

University of Plymouth

Faculty of Arts & Humanities and Business

School of Society and Culture

Programme Specification

BSc (Hons) Sociology / 0250

September 2021

1. **BSc (Honours) Sociology**

Final award title: BSc (Hons) Sociology

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 4 (120 Credits)		
Semester 1	SOC1513 Key Concepts & Skills for Sociology (4-week immersive module) 20 Credits	
	SOC1510 Social Identities & Inequalities 20 Credits	CCJ403 21st Century Crime Problems 20 credits
Semester 2	GOV1000PP Plymouth Plus Module One Planet? Society and Sustainability 20 Credits	
	SOC1514 Introduction to Social Theory 20 Credits	SOC1515 Social Science Research Methodologies 20 credits

At Level 5 students may choose to undertake an optional study year (or semester) abroad at one of our partner institutions in Europe or the United States.

Level 5 (120 Credits)			
Semester 1	SOC2516 Culture, Structure & Experience 20 Credits	SOC2529 Contemporary Social Issues 20 Credits	Elective Modules 20 credits from: SOC2527 Work Based Learning in Sociology 20 credits (runs over Semesters 1 & 2) <i>Delivery suspended in 21/22</i> SOC2522 Globalisation and International Social Justice 20 Credits IRL200 Understanding Global Politics 20 credits
Semester 2	SOC2524 Developments in Social Theory 20 Credits	SOC2525 Gender, Sex & Sexuality 20 Credits	SOC2523 The Social Science Research Process 20 credits

Level 6 (120 Credits)	
All Year	SOC3549 Dissertation 40 Credits
Semester 1	SOC3545 Social Theory and Political Action 20 Credits Plus 60 credits from electives: CCJ612 Experiential Learning Opportunities in Criminology 20 credits (runs over Semesters 1 & 2) SOC3548 Work Based Learning in Sociology 20 credits (runs over Semesters 1 & 2) <i>Delivery suspended in 21/22</i> SOC3547 Media, State & Society 20 credits

	<p style="text-align: center;">SOC3538 Philosophy of Social Science 20 credits Delivery suspended in 2021-22</p>
Semester 2	<p style="text-align: center;">SOC3543 Health, Healing and Healthcare 20 credits</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SOC3544 Food and Foodways 20 credits</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ANTH608 Ethics and Ethnography 20 Credits</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CCJ610 Green Criminology 20 credits</p>

BSc (Hons) Sociology Minor

Level 4 (120 Credits)		
Semester 1	4-week immersive module from Major programme 20 Credits	
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">SOC1510 Social Identities & Inequalities 20 Credits</td> <td style="text-align: center;">20 credits from Major programme</td> </tr> </table>	SOC1510 Social Identities & Inequalities 20 Credits
SOC1510 Social Identities & Inequalities 20 Credits	20 credits from Major programme	
Semester 2	20 credit Plymouth Plus module from Major programme	
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">SOC1514 Introduction to Social Theory 20 Credits</td> <td style="text-align: center;">20 credits from Major programme</td> </tr> </table>	SOC1514 Introduction to Social Theory 20 Credits
SOC1514 Introduction to Social Theory 20 Credits	20 credits from Major programme	

Level 5 (120 Credits)			
Semester 1	SOC2516 Culture, Structure & Experience 20 Credits	20 credit module from Major programme	20 credit module from Major programme

Semester 2	SOC2524 Developments in Social Theory 20 Credits	20 credit module from Major programme	20 credit module from Major programme
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Level 6 (120 Credits)	
All Year	Dissertation or equivalent module from Major programme
Semester 1	<p>40 credits from the following:</p> <p>SOC3545 Social Theory and Political Action 20 credits (Core)</p> <p>SOC3547 Media, State and Society 20 credits</p> <p>SOC3538 Philosophy of Social Science 20 credits Delivery suspended in 2021-22</p>
Semester 2	<p>SOC3544 Food and Foodways 20 credits</p>

7. Programme Aims

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

The programme aims 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. Programme Learning Outcomes

(A) Knowledge and Understanding	Teaching/Learning Methods and Strategies
<p>On successful completion graduates should have developed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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; 3) the capacity to analyse social relationships between individuals, groups and social institutions; 4) proficiency in assessing the appropriate use of a range of research strategies and methods 	<p>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. Seminars provide students with space to develop their understanding of sociological concepts and practice through discussion, defined tasks and/or presentations. 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.</p>

<p>(quantitative and qualitative);</p> <p>5) the ability to examine and explain processes that underpin social change and social stability;</p> <p>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;</p>	<p>Assessment Strategy</p> <p>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.</p>
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<p>(B) Cognitive and Intellectual Skills</p> <p>On successful completion graduates should have developed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<p>Teaching/Learning Methods and Strategies</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Assessment Strategy</p>
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	<p>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.</p>
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<p>(C) Key/Transferable Skills</p> <p>On successful completion graduates should have developed the ability to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<p>Teaching/Learning Methods and Strategies</p> <p>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 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</p>
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	<p>in personal and professional development, which includes personal reflection.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Assessment Strategy</p> <p>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.</p>
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<p>(D) Employment Related Skills</p> <p>On successful completion graduates should have developed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<p>Teaching/Learning Methods and Strategies</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
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	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
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8.2. Practical Skills

On successful completion graduates should have developed:

<p>(E) Practical Skills</p> <p>On successful completion graduates should have developed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) skills in the use of information technology; 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; 4) the ability to work effectively as an individual and as a member of a team; 	<p>Teaching/Learning Methods and Strategies</p> <p>The Stage 1 module SOC1513 provides a foundation for students in key skills, which are developed in research method modules at Stages 1 and 2.</p> <p>The Sociology programme has a strong applied focus throughout the three Stages. This involves addressing contemporary issues and controversies, as in SOC1510 (Social Identities & Inequalities) and SOC2525 (Gender, Sex & Sexuality). Themes of social inequality and identity run through several modules, with students encouraged in applying these in different settings.</p> <p>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</p>
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	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
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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	
A-level/AS-level	Normal minimum entry requirements are 104 at A-level. Minimum of two A Levels.
BTEC National Diploma	2 Distinctions and 1 Star, or 1 Star and 2 Merits
International Baccalaureate	26 points overall to include 4 at any subject at Higher Level.
English language proficiency	IELTS 6.5 or above
Access to Higher Education at level 3	Access to HE Diploma at level 3, pass required
Welsh Baccaaurate	240 points
Scottish Qualifications Authority	240 points
Irish Leaving Certificate	Passed at Higher Level, acceptable in combination with other qualifications
DAS arrangements	<p>Provision will be made for students with disabilities by reasonable adjustments where health and safety and educational standards are not prejudiced</p> <p>There is provision for separate examination rooms for students with disabilities.</p> <p>The Disability Assist Service offers the use of computers, readers, and other support mechanisms that may be used where appropriate.</p>

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

- 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.

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

Core Modules		Award Learning Outcomes contributed to (for more information see Section 8)																												C o m p e n s a t o n Y/ N	Assessment Element(s) and weightings [use KIS definition] E1- exam E2 – clinical exam T1- test C1- coursework A1 – generic assessment P1 - practical	
		Knowledge & understanding						Cognitive & intellectual skills				Key & transferable skills							Employment related skills				Practical skills									
		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														Y	C1 100%	
	SOC1514	x				x		x	x	x	x					x														Y	C1 100%	
	SOC1515														x	x	x													x	Y	C1 100%
	SOC1513			x															x	x	x		x	x	x					Y	C1 40% P1 60%	
	GOV1000PP		x					x	x	x	x																			Y	C1 50% P1 50%	
Level 4 LOs																																
Level 5	SOC2516	x	x	x				x	x	x	x					x														Y	C1 100%	
	SOC2523				x									x	x	x												x		x	Y	C1 100%
	SOC2524					x		x	x	x	x																			Y	C1 100%	
	SOC2525	x	x	x					x																					Y	C1 100%	
	SOC2529	x	x	x		x	x	x	x					x	x	x	x													Y	C1 100%	
Level 5 LOs																																
Level 6	SOC3545							x	x	x	x																			Y	C1 100%	
	SOC3549	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x																	N	C1 100%	
Level 6 LOs																																

