

For exams January, May and November onwards
For teaching from September 2021 onwards

SPECIFICATION 



Learning
Resource Network

INTERNATIONAL AS AND A-LEVEL SOCIOLOGY (6121)



THE QUEEN'S AWARDS
FOR ENTERPRISE:
INTERNATIONAL TRADE
2020

Contents

Background to LRN	Page 03
Introduction	Page 04
Objective	Page 04
Mode of Delivery	Page 04
Progression	Page 04
Qualification Overview	Page 05
Assessment	Page 07
Guided Learning Hours	Page 07
Entries Codes	Page 07
Private Candidates	Page 07
Grading	Page 07
Results	Page 07
Re-takes	Page 07
Customer Service Statement	Page 08
Diversity and Equality	Page 08
Subject Content	Page 09

BACKGROUND TO LRN

Learning Resource Network (LRN) is a recognised Awarding Organisation that offers a range of qualifications to candidates, educational institutes, training providers, schools and employers.

LRN is recognised for its high quality qualifications that enable candidates to progress to other areas of study and employment in their designated fields.

In producing its qualifications, LRN uses the experience and expertise of academics, professionals working in the pertinent industries and assessment practitioners with a wealth of best practice and knowledge of validation, verification, delivery and assessment.

ACCOLADES

Queen's Award

In April 2020, LRN received the Queen's Award for Enterprise for International Trade. LRN is one of 220 organisations in the UK to be recognised with this prestigious accolade. This was in recognition of the expansion LRN brought to the overseas qualification market.

MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

LRN has been awarded international accreditation as part of its quality controls, policies, systems and overall approach to its management systems. These awards are externally validated by the British Assessment Bureau. LRN has achieved accreditation in the form of ISO 9001: Quality Management Systems, ISO 14001: Environment Management Systems and ISO 27001: Information Security Management Systems.

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

LRN has achieved the prestigious award of Customer Service Excellence. This is in recognition of its customer service practices, approach to managing and dealing with UK and Overseas customer needs, including the diverse needs of its centres.

LRN was the first UK Awarding Organisation to achieve Customer Service Excellence. Following reaccreditation in 2019, LRN received an award for Customer Service Excellence: Compliance Plus, demonstrating that LRN went above and beyond the delivery of its customer service principles.



INTRODUCTION

This specification provides an overview to the LRN International AS & A Level Sociology¹. This document is suitable for various users, including candidates, centres, administrators, employers, parents/guardians, teachers (and other educational based staff) and examiners. The specification outlines the key features and administrative procedures required for this international qualification.

OBJECTIVE

The LRN International AS & A Level Sociology is designed to enable international candidates to demonstrate their ability across a broad range of Investigating socialisation and identity, Understanding family units, Education and its societal roles, Globalisation and society and Mass communication within society.

MODE OF DELIVERY

This qualification has been constructed to be delivered within centres. Centres will need to demonstrate to LRN, through the centre recognition processes, that they have the resources, facilities and competence to deliver. However, centres must be able to demonstrate, in line with LRN's criteria, that they have the means, capability, capacity and resources (including suitably qualified centre staff) to deliver by the method chosen by the centre.

PROGRESSION

The LRN International AS & A Level Sociology has been designed to reflect the wide variation in candidates' origins, levels of education and career aims. Progression opportunities may, therefore, take a variety of paths. Depending on the level of qualification achieved, it may be appropriate for the candidate to progress to:

1. Similar level 3 qualification in Sociology;
2. LRN Level 3 Diploma in Pre-U Foundation Studies;
3. A higher level of any qualification – e.g.; HNC/HND or Degree'
4. Vocationally Related Qualifications

¹ LRN International AS/A Level are globally recognised qualifications designed specifically for international candidates and are available outside the United Kingdom. Candidates based in England refer to the Ofqual register.

QUALIFICATION OVERVIEW

Number	Subject Content	LRN International AS Level	LRN International A Level	AO	Exam
1	Investigating socialisation and identity	✓	✓	1, 2 and 3	Combination of written exam papers (externally set and marked). AS Level Paper 1: Short answers and essay-based question. Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes Weighting: 50% Paper 2: Short answers and essay-based question. Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes Weighting: 50% A Level Paper 1: Short answers and essay-based question. Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes Weighting: 25% Paper 2: Short answers and essay-based question. Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes Weighting: 25%
2	Understanding family units	✓	✓	1, 2 and 3	
3	Education and its societal roles	-	✓	1, 2 and 3	
4	Globalisation and society	-	✓	1, 2 and 3	
5	Mass communication within society	-	✓	1, 2 and 3	

					<p>Paper 3:</p> <p>Short answers and essay-based question.</p> <p>Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes</p> <p>Weighting: 25%</p> <p>Paper 4:</p> <p>Essay-based question.</p> <p>Duration: 2 hours</p> <p>Weighting: 25%</p>
--	--	--	--	--	---

BREAKDOWN OF ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

AO1 - demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- sociological theories and perspectives.
- recurrent themes in sociology.
- terminology used in sociology.
- methods used to study sociology.
- relevant theories and research findings.

AO2 – apply knowledge and understanding by:

- Interpreting sociological material, including concepts, theories and evidence.
- applying sociological knowledge and material to a range of issues
- using sociological materials to construct and support particular sociological perspectives
- demonstrating awareness of the interrelationship between concepts, theories and evidence when a certain point of view is presented.

AO3 – using sociological knowledge to:

- Analyse and evaluate theories, evidence, perspectives and methodologies
- develop arguments supporting or contradicting sociological theories and views
- investigate sociological theories to expose underlying assumptions, value judgements, misconceptions, logical flaws and ideological influences
- discuss opposing viewpoints or evidence to demonstrate the complexity of sociological discourse
- recognise the limitations of, or bias in, sociological and non-sociological evidence
- reach conclusions based on a reasoned consideration of available evidence and arguments.

ASSESSMENT

The assessment for this qualification consists of written exam papers, set and marked by the LRN.

Assessment objectives (AOs)	Weighting			
	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3	Paper 4
AO1	40%	40%	35%	28%
AO2	30%	30%	30%	30%
AO3	30%	30%	35%	42%

GUIDED LEARNING HOURS (GLH)

The LRN International AS Level guided learning hours (GLH) are 180 and 360 guided learning hours for LRN International A Level. Please note the hours stated are indicative.

ENTRIES CODES

One entry per qualification is sufficient and will cover all the question papers including certification.

PRIVATE CANDIDATES

Centres are advised that private candidates are only to be enrolled with prior agreement and confirmation from LRN.

GRADING

The LRN International A Level will be graded on a six-point scale: A*, A, B, C, D and E and LRN International AS Level will be graded on a five-point scale: A, B, C, D and E. Candidates who fail to reach the minimum standard for grade E will be recorded as U (unclassified) and will not receive a qualification certificate.

RESULTS

Exam series are in:

- January (results released in March)
- June (results released in August)
- November (results released in January)

RE-TAKES

Whereas candidates can re-take each paper as often as they wish, within the shelf-life of the specification.

CUSTOMER SERVICE STATEMENT

Learning Resource Network (LRN) is committed to ensuring all customers are dealt with promptly and in a professional and helpful manner. In order to guarantee this, we commit to ensuring the following in our day-to-day interactions with candidates, assessment centres and our stakeholder network:

- All customers will be treated equally and with respect;
- All customer information will only be used in a way which has been agreed in advance, unless we are informed of something that places them or others at risk of harm;
- All customers will be treated by staff in a professional manner.

LRN has arrangements in place to provide a telephone and e-mail helpdesk which will be staffed from 09:00 to 17:00 from Monday to Friday. Furthermore, it will respond to each e-mail, letter or telephone message it receives regarding feedback on its qualifications, centre approvals process or other matters relating to its products and/or services. The timetable for responding is as follows:

- E-mail: 5 working days
- Letter: 5 working days
- Telephone message: 5 working days

DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY

Learning Resource Network (LRN) is committed to ensuring fair and equal access to its qualifications, examinations and support materials. Our Diversity and Equality policy seeks to eliminate unjustifiable discrimination, harassment and/or victimisation and to advance equality of opportunity, thereby ensuring all candidates are treated fairly, in accordance with the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010. Specifically, we comply fully with the requirements laid out in the Equality Act 2010. In addition, and within the constraints of this policy, LRN will have due regard for the General data Protection Regulations (GDPR) in the retention of information which is unnecessary.

1	Investigating socialisation and identity.		
Aim			
Learners should be able to explain the process of socialisation, the nature of identity and the means by which such matters are investigated using sociological knowledge and understanding.			
Learning Outcomes - The learner will:		Assessment Criteria - The learner can:	
1	Know and understand what is meant by 'cultures' in a society.	1.1	Describe culture in terms of shared values, norms, beliefs, customs and language.
		1.2	Distinguish between values and norms.
		1.3	Explain what is meant by a 'multicultural society'.
		1.4	Examine conflict, consensus, change and development in societies and cultures.
2	Know and understand the nature of socialisation.	2.1	Distinguish between learning and acquired/instinctive behaviour
		2.2	Describe socialization as a learning process.
		2.3	Distinguish primary and secondary forms of socialization.
		2.4	Describe the skills that need to be learned as a part of the process of socialization.
		2.5	Evaluate conformity and resistance in the process of socialization.
		2.6	Examine socialisation as a means of maintaining social order and control
3	Know and understand the nature of social identity	3.1	Explain what is meant by 'self' and 'social identity'
		3.2	Evaluate how various factors shape social identity, including gender, ethnicity, social class and age
		3.3	Describe the effects and consequences of social differentiation, including the influence of ascribed status and achieved status.
		3.4	Evaluate social structure and social action theories.
4	Know and understand the practicalities of	4.1	Distinguish facts, opinions, and value judgements.

investigating sociological concepts.	4.2	Distinguish between primary, secondary, quantitative and qualitative data.
	4.3	Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different types of questionnaire, interview, case study, experiment, observation and content analysis
	4.4	Analyse the design of sociological investigations and the method(s) used in to collect and record evidence
	4.5	Describe the process of research design in terms of research strategy, questions and hypotheses, sampling frames, sampling techniques, pilot studies, operationalisation, execution and interpretation of results.
	4.6	Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different sources of secondary data.
	4.7	Explain how the actions, values of the sociologist and research funding may bias research findings.
	4.8	Distinguish between the positivist and interpretivist approaches in sociology.
	4.9	Explain what is meant by a mixed methods approach to research, including triangulation and methodological pluralism.
	4.10	Evaluate the significance of validity, reliability, objectivity, representativeness and ethics in assessing the value of different research methods.
	4.11	Examine the factors influencing the design and conduct of sociological research.
	4.12	Examine the practical, ethical and theoretical issues arising in sociological investigation.

2 Understanding family units			
Aim			
Learners should be able to evaluate different sociological perspectives on the role of the family and family diversity, and to understand the way social change affects the operation of family units.			
Learning Outcomes - The learner will:		Assessment Criteria - The learner can:	
1	Understand various perspectives on the role and development of the family.	1.1	Examine different family and household forms, including nuclear, extended, lone-parent, reconstituted (blended) and same-sex families and the historical context in which they develop.
		1.1	Evaluate functionalist accounts of the contribution of the family to its constituents and society and the development of family functions over time, including the 'loss of functions' debate.
		1.2	Evaluate Marxist accounts of how the family benefits capitalism, including ideological control, reproduction of labour and consumption.
		1.3	Evaluate the different Feminist criticisms of the functionalist and Marxist accounts.
		1.4	Examine the debate about the extent of family diversity and the dominance of the nuclear family.
		1.5	Examine the causes and consequences of changing patterns of marriage, cohabitation, divorce and separation and the concept of the family life cycle.
		1.6	Evaluate the impact of state and social policy as influences on the family unit.
		1.7	Evaluate the New Right and postmodern perspectives on family diversity
2	Understand the influence of gender and age on family life.	2.1	Distinguish between the liberal, radical and Marxist feminist perspectives on conjugal roles, equality and power within the family unit.
		2.2	Evaluate discussions as to whether family life has a positive or negative impact on its constituents.

		2.3	Evaluate childhood as a social construction with reference to the roles and social positions of children in the family.
		2.4	Examine how the concept of parenthood has evolved.
		2.3	Evaluate the role of social class, gender and ethnicity as factors impacting on childhood experience.

3		Education and its societal roles	
Aim			
Learners will understand how educational attainment is a function of various factors and will recognise different perspectives on the role of education within society.			
Learning Outcomes - The learner will:		Assessment Criteria - The learner can:	
1	Understand theories as to the function of education.	1.1	Evaluate functionalist theories on education and the maintenance of value consensus and solidarity.
		1.2	Examine role allocation and its relationship to education.
		1.3	Evaluate Marxist accounts of education and the maintenance of capitalism.
		1.4	Examine the way in which education plays a role in ideological control and cultural reproduction.
		1.5	Evaluate New Right and social democratic perspectives on the economy and education.
2	Understand the relationship between social mobility and education.	2.1	Explain what is meant by meritocracy and equal opportunity.
		2.2	Evaluate contemporary education as a meritocracy.
		2.3	Examine the consequences of under-achievement in education for society and the individual.
3	Understand how educational content is shaped.	3.1	Explain how knowledge is socially constructed.
		3.2	Examine the factors working to influence curriculum content, including power, status, culture, economic demands, and gender.
		3.3	Evaluate whether curricula are ethnocentric, gendered or hidden.
		3.4	Examine the way in which education has an influence on what constitutes cultural capital.

4	Understand the influence of individual and social factors on educational attainment.	4.1	Examine the extent to which intelligence can be successfully defined or measured.
		4.2	Examine the relationship between intelligence and educational attainment.
		4.3	Examine how social class, ethnicity and gender influence educational attainment discretely and in concert.

4	Globalisation and society		
Aim			
Learners will identify the connections between the local and the global and examine emerging areas of sociology, such as new forms of global crime, global inequalities and recent global migration patterns.			
Learning Outcomes - The learner will:		Assessment Criteria - The learner can:	
1	Understand various perspectives on globalisation	1.1	Explain what is meant by globalisation, 'glocalisation' and global culture.
		1.2	Examine the problems of defining globalisation.
		1.3	Distinguish the difference between cultural, political and economic globalisation.
		1.4	Evaluate Marxist, feminist, postmodernist, globalist, sceptic and transformationalist perspectives on the beneficiaries of globalisation.
		1,5	Examine global social movements and attempts to oppose globalisation.
		1.6	Evaluate the role of the nation state in tackling global social and environmental problems.
2	Understand the relationship between globalisation and identity.	2.1	Examine the impact of globalisation on ethnic revitalisation, cultural defence and identity (including hybrid identity).
		2.2	Distinguish between cultural divergence and cultural convergence/homogenisation theories.
		2.3	Examine what is meant by the concept of westernization.
		2.4	Evaluate the role of western ideology, liberal democracy and human rights in shaping identity.

3	Understand the relationship between globalisation, poverty and inequality.	3.1	Examine sociological explanations for global inequalities, including capitalism, colonialism, post-colonialism and patriarchy.
		3.2	Evaluate impact of globalisation on educational, financial and health life chances in developing countries.
		3.3	Evaluate the role and success of transnational organisations in tackling global inequalities.
4	Understand how globalisation has affected migration.	4.1	Examine the causes of global migration, including immigration, emigration, net migration, push and pull factors, global labour patterns and tourism.
		4.2	Evaluate the consequences of global migration, positive and negative, including cultural diversity, economic benefits and burdens and negative perceptions of migration.
5	Understand how globalisation has affected crime.	5.1	Examine the reasons for the emergence of global crimes, such as human trafficking, corporate crime and environmental offences.
		5.2	Examine the policing and prosecution of global crime.
		5.3	Evaluate Marxist, feminist and other accounts as to the beneficiaries of global crime.

5	Mass communication within society		
Aim			
Learners will understand power relationships regarding the media and how media effects influence individuals.			
Learning Outcomes - The learner will:		Assessment Criteria - The learner can:	
1	Understand the nature of contemporary media.	1.1	Distinguish between traditional and new media.
		1.2	Evaluate the impact and influence of new media.
		1.3	Examine relevant media trends including cross-media ownership, digitalisation, media conglomerates and social media.
		1.4	Evaluate the merits of arguments concerning media ownership and control.
2	Understand theories of the media and influences on media content.	2.1	Examine the influence of the media on political processes, including agenda-setting, opinion polls and news reporting.
		2.2	Evaluate mass manipulation and hegemony as discrete ways of understanding the production of media content.
		2.3	Examine censorship's influence on media content.
		2.4	Evaluate Marxist, neo-Marxist, pluralist and post-modern theories of the media and mass communication.
3	Understand media representations, effects, and influences on human behaviour.	3.1	Examine media representations of class, gender, ethnicity and age.
		3.2	Distinguish direct and indirect models of media influence.
		3.3	Evaluate the respective merits of the (i) hypodermic syringe model, (ii) the uses and gratification model, (iii) the two-step flow model, and (iv) the normative model and the cultural effects model.

		3.4	Evaluate the respective merits of the two-step flow model. the normative model and the cultural effects model.
		3.5	Examine the evidence as to the media's influence on human behaviour, for example, the role of advertising.
		3.6	Examine the impact of media stereotyping and sensationalism and the creation of moral panics and folk devils.