verbal forms; 3) Skills in personal reflection, team-working, independent working, and skills in problem-solving; 4) skills in gathering, summarising and synthesising information	Employment related skills and understanding are provided within the Sociology programme both through core **work-related** and elective **work-based** learning. For example, the contribution of sociology to understanding experiences of work and employment feature in the curriculum, notably in the Stage 2 Work, Employment & Society module. A series of career planning opportunities are provided to students throughout their years of study. This has been developed in conjunction with the University Careers staff to link with identified modules, and connected with personal tutor group sessions. At each Stage this includes a careers advisor from the Careers Service presenting a dedicated session to students on careers. That guidance is enhanced by the personal tutoring system which supports student queries about careers and at Stage 3 provides advice on CV preparation and interview technique. **Assessment Strategy** The requirement for students to be reflective within the process of personal tutoring, and within modules at each Stage, encourages them to consider future aims and plans.

8.5.   Practical skills

On successful completion graduates should have developed:

(E) Practical Skills	Teaching/Learning Methods and Strategies
On successful completion graduates should have developed:	The Stage 1 module SOC 1513 provides a foundation for students in key skills, which are developed in research method modules at Stages 1 and 2.

1)	skills in the use of information technology;	The Sociology programme has a strong applied focus throughout the three Stages. This involves addressing contemporary issues and controversies, as in SOC 1510 (Social Identities & Inequalities) and SOC 2525 (Gender, Sex & Sexuality). Themes of social inequality and identity run through several modules, with students encouraged in applying these in different settings.
2)	organisational and administrative skills, including skills in 'time-management';	
3)	skills in presenting information in a variety of formats, including reports, essays, posters, presentations;	Students are supported in developing skills to study autonomously during the course of the Sociology programme, reflected in appropriate progression through teaching, learning and assessment methods, including the contribution of the personal tutor system. Use of IT systems is embedded into student learning practices as the **digital learning environment (Moodle)** provides access to lecture notes and general information on the Sociology programme. All students are supported in developing skills in quantitative data analysis (currently involving SPSS). Students are able to e-mail staff and vice versa.
4)	the ability to work effectively as an individual and as a member of a team;	
		Stage 3 specialises in skills application in subject specific modules, and in the dissertation, as student-centred learning results in more autonomous study. The supervisory role of tutors provides students with support and advice on applying their methodological knowledge to sociological issues.
		Assessment Strategy All student **coursework** must be completed using appropriate IT systems and presented as such. The **dissertation** requires an ethical assessment of practice as an integral part of the research process and is the key opportunity for students to apply their methodological understanding autonomously. Students are given the opportunity for **formative** feedback such

	that they can improve on work submitted formatively in readiness for final submission. The work-based learning module **report** also provides an opportunity for some students to reflect on their practical skills in context.

9.   Admissions Criteria, including APCL, APEL and DAS arrangements

All applicants are recommended to have GCSE (or equivalent) Maths and English at Grade C or above (from 2017 this is Grade 4 or above). If applicants do not have the equivalent, completing this during this degree will be promoted.

Entry Requirements for BSc (Hons) Sociology with Foundation	
A-level/AS-level	For level 3 entry the tariff points entry level will normally be 32-48 points from A level or equivalent. Non-standard applicants will normally be interviewed.
BTEC National Diploma/QCF Extended Diploma	All applications to be referred to the Admissions Tutor
Access to Higher Education at level 3	Candidates can be interviewed before an offer is made. Pass an Access to HE Diploma in any subjects with at least 33 credits at Merit/Dist.
Welsh Baccalaureate	All applications to be referred to the Admissions Tutor
Scottish Qualifications Authority	32-48 points at Advanced Highers – refer to admissions tutor
Irish Leaving Certificate	Irish Highers, H5 in five subjects equivalent to 32-48 points
International Baccalaureate	24 overall – refer to admissions tutor.
Proficiency in English	Students for whom English is an additional language will need to demonstrate ability in spoken and written English equivalent to an IELTS score of 6.0 and/or successfully complete the University's special test before entering the Foundation Year.

Other qualifications may be accepted for entry; information is provided on Programme Course pages specifying what these are and the level at which they need to be achieved.

10.   Progression criteria for Final and Intermediate Awards

Students are required to pass all modules of the Foundation Year to progress to Level 4 of the BSc Sociology degree. Requests to change programmes at the end of the Foundation Year will be considered only within the normal University regulations.

- Students must achieve 120 credits at Level 3 to progress to Level 4. There is no exit award for those leaving after the Foundation Year only.
- If students withdraw from the degree programme after successfully completing Level 4, they are eligible for the award of a Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE).
- If students withdraw from the degree programme after successfully completing Level 5, they are eligible for the award of a Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE).
- If students fail to achieve 120 credits at Level 6 but gain 80 credits they may be eligible for an Ordinary Degree.

Students must achieve 120 credits at Level 4 to progress to Level 5, and 240 credits (including 120 at Level 5) to progress to Level 6.

Students from appropriate other courses may be eligible to join Level 5 if they have 120 credits at Level 4 from a relevant programme. If, in addition to 120 credits at Level 4, they also have 120 Level 5 credits from a relevant programme they may be eligible to join Level 6.

The final mark on which final degree classification is based will be calculated on the following basis:
Level 4 – average mark from best 80 credits: 10%
Level 5 – average mark from all 120 credits: 30%
Level 6 – average mark from all 120 credits: 60%

11. Non Standard Regulations
There are no exceptions to the University regulations.

12. Transitional Arrangements
N/A

Appendices
Programme Specification Mapping (UG) – core/elective modules on Levels 4-6 contributing to the meeting of award learning outcomes.

Core Modules		Knowledge & understanding						Cognitive & intellectual skills				Key & transferable skills							Employment related skills				Practical skills							Compensation Y/N	Assessment Element(s) and weightings [use KIS definition] E1- exam E2 – clinical exam T1- test C1- coursework A1 – generic assessment P1 - practical
		1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Level 4	SOC1510	x	x	x				x	x	x	x				x			x					x							Y	C1 100%
Level 4	SOC1511	x				x		x	x	x	x				x			x					x							Y	C1 100%
Level 4	SOC1512											x	x	x				x					x						x	Y	C1 100%
Level 4	SOC1513		x													x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x				Y	C1 40% P1 60%
Level 4	GOV1000 PP		x					x	x	x	x							x	x				x							Y	C1 50% P1 50%
Level 4 LOs																															
Level 5	SOC2516	x	x	x				x	x	x	x				x			x					x							Y	C1 100%
Level 5	SOC2523			x								x	x	x				x			x		x				x		x	Y	C1 100%
Level 5	SOC2524				x			x	x	x	x				x			x					x							Y	C1 100%
Level 5	SOC2526						x			x	x				x			x	x	x	x		x							Y	C1 100%
Level 5	SOC 2525	x	x	x					x		x				x			x					x							Y	C1 100%
Level 5 LOs																															
L6	SOC3545							x	x	x	x				x															Y	C1 100%
L6	SOC3546			x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x													N	C1 100%
Level 6 LOs																															

ELECTIVE MODULES: tick those Award Learning Outcomes the module contributes to through its assessed learning outcomes.

Elective Modules		Knowledge & understanding						Cognitive & intellectual skills				Key & transferable skills							Employment related skills				Practical skills							Compensation Y/N	Assessment Element(s) and weightings [use KIS definition] E1 - exam, E2 - clinical exam, T1 - test, C1 - coursework, A1 - generic assessment, P1 - practical
		1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Level 4 LOs																															
L5	SOC2527			x						x	x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x					Y	C1 70% P1 30%
	SOC2522	x	x	x						x	x				x	x				x		x		x	x					Y	C1 60% P1 40%
Level 5 LOs																															
Level 6	SOC3538								x	x	x					x				x				x						Y	C1 100%
	SOC3543	x	x							x	x				x					x				x						Y	C1 100%
	SOC3544	x	x						x	x	x				x					x				x						Y	C1 100%
	SOC3547								x	x	x				x					x				x						Y	C1 100%
	SOC3548			x						x	x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x					Y	C1 80% P1 20%