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CATS University Foundation Programme

Sociology Specification

Going further than others

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UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION PROGRAMME

Going further than others

CATS UFP is a Level 3 course, designed to help international students to move successfully from high school to a UK University. It does this by using a variety of assessment methods that are common in UK Universities, such as portfolios, presentations academic posters, and examinations combined with content specifically designed to build on prior learning from courses around the world. While English for Academic purposes is an essential part of CATS UFP, and all students will take an English course, assessment design within each module focuses on subject knowledge and skills, rather than the ability to cope with English as a second language.

CATS UFP is delivered over nine months (sometimes six, for students on specific visas, used to a rigorous style of study and excellent English), within a pastorally supportive and culturally stimulating context that enables students' learning to prosper. It does this by providing a variety of routes to the qualification, taught by expert staff and with time to develop English and learn about British culture. CATS UFP is only available to centres with excellent pastoral care. Centres provide a stimulating intellectual and cultural environment with small classes. Thus, enabling the best learning to happen. With CATS UFP, all learning happens with teachers who are expert in creating a positive learning environment for students from a wide range of countries.

CATS UFP has a successful record of accomplishment and is highly respected by UK universities. With this qualification, students with 12 years of schooling from their own country can make the progression that they want, to a wide range of UK universities, including those ranked most highly for both research and teaching. CATS UFP has strong advocates in its alumni, who display what a CATS UFP qualification can give them. Graduates report that they feel very well prepared for university study; often, better prepared than students from other Level 3 programmes. Universities have confirmed this, through testimonials and through extensive consultation with university based External Examiners it has gained excellent credibility with UK universities.

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INTRODUCTION: Why Choose Sociology UFP?

Relevant and engaging content.
Sociology UFP is a highly popular and successful course at CATS colleges. The course encourages enthusiasm for research and investigation. Our syllabus has been designed to ensure the opportunity for students to acquire and consolidate the skills they will need at university level, such as the ability to design and implement independent research, collect and analyse primary and secondary data as well as develop structured arguments. Because of our focus on a range of academic skills, the course allows students to successfully move into many different related degrees of studies, which in turn can lead to a wide range of careers.

Sensitivity towards international students.
Sociology is the study of the complexities of human society and social relationships. It is, therefore, an excellent subject to engage within a multi-cultural context. The course focuses on key themes and social characteristics which allow students in an international setting to engage in cross-cultural comparisons. Sociology UFP, furthermore, has been designed to ensure that students who aim to settle into the British Higher Education system develop the skills to achieve their university and career goals.

Real life skills.
Sociology students will explore research related to and relevant for social policy and social changes. In considering data, students will be aware of the nature of sociology as an influential and constantly evolving subject that allows us to chart the changes that society undergoes. As such, Sociology has relevance to all members of all societies. By focusing on globalisation and its effects on human societies, students will develop their understanding of their own place in a global context as well as gain empathy for others.

Aims of the Course

UFP Sociology follows recommendations from our partner universities to encourage students to:

- Foster the development of critical and reflective thinking with a respect for social diversity.
- Recognize the importance of social structure and social action in explaining social issues.
- Develop their own sociological awareness through active engagement with the contemporary social world.
- Acquire knowledge and a critical understanding of contemporary social processes and social changes.
- Appreciate the significance of theoretical and conceptual issues in the sociological debate.
- Understand and evaluate sociological methodology and a range of research methods through active involvement in the research process.
- Develop skills that enable individuals to focus on their personal identity, roles and responsibilities within society.
- Develop a lifelong interest in social issues.

Key Academic Skills

- Students taking this course will be encouraged to develop into independents learners with the ability to think critically, engage in effective primary research and data analysis, discuss arguments in both written work and in class presentations. UFP Sociology promotes these academic skills in the following ways:
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Reasoning and critical thinking

- Students will:
  - examine social processes from different perspectives.
  - use problem-solving skills and different theoretical and methodological approaches to create and test hypotheses.
  - collect and analyse primary and secondary data.
  - build and evaluate alternative arguments.
  - explore the rationales behind social policies.
  - use the knowledge learnt through research and theory to assess the relevance and application of ideas to different social settings.

Independent learning

- Students will:
- work on initiative to prioritise tasks.
- carry out self-directed learning tasks.
- organise their own learning through management of time and material.
- work independently to support understanding of material.
- reflect and identify strengths and areas for further development.
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Research skills

- Students will:
- design an independent research project on a topic of sociological relevance.
- apply and evaluate sociological research methods.
- conduct independent research in preparation for controlled assessment, continuous assessment, and coursework.
- ensure all research is referenced and not plagiarised.
- use ICT to collect relevant primary and secondary data.

Presentation and Communication skills

- Students will:
- practice academic conventions in longer written work.
- use of word processing and other forms of ICT for communications of the results.

- organise information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate.
- practice verbal and non-verbal communication skills in presentation work and comprehension discussions.

Assessment Success

Sociology UFP involves a blended learning approach to assessment that enables all active and engaged students to reach their full potential. The course involves four assessment types which provide students with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and understanding in several forms.

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Coursework.
Coursework will involve undertaking some small-scale independent research. Progress will be monitored, and at intermediate and final stages, students' work will be evaluated. This assessment will offer students the opportunity to acquire independent research skills, which will be invaluable to any university degree course. The assessment also involves the student in presenting their findings and answering audience questions. This enables students to develop in terms of confidence as well as their ability to reflect on their own work and build on strengths and understanding.

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Continuous Assessment.
Across the academic year students will complete a portfolio of short essays focusing on sociological case studies. Continuous assessment topics are contemporary and engaging to help students to see the relevance of Sociology in the world today and to develop their skills in applying sociological ideas to real-world situations.

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Controlled Assessment.
The controlled assessment will require students to prepare for a set of seen questions in advance, giving them a closely supervised experience of purposeful research.

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Examination.
In line with recent trends in higher education, the final examination will no longer consist of written exam paper. Students instead will prepare a class presentation on a topic assigned by the teacher along with some academic readings. Thus, students have the opportunity to develop the skill needed to succeed in an examination format that is increasingly frequent at undergraduate level.

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ASSUMED PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

The UFP Sociology course is built on the assumption that students will not have studied the subject previously. However, it is recommended for students to have competence in certain cognitive, language, and transferable skills to be able to:

- read and comprehend extended texts in English.
- write extended coherent texts in English.
- use PowerPoint.
- select and research relevant resources.
- gather and present quantitative data through pie charts, graphs, bar charts as well as written forms.
- show willingness to learn new skills and academic conventions.
- show willingness to consider different views.
- have curiosity and an open-minded approach to the study of society and social organisations.

Subject Content

The topics stated in the table below will be assessed through coursework, continuous assessment, controlled assessment, and final examination.

Overview
Content Outline based on 140 annual guided learning hours.

Unit 1.	
The Sociological Imagination (80)	This unit will introduce students to the key ideas and methods of sociology. By focusing on the notion of social construction, students will understand the main logic tenants of social sciences and apply them to a range of issues of contemporary relevance, including - but not limited to - race and gender. Students will be required to approach epistemological questions from consensus, conflict, structure and social action perspectives. The understanding of these sociological traditions will take place by the analysis of the process/es of social stratification by gender, ethnicity, age and class, and the evaluation of the mechanisms of resistance and maintenance of the social order including –but not limited to- power. Students will become familiar with the main methodological tools used to produce and evaluate social research, including Positivism and Interpretivist approaches. They will discuss different forms of data and alternative methods of their collection. This will lead to the awareness of some of these tools in the design and completion of the first two short-essays of the continuous assessment, the first piece of coursework, and the controlled assessment during the first term of study.

Unit 2.	
Global Culture (60)	This unit will introduce students to the sociological study of culture and identity. Students will be able to understand the processes leading to formation of different forms of cultures and subculture, including - but not limited to- high and low cultures, working class subculture, mass culture, youth culture. Building on their knowledge of sociological theories and methods, students should able to analyse and evaluate the main sociological perspectives on culture studies, including the contributions of Raymond Williams, Stuart Hall, and Pierre Bourdieu. By focusing on the mass media, social media and information technology, students will be required to apply sociological perspectives to contemporary issues, including – but not limited to – ethnic identities (e.g. Racial Justice) and gender identities (e.g. MeToo). Students will be able to understand how individual and collective identities are formed with respect to gender, ethnicity, class, nation. They will be able to apply and evaluate the sociological explanations of the processes leading to identity formation, including – but not limited to – the works of George Herbert Mead and Erving Goffmann. Focusing on globalisation, students will be required to apply their knowledge and understanding of sociological theories about identity to the questions of multiculturalism, hybridization and glocalization.

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Detailed Content List

Unit 1.	The Sociological Imagination
Social Constructions	Nature and Nurture; Society; Social Institutions; Norms; Deviance. Nature of Sociology: Essentialism and common sense; Social constructions: Berger and Luckmann; Sociological Imagination: Wright Mills; Social formation of beliefs; Values; Anomie; Social Power; Power by coercion; Power by legitimacy; Power as action: Foucault. Status and social allocation of deference: Elias.
Theories	Agency; Social Agents; Social Action; Action Theories: Weber; Symbolic Interactionism; Social Structure; Structural functionalism: Pearson and Merton; Structuraction: Giddens; Theory of fields: Bourdieu; Conflict; Marxism (Marx); Capital; Capitalism; Alienation; Class struggle; Consensus; Consensus Theories: Durkheim. Industrial and post-industrial society; Modernity, Postmodernity: Lyotard, Baumann.
Methods	Social Facts; Nature of social data; Hypotheses; Inductive method; Deductive method; Objectivity; Subjectivity; Intersubjectivity; Positivism; Interpretivism; Verstehen; Generalisability; Representativeness; Validity and Reliability.
Stratification	Gender and Sex; Gender stratification; Patriarchy; Feminization of poverty; Race; Ethnicity; Ethnic stratification; Age stratification; lifecycles; Class stratification: Marx; Weber; class and status; capitalism; underclass; meritocracy; Overlapping of gender, ethnicity, age, and class stratifications; Theories of stratification: Davis and Moore; Marxist theories.

Unit 2.	Global Cultures
Culture	High culture and low culture; Base and Superstructure; Ideology; Hegemony; State Apparatuses; Habitus; Cultural Capital; Social Capital; Symbolic Capital; Subcultures; Youth Culture; Counterculture; Culture Industry; Mass Culture; Mass Media and Information Technologies; Theories culture: Raymond Williams; Stuart Hall; Code; Encoding; Decoding.
Identity	Identity and Identities; Social formation of identities: I and Me (Mead); looking glass self; Labelling; Prejudice; Stigma (Goffmann) Early and Late socialisation Gender identities; Femininities; Masculinities; Ethnic identities; Racialized identities; Racialization; Ethnocentrism; Class identities; National identities.
Globalisation	Glocalisation Hybridisation Diaspora Multiculturalism Cosmopolitanism

Assessment Overview

Assessment Objectives

UFP Sociology follows guidelines suggested by CATS UFP university partners. Within this framework, UFP Sociology places a strong emphasis on the use of sociology in an international context compared with other Level 3 qualifications.

	Objective	Weighting
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of sociological theories, concepts, evidence, and research methods.	30%
AO2	Apply sociological theories, concepts, evidence, and research methods to a range of issues.	30%
AO3	Analyse and evaluate sociological theories, concepts, evidence, and research methods in order to present arguments, judge arguments, draw conclusions.	20%
AO4	Communicate (verbal and written) arguments and explanations in a clear and structured manner, making use of a range of theories, research and relevant material. Work includes appropriate vocabulary, subject terminology and references by following proper academic conventions.	15%
AO5	Reflect with honesty and insight on own learning and performance, recognising own strengths and areas for development.	5%

Assessment Structure

UFP Sociology involves several methods of assessment: case study, report, topic and reflective presentation, controlled assessment, essay, exam paper. These assessments are designed to allow spaced learning and facilitate the acquisition of highly transferable reasoning and writing skills.

Title	Value	
Coursework 1	10%	Design a report including the pilot study. Report to be submitted before the end of the first academic term, along with a reflective presentation of the findings.
Coursework 2	20%	Complete a full report on a sociological topic of contemporary relevance. Report to be submitted by the end of the second academic term and supported by a student-led group discussion.
Controlled Assessment	30%	Readings and questions testing comprehension of previously seen academic texts against the knowledge and understanding acquired through Unit 1 The Sociological Imagination. To be held during the second academic term.
Continuous Assessment	10%	Portfolio of four short essays on case studies: 800-1200 words essays on a topic of contemporary relevance. Essays to be submitted throughout the year.
Final Presentation	30%	Presentation on a topic of Unit 2 Global Cultures

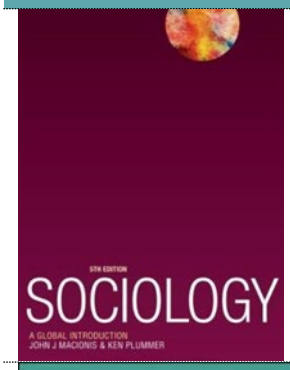
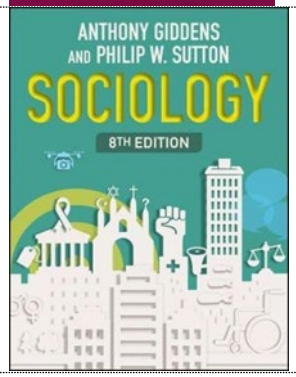
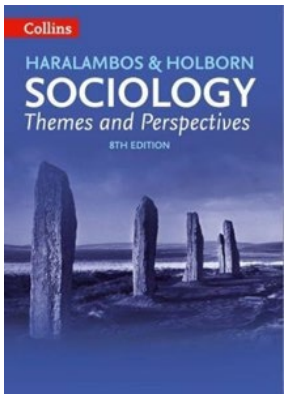
Title	Weight					
Coursework 1 - Report	5%	16%	40%	32%	12%	-
Coursework 1 - Presentation	5%	36%	-	-	24%	40%
Coursework 2 Group discussion	10%	27%			46%	27%
Coursework 2 Report	10%	27%	36%	27%	10%	-
Controlled Assessment	30%	40%	40%	20%	-	-
Continuous Assessment	10%	36%	-	40%	24%	-
Final Presentation	30%	30%	20%	20%	20%	10%
Total	100%	30%	30%	20%	15%	5%

Suggested Study Materials

A wide range of learning resources are available for teaching, researching and learning the topics listed above.

Textbooks

Among the many available textbooks, the following meet most of the requirements of the current specification.

	Textbook	Unit 1	Unit 2
	John Macionis and Ken Plummer, *Sociology: A Global Introduction*, Pearson.	Ch.1. The Sociological Imagination Ch.2. Studying the Social Ch.3. Societies Ch.8. Inequality. Social division and Stratification	Ch.4. Culture Ch.7. Microsociology Ch.12. The Gender Order Ch.22. Communication and the New Media
	Anthony Giddens and Philip Sutton, *Sociology*, Polity Press. The Sixth Edition of this famous textbook is available online under CC license from https://archive.org	Ch.1. What is Sociology? Ch.2. Asking and Answering Sociological Questions Ch. 3. Theories and Perspectives 12. Stratification and Social Class	Ch.4. Globalisation and Social Change Ch.15. Gender and Sexuality Ch. 16. Race, Ethnicity and Migration Ch.18. The Media
	Michael Haralambros and Martin Holborn, *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*, Collins.	Introduction. Sociological Perspectives Ch.1. Stratification, class and inequality Ch.9. Power, politics and the state Ch.14. Methodology Ch.15. Sociological Theory	Ch.2. Sex and gender Ch.3. Race, ethnicity and nationality Ch.5. Health, medicine and the body Ch.11. Culture, socialisation and identity Ch.13. Age and the life course

Additional Learning and Teaching Material

No textbook available on the market is designed to meet the demands of the present specification. To address the need of consistency that this may sometimes cause among students and instructors, a selection of learning materials relevant for each component of teaching and assessment of this specification is now available, along with an Instructor Guide.

The Reader includes:

- A glossary of key terms
- Key Questions on each topic relevant for this specification
- Case studies on some questions of contemporary relevance
- A selection of extracts from foundational sociological works

The Booklet includes:

- Outlines of topics
- Marks Schemes
- Marking Policies
- Marked Samples
- Assessments Deadlines

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