

# **GCSE Subject Level Guidance for Sociology**

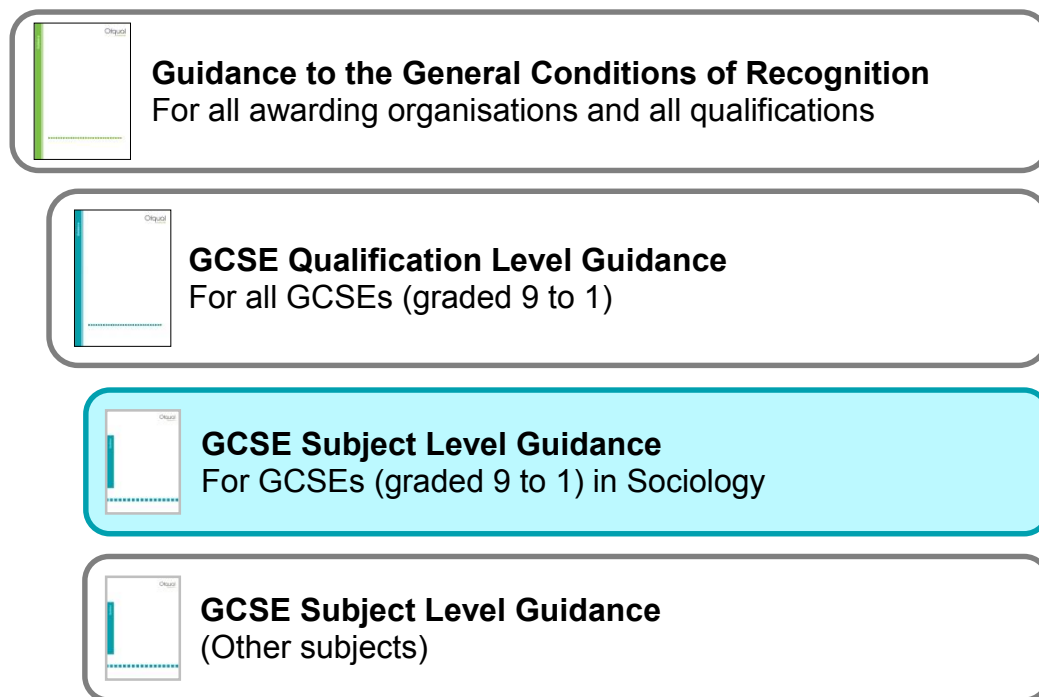
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## Introduction

This document (highlighted in the figure below) is part of a suite of documents which outlines our guidance for awarding organisations offering GCSE qualifications (graded from 9 to 1).



This document sets out guidance which applies to all GCSE Qualifications (graded from 9 to 1) in Sociology. It supports the *GCSE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Sociology*.<sup>1</sup>

This document constitutes guidance for the purposes of section 153 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (the '2009 Act') and Condition GCSE(Sociology)1.

An awarding organisation has a legal obligation under the 2009 Act to have regard to this guidance, where relevant, in relation to each GCSE Qualification in Sociology that it makes available or proposes to make available. Condition GCSE(Sociology)1 imposes the same obligation in respect of the guidance below which is issued under that Condition.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-sociology](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-sociology)

An awarding organisation should use the guidance in this document to help it understand how to comply with the *GCSE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Sociology*.

## **Guidance set out in this document**

This document provides guidance on assessment objectives for GCSE Qualifications (graded 9 to 1) in Sociology.

## Guidance on assessment objectives for GCSE Qualifications in Sociology

Condition GCSE(Sociology)1.2 allows us to specify requirements and guidance relating to assessment objectives for GCSE Qualifications in Sociology.

We published our requirements in relation to assessment objectives in *GCSE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Sociology*, and reproduce them in the table below.

	Objective	Weighting
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods.	40%
AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding of sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods.	40%
AO3	Analyse and evaluate sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods in order to construct arguments, make judgements and draw conclusions.	20%

We set out below our guidance for the purposes of Condition GCSE(Sociology)1.2. This guidance explains how we expect awarding organisations to interpret these assessment objectives in terms of:

- the discrete ‘elements’ within each assessment objective and its strands that questions and tasks could target and/or seek to credit – our expectation is that each and every question/task should target or seek to credit at least one of these elements, and may target or seek to credit multiple elements across one or more assessment objectives;
- the coverage expectations, such as in relation to the different elements within each assessment objective and how those elements should be sampled over time; and
- the key areas of emphasis in each assessment objective and the particular meaning for the subject of any key terms and phrases used; defined terms are shown in bold text, followed by their definitions.

In line with the obligations set out in Condition GCSE(Sociology)1.2, we expect awarding organisations to be able to demonstrate how they have had regard to this guidance. For example, an awarding organisation could map how it has regard to the guidance as it:

- develops its sample assessment materials;
- delivers the qualification;
- develops and applies its approach to sampling the elements into which the assessment objectives are divided; and
- monitors the qualification to make sure it addresses all elements appropriately.

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods.			40%
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretations and Definitions
n/a	1a - Demonstrate knowledge of sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Full coverage in each set of assessments<sup>2</sup> (but not in every assessment)</li> <li>■ A reasonable balance between the elements within this assessment objective.</li> <li>■ Awarding organisations should justify the balance between elements 1a and 1b in their assessment strategies.</li> <li>■ No more than 10% of the total marks for the qualification should reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation.<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods</b> are aspects of the subject content. Individual questions/tasks would not necessarily assess theories, concepts, evidence and methods together. An awarding organisation should explain in its assessment strategy its approach to targeting them as part of sampling the subject content.</li> </ul>
	1b - Demonstrate understanding of sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods.		

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this guidance, a 'set of assessments' means the assessments to be taken by a particular Learner for a GCSE Qualification in Sociology. For clarity, the assessments taken by Learners may vary, depending on any possible routes through the qualification.

<sup>3</sup> Marks which 'reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation' means any mark awarded solely for recalling facts or other knowledge. It does not include marks awarded for selecting appropriate knowledge (for example, to evidence an argument), or for applying knowledge to a particular context.

AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding of sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods.			40%
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretations and Definitions
n/a	1a - Apply knowledge and understanding of sociological theories, concepts and evidence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not in every assessment)</li> <li>■ A reasonable balance between the elements within this assessment objective.</li> <li>■ Awarding organisations should justify the balance between elements 1a and 1b in their assessment strategies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods</b> are aspects of the subject content. Individual questions/tasks would not necessarily assess theories, concepts, evidence and methods together. An awarding organisation should explain in its assessment strategy its approach to targeting them as part of sampling the subject content.</li> <li>■ In the context of this assessment objective, issues could range from specific, real-world examples to more conceptual, esoteric debates.</li> </ul>
	1b - Apply knowledge and understanding of sociological methods.		



AO3: Analyse and evaluate sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods in order to construct arguments, make judgements and draw conclusions.			20%
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretations and Definitions
n/a	<p>1a - Analyse sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods in order to construct arguments.</p> <p>1b - Evaluate sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods in order to make judgements and draw conclusions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not in every assessment)</li> <li>■ A reasonable balance between the elements within this assessment objective.</li> <li>■ Awarding organisations should justify the balance between elements 1a and 1b in their assessment strategies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods</b> are aspects of the subject content. Individual questions/tasks would not necessarily assess theories, concepts, evidence and methods together. An awarding organisation should explain in its assessment strategy its approach to targeting them as part of sampling the subject content.</li> <li>■ In the context of this assessment objective – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Analyse</b> means deconstructing information and/or issues to find connections and provide logical chains of reasoning;</li> <li>□ <b>Evaluate</b> means appraising and/or ascribing value to information and/or issues.</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Responses might not necessarily come to a definitive conclusion as it may not be possible to do this in relation to some issues.</li> </ul>

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