

AS AND A LEVEL *SOCIOLOGY*

Helping you make the most of the new approach –
a brief guide to our exciting new specifications
for first teaching in September 2015



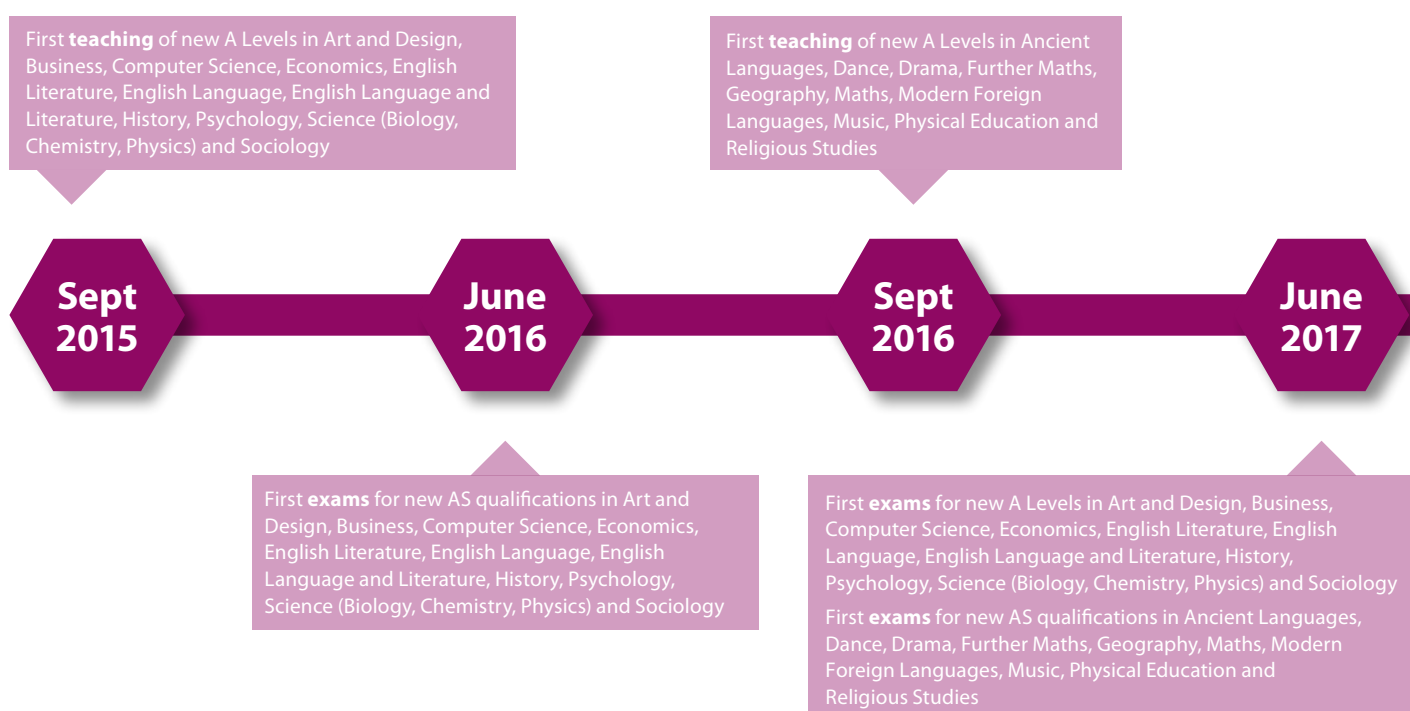
ocr.org.uk/alevelsociology

WHAT REFORM MEANS FOR YOU

In February 2013 the former Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, asked Ofqual to implement changes leading to new A Levels. The Government has stated that the purpose of taking A Levels is primarily for entry to university and that some changes are needed so students are better prepared to start their university course.

OCR's new qualifications for first teaching from September 2015 have been redeveloped to engage and enthuse you and your students, and we've worked hard to create high-quality resources to support the teaching of them. Following our accreditation by Ofqual, this summary brochure introduces you to the new qualifications and shows you how we can help make the transition easier.

A LEVEL TIMELINE



Changes to assessment

A Levels from 2015 – linear assessment

- New A Levels will be fully linear so assessment of a student's knowledge and understanding of the whole course takes place at the end of two years of study. (There'll be no exams in January.) The first assessment of two-year courses that start in September 2015 will be in June 2017.

Proposed changes for AS Levels

- The new AS Level qualifications, for first teaching in September 2015, won't count towards the final grade of an A Level, but will be separate, stand-alone qualifications in their own right.
- The new AS qualifications will remain broadly at their current standard. In some subjects, it may be appropriate for the AS to be designed to be co-teachable with the first year of the A Level. The first assessment of the new AS Levels is planned for June 2016.

First **teaching** of new A Levels and AS Levels in a range of further subjects.

**Sept
2017**

First **exams** for new A Levels in a range of further subjects

**June
2018**

**June
2019**

First **exams** for new A Levels in Ancient Languages, Dance, Design and Technology, Drama, Further Maths, Geography, Maths, Modern Foreign Languages, Music, Physical Education and Religious Studies
First AS **exams** in a range of further subjects

WHY CHOOSE OCR?

Choose OCR and you've got the reassurance that you're working with one of the UK's leading awarding bodies. Our new AS and A Level qualifications have been developed in consultation with teachers, employers and higher education to provide students with qualifications that are relevant to them and meet their needs.

We're part of the Cambridge Assessment Group, Europe's largest assessment agency and a department of the University of Cambridge. Cambridge Assessment plays a leading role in developing and delivering assessments throughout the world, operating in over 150 countries.

We work with a range of education providers, including schools, colleges, workplaces and other institutions in both the public and private sectors. Over 13,000 centres choose our A Levels, GCSEs, and vocational qualifications including Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals and Cambridge Progression.

We believe in developing specifications that help you bring the subject to life and inspire your students to achieve more. They're designed to be straightforward and accessible, so you can tailor the delivery of the course to suit your students' needs.

MEET THE SOCIOLOGY TEAM

We have a dedicated team of people working on our new Sociology qualifications, including:

Ewan Brady

Subject Specialist, Sociology and Humanities

Helen Hemmings

Subject Specialist, Sociology

Find out more about our Sociology team at:

ocr.org.uk/sociologyteam

HAVE ANY QUESTIONS AND WANT TO TALK TO US? WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

Our aim is to assist you however we can. As well as giving you a toolkit of support services and resources to choose from, we're also here to help you with specialist advice, guidance and support for those times when you simply need a more individual service. Here's how to reach our Customer Contact Centre:

By phone: **01223 553998**

By email: sociology@ocr.org.uk

INTRODUCING...

AS AND A LEVEL SOCIOLOGY

(FROM SEPTEMBER 2015)

OUR VISION

Our AS and A Level Sociology specifications provide your students with the exciting opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the world around them and reflect on social issues that are often relevant to their own social experiences. They open up the possibility for fascinating discussions, for example 'what impact do digital forms of communication have on social relations?', 'how do sociologists investigate inequality in society?' and 'what are the patterns and trends of religion in relation to social class?'

Through the specifications, students can acquire knowledge and a critical understanding of contemporary social processes and social changes. They have the opportunity to develop a broad set of key desirable skills, including the ability to analyse and formulate clear, logical arguments with scope for extensive evaluation from a range of theoretical perspectives.

Developing strong critical thinking skills and being able to consider issues with a global outlook will be of huge benefit to your students moving forward, whether this is in further education, the workplace or society in general.



WHY CHOOSE OCR AS AND A LEVEL SOCIOLOGY?

This practical and engaging course has been redeveloped after feedback from teachers and other key stakeholders. The content has been designed to inspire, nurture and develop students. The most popular aspects of our current AS and A Level have been retained or enhanced with a stronger global dimension to reflect society today.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE KEY BENEFITS OF OUR NEW SOCIOLOGY SPECIFICATIONS FOR YOU AND YOUR STUDENTS:

- **Straightforward specifications**

Detailed guidance in the specifications was highly valued in the feedback we received from teachers and we'll continue to provide this.

- **Focus on Sociology's key themes**

Our specifications have a strong focus on key sociological themes: socialisation, culture and identity; and power, control and inequality.

- **Choice for teachers and students**

Given the breadth of the subject, we felt it was important that you and your students had choice and we've continued to provide a selection of topic options.

- **Contemporary society**

Our specifications focus on contemporary society and, in response to feedback received, we've introduced a stronger emphasis on society in a globalised world. These elements have been combined into our exciting new Component 3 titled 'Debates in contemporary society'.

- **Globalisation and the digital social world**

As part of Component 3, we've introduced a fascinating new topic on globalisation and the digital social world, an area that's extremely relevant to the way we communicate as a society today and that's bound to be a very popular topic with your students.

- **Improved support and more teacher guidance**

You'll have access to a range of exciting and innovative resources that can be tailored to the needs of your students. Whether you're an existing OCR centre or moving from another examination board, we'll make sure that you have a package of quality support materials to aid your teaching.



AS LEVEL SOCIOLOGY AT A GLANCE

Our AS Level Sociology qualification has been designed to be co-teachable with the first year of the A Level. The specification content is identical to the A Level content for Component 1 and Component 2 Section A. Component 2 Section B has a reduced amount of content. Assessment will be of AS Level demand.

AS LEVEL CONTENT OVERVIEW

- Sociological theories and methods are integrated into each component.
- Although not directly assessed, we encourage students to carry out their own small-scale research projects as a way of enhancing their sociological understanding of methodology, substantive topic areas and core themes.

Component	Content overview
Component 1 Socialisation, culture and identity	<p>Component 1 introduces students to the key themes of socialisation, culture and identity and develops these themes through the context of one of three options. These options develop skills that enable students to focus on their personal identity, roles and responsibilities within society and to develop a lifelong interest in social issues.</p> <p>SECTION A: INTRODUCING SOCIALISATION, CULTURE AND IDENTITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is culture? • What is socialisation? • What is identity? <p>SECTION B: OPTIONS (CHOOSE ONE OF THREE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families and relationships • Youth subcultures • Media.
Component 2 Researching and understanding social inequalities	<p>Component 2 introduces and explores the methods of sociological enquiry and develops knowledge and understanding of contemporary social processes and social change in the context of social inequality and difference. It develops links between the nature of sociological thought and the methods of sociological enquiry.</p> <p>SECTION A: RESEARCH METHODS AND RESEARCHING SOCIAL INEQUALITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the relationship between theory and methods? • What are the main stages of the research process? • Which methods are used in sociological research? <p>SECTION B: UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL INEQUALITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the main patterns and trends in social inequality and difference? • How can patterns and trends in social inequality and difference be explained?

A LEVEL SOCIOLOGY AT A GLANCE

Here's a brief look at some of the components, the course content and the assessment overview for our A Level Sociology.

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Component	Content overview
Component 3 Debates in contemporary society	<p>Component 3 engages students in theoretical debates and how these relate to a contemporary global society.</p> <p>The component develops knowledge and understanding of social processes and social change. It develops links between the topics studied in this component, the nature of sociological thought, contemporary social policy and the core themes.</p> <p>Contemporary and global debates are introduced through Section A, while Section B explores the debates in more depth through a detailed study of one of three options.</p> <p>SECTION A: GLOBALISATION AND THE DIGITAL SOCIAL WORLD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the relationship between globalisation and digital forms of communication? • What is the impact of digital forms of communication in a global context? <p>This section provides students with the opportunity to consider developments in digital forms of communication within global society and how these developments are related to social capital. Students will gain an overview of how Marxists, feminists and postmodernists view digital forms of communication and the impact of digital social communication – whether this is on people's identity, social inequalities or relationships. Students will also consider the impact on culture in terms of conflict and change, cultural homogenisation and culture defence.</p> <p>SECTION B: OPTIONS (CHOOSE ONE OF THREE)</p> <p>All three options include a global aspect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime and deviance • Education • Religion, belief and faith.

AS LEVEL ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

The assessment consists of two written examinations externally assessed by OCR.

Component			Marks	Duration	Weighting
Component 1	SOCIALISATION, CULTURE AND IDENTITY		75	1½ hours	50%
	Section A	Introducing socialisation, culture and identity Compulsory questions, some based on source material			
	Section B	Options Select one option from a choice of three. Within an option, there are three questions			
Component 2	RESEARCHING AND UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL INEQUALITIES		75	1½ hours	50%
	Section A	Research methods and researching social inequalities Compulsory questions, some based on source material			
	Section B	Understanding social inequalities Compulsory extended response questions			

A LEVEL ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

The assessment consists of three written examinations externally assessed by OCR.

Component		Marks	Duration	Weighting
Component 1	SOCIALISATION, CULTURE AND IDENTITY	90	1½ hours	30%
	Section A Introducing socialisation, culture and identity Compulsory questions, some based on source material			
	Section B Options Select one option from a choice of three. Within an option, there are three questions			
Component 2	RESEARCHING AND UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL INEQUALITIES	105	2¼ hours	35%
	Section A Research methods and researching social inequalities Compulsory questions, some based on source material			
	Section B Understanding social inequalities Compulsory extended response questions			
Component 3	DEBATES IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY	105	2¼ hours	35%
	Section A Globalisation and the digital social world Compulsory questions, some source-based			
	Section B Options Select one option from a choice of three. Within an option there are three questions			

WHAT STAYS THE SAME, WHAT CHANGES?

	What stays the same?	What changes?
Structure	All components remain compulsory	The qualification has moved from four to three compulsory components
Content	<p>Teachers retain the ability to make topic choices in Component 1 and Component 3</p> <p>Families and relationships; Youth subcultures; Media; Crime and deviance; Education; and Religion, belief and faith remain topic options (but with updated content)</p> <p>Most content in relation to exploring socialisation, culture and identity remains the same</p> <p>The nature of sociological thought and the methods of sociological enquiry continue to be explored in relation to social inequalities</p>	<p>Content across all components has been updated.</p> <p>The creation of identities and socialisation are also considered in relation to disabilities and sexualities</p> <p>A new compulsory section on 'Globalisation and the digital social world' has been introduced</p> <p>The topic options 'Crime and deviance', 'Education', and 'Religion, belief and faith' have a stronger global focus</p> <p>Two topic options – 'Power and politics', and 'Health' – have been removed</p>
Assessment	All components are assessed by written examination	<p>Total examination time is six hours to satisfy the new minimum assessment time rules for A Level qualifications</p> <p>Removal of the pre-release and the introduction of more stimulus and source-based questions: this approach enables teachers to have more freedom in teaching time, while encouraging the development of students' skills to react positively to unseen material. This more accurately reflects how students would encounter data in future study and in everyday life</p> <p>Our extended response questions carry a slightly lower mark tariff (a maximum of 40 marks). This still enables students to write at length but allows for the inclusion of more short-answer questions, providing an opportunity to more broadly assess the specification content and enable students of all abilities to access marks</p> <p>The demand of the assessment will remain the same in each examination session but the command words will not necessarily stay the same</p>

SOCIOLOGY SPECIMEN ASSESSMENT MATERIALS

COMPONENT 1

Outline and briefly evaluate the view that social class is a strong influence on an individual's identity.

[20]

OPTION 1

FAMILIES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Outline two reasons for the increase in non-family households and illustrate your answer with examples.

*[12]

Explain and briefly evaluate the view that relationships between parents and children are changing.

*[16]

Assess the view that the roles of men and women in the family have changed.

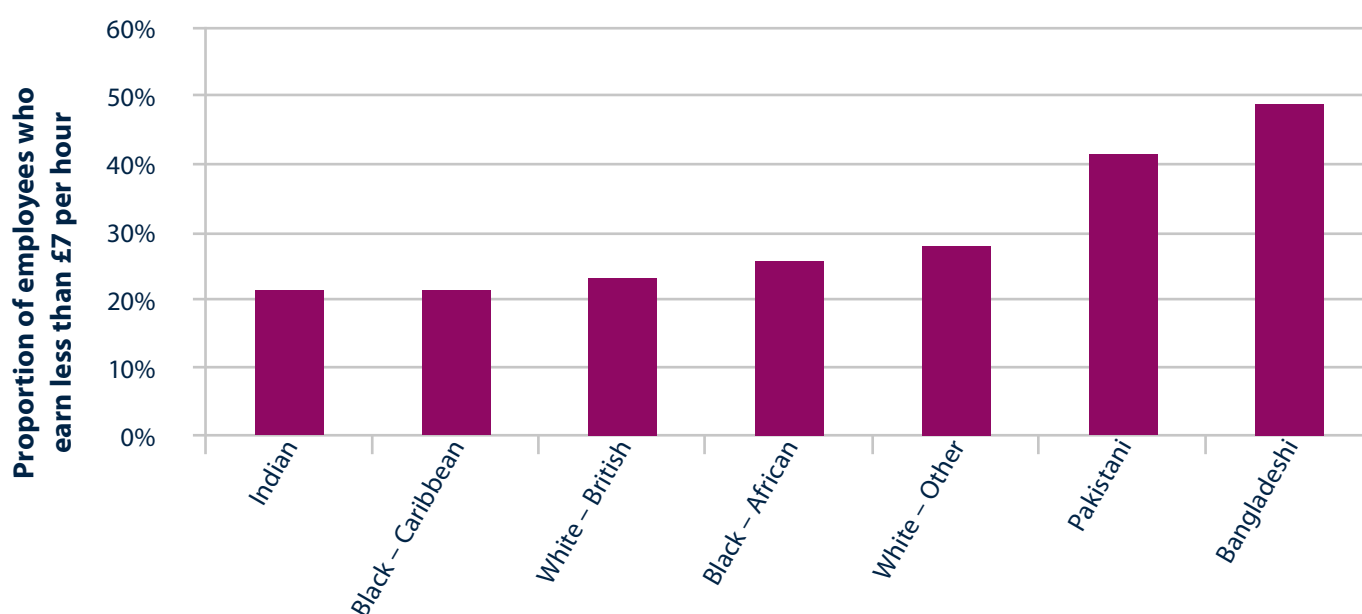
*[24]

COMPONENT 2

Read the source material and answer all the questions in Section A.

SOURCE A

ETHNIC GROUPS AND LOW PAY



Adapted from: Labour Force Survey (LFS), ONS; the data is the average for 2008 to 2010; UK; updated March 2011

LFS is the main government survey for analysis of the workforce, in terms of both the jobs people do and the characteristics of the people themselves.

SPECIMEN ASSESSMENT MATERIALS CONTINUED

SOURCE B

Investigating attitudes of young people in poor neighbourhoods

Robert MacDonald and Jane Marsh carried out an ethnographic study of young people in a town they called East Kelby in Teesside, north-east England. They aimed to test the hypothesis put forward by the American New Right thinker Charles Murray (1994) that an underclass was emerging in the UK. Murray argued that the welfare system was encouraging the emergence of a class of people below the working class who did not work and lived off benefits. He argued that members of this underclass were characterised by irresponsible and anti-social behaviour, for example a failure by males to work and take responsibility for supporting children they had fathered, high rates of teenage pregnancy and lone mothers bringing up children on benefits.

MacDonald and Marsh wanted to focus on the outlook and values of young people in East Kelby using methods which would allow them to describe their own lives and their strategies for survival in their own words. They therefore chose to use a variety of methods to collect qualitative data. They chose the town of East Kelby as a case study because it had many of the characteristics of the kind of area in which Murray had suggested an underclass was developing, for example high levels of unemployment, poverty and educational underachievement.

The research was carried out between 1998 and 2000 and used three methods. Firstly, 40 interviews were carried out with professionals working with young people, such as probation officers and youth workers. Secondly, Marsh carried out participant observation by visiting youth clubs, unwaged groups and family centres. She also talked to people on the street and those travelling around the area on the buses. Finally, semi-structured interviews were carried out with 88 young people aged between 15 and 25. Respondents were asked about their lives, how they reached their current situation and their views of their future and their neighbourhood. A second round of interviews was carried out a year later with about 60% of the original sample. The researchers lost contact with some of the original respondents because they had moved. MacDonald and Marsh concluded that most young people in East Kelby did not reject traditional work and family values in the way Murray claimed the underclass did. The young people were keen to find work and most regarded two parent families as the best way to bring up children. The authors argue that young people need opportunities for well-paid and secure jobs if they are to escape from poverty and social exclusion.

Adapted from J Blundell and J Griffiths (2008) *Sociology since 2000* Cooksbridge: Connect Publications.

SPECIMEN ASSESSMENT MATERIALS CONTINUED

Read the source material and answer all the questions in Section A.

Summarise the data shown in Source A. [4]

With reference to Source B explain two reasons why some sociologists use mixed methods when conducting sociological research. [6]

With reference to Source A explain one strength and one weakness of using official statistics to study inequalities between ethnic groups. [10]

Using Source B and your wider sociological knowledge, assess the usefulness of ethnographic research methods for investigating young people in poor neighbourhoods. [25]

COMPONENT 3

Read the source material and answer all the questions in Section A.

SOURCE A

Digital technologies have created many new products which have been adopted widely. A recent study has suggested that digital social communication is having a significant impact on our lives. Our social networks are being extended and we are reaching a much wider range of people. This seems to be giving more power to ordinary people to both create and receive different types of communication, from sharing events to distributing music. In addition, we are building new digital communities that bring people together from many different social backgrounds and cultures. This may be reducing social inequality by breaking down the barriers between people.

Who needs social media and mobile phones?

I just don't agree with those people who say that digital technology and social media create better relationships, keep us in touch with family and friends, and help us to be safer.

If they do promote better relationships, why do young people's conversations rarely go beyond a few sentences?

What is the impact on relationships when talking to someone else is interrupted by a call that 'cannot be missed'?

Where is the real social interaction between people face-to-face? Evaluate this point of view, with reference to the Sources and your wider sociological knowledge.

With reference to the Sources, explain how social media might extend social networks. *[9]

With reference to the Sources, to what extent has digital social communication weakened social relationships? [10]

'Digital social communication has reduced social inequality.' Evaluate this point of view, with reference to the Sources and your wider sociological knowledge. [16]

CRIME AND DEVIANCE

In what ways is deviance socially constructed? *[10]

To what extent are police recorded crime figures useful in measuring patterns and trends in crime? *[20]

Outline and evaluate Marxist explanations of crime and deviance. *[40]

Quality of extended responses will be assessed in questions marked with an asterisk (*).

SUPPORTING YOU ALL THE WAY

We recognise that the introduction of a new specification can bring challenges for implementation and teaching. Our aim is to help you at every stage and we're working hard to provide a practical package of support in close consultation with teachers and other experts so we can help you to make the changes. For a start, we'll provide a range of high-quality creative resources. Tailored to the needs of each subject, their focus is on supporting creative teaching approaches and progression for all students. We see our resources as a body of knowledge that will grow throughout the lifetime of the specifications. They are built on the best practice we've identified from our ongoing discussions with the teaching community.

We are also developing exciting new digital tools to help you explore and use our resources. The Scheme of Work Builder will allow you to construct personalised schemes of work and you'll be able to add in the specification content, our wide range of resources and teaching suggestions, and your own content and materials.

Please visit our website at ocr.org.uk/reformresources for details of the new tools we are developing and to take a look at the types of resources on offer.

Along with subject-specific resources and tools, you'll also have access to a selection of generic resources that focus on skills development, professional guidance for teachers and results data analysis. These include:

Skills Guides – we've produced a set of Skills Guides that aren't specific to a subject, but each covers a topic that could be relevant to a range of qualifications – for example communication, legislation and research. Download the guides at ocr.org.uk/skillsguides

Active Results – our free online A Level results analysis service helps you review the performance of individual students or your whole cohort. It provides access to detailed results data, enabling more comprehensive analysis of results to give you a more accurate measurement of the achievements of your centre. For more details, please refer to ocr.org.uk/activeresults

Publisher partner resources

We're working with a number of leading publishers who are producing resources for the new AS and A Level specifications for 2015. We're working together to make sure that the resources embed the fundamental content of each specification, while delivering the breadth and depth needed to succeed at A Level and beyond.

You can find more details about all our publisher partners and all the resources they're providing on our website at ocr.org.uk/publishing-partners

NEW MOCK PAPERS SERVICES

EXAMCREATOR

PAST PAPERS AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

Use our new online past papers service 'ExamCreator' to build, mark and assess tests from OCR exam questions. You can select questions for particular topics or units being studied or produce a complete mock GCSE or A Level exam. With its unique 'online' functionality to assign and mark tests, ExamCreator is able to provide feedback and generate test performance reports for individual learners and groups.

WITH EXAMCREATOR YOU CAN:

- Build your own tests using a mix of real exam questions
- Filter questions by topic, tier, unit, year, etc
- Access mark schemes and Examiner comments for each question in your test
- Print tests as PDF documents to be sat in exam conditions
- Assign tests online
- Create teaching groups, year groups or any other combination to make assignment easier
- Mark online tests on-screen and record the results
- Create reports for individual students or whole teaching groups.

Tests created in ExamCreator are supported by the original mark scheme and Examiner reports – broken down by individual question. So a mark scheme is created to specifically support a test that's been built. All the questions are pre-tagged by topic so you don't have to review every question to create focused tests on specific topics. We've worked with partners 'The Test Factory' to build ExamCreator and we'll continue to support the system going forward.

In summary... ExamCreator could help you create end-of-topic tests for Assessment for learning, make termly tests to assess retention of knowledge, set mock examinations or set homework. And remember, it has a built-in reporting system, so could help you track the progress of individual students or teaching groups.

To find out more and to register, please visit ocr.org.uk/examcreator



MOCK EXAM SERVICE (DETAILS TO BE FINALISED)

Most A Level Sociology students, after 2015, will have significantly fewer chances to experience full examination conditions in preparation for their final exams, due to linearisation and assessment at the end of the course. You'll also have fewer opportunities to assess students' progress under formal examination conditions. To help fill this gap, we plan to support our A Level Sociology qualification with a mock examinations service from May 2016.

The standard service will feature:

- Question papers produced to the same standards as official A Level papers that will be available to download from a secure location
- Well-presented, easy-to-interpret mark schemes
- Examiner's commentary on points to look out for when marking
- Sample answers with Examiner's commentary.



FREE A LEVEL REFORM TRAINING EVENTS

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW SPECIFICATIONS

We're running **free** training events throughout the next academic year to help you get to grips with the reformed qualifications for first teaching in September 2015.

PRACTICAL EVENTS, CREATED WITH YOU IN MIND

These carefully planned **free** events are designed to help smooth the path to the first teaching of reformed qualifications and provide you with an understanding of:

- The new specification content, structure and assessment
- The differences between the existing and new specifications
- The resources and support available for qualifications.

They'll give you the opportunity to speak face to face with our team, and network and discuss teaching approaches with colleagues.

In 2015, we'll also be running a further series of free events to help you get ready for first teaching of the reformed qualifications. Watch out for details at cpdhub.ocr.org.uk

To receive more information about dates, and the wide range of locations as we release them, please register for A Level reform email updates at ocr.org.uk/updates



Download high-quality, exciting and innovative AS and A Level Sociology resources from ocr.org.uk/alevelsociology

Free resources and support for our AS and A Level Sociology qualifications, developed through collaboration between our Sociology Subject Specialists, teachers and other subject experts, are available from our website. You can also contact our Sociology Subject Specialists for specialist advice, guidance and support, for individual service and assistance whenever you need it.

Meet the team at ocr.org.uk/sociologyteam and contact them at:

01223 553998

sociology@ocr.org.uk

[@OCRexams](https://twitter.com/OCRexams)

To stay up to date with all the relevant news about our qualifications, register for email updates at ocr.org.uk/updates

Sociology community

The social network is a free platform where teachers can engage with each other – and with us – to find and offer guidance, discover and share ideas, best practice and a range of Sociology support materials.

To sign up, go to social.ocr.org.uk

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