Programme specification

(Notes on how to complete this template are provided in Annexe 3)

1. Overview / factual information

Programme/award title(s)	BA (Hons) Sociology
Teaching Institution	University Centre Peterborough (UCP)
Awarding Institution	The Open University (OU)
Date of first OU validation	November 2020
Date of latest OU (re)validation	N/A
Next revalidation	2025/26
Credit points achieved for the award	360
UCAS Code (if applicable)	L300
HECoS Code (if applicable)	
LDCS Code (FE Colleges England only	TBC
Programme start date and cycle of starts if appropriate.	September 2026
Underpinning QAA subject benchmark(s)	2019
Other external and internal reference points used to inform programme outcomes (including QAA Characteristics Statements). For apprenticeships, the standard or framework against which it will be delivered.	● British Sociological Association (BSA) Ethical Guidelines and Statement of Ethical Practice ● QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Sociology (2019) ● QAA Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (FHEQ) ● QAA Characteristics Statement for Bachelor's Degrees ● World Economic Forum, Future of Jobs Report (2025), particularly the Core Skills framework ● Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Skills Improvement Plan (2024) ● Institutional Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy ● Institutional policies relating to inclusive learning, assessment and student support
Professional/statutory/ accreditation recognition	**N/A**
For apprenticeships fully or non-integrated Assessment. If fully integrated, EPAO being used.	**N/A**

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if they takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content, and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in student module guide(s) and the students handbook.

The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be verified by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

Mode(s) of Study (PT, FT, DL, Mix of DL & Face-to-Face) Apprenticeship	FT & PT
Duration of the programme for each mode of study	FT: 3 years (2 semesters per year) PT: 4 years (2 semesters per year - 90 credits per year)
Dual accreditation (if applicable)	N/A
Date of production/revision of this specification	December 2025

2. Programme overview

2.1 Educational aims and objectives

The BA (Hons) Sociology programme provides students with an academically robust and inclusive education in sociology, supporting them to understand, analyse and critically engage with contemporary social life. The programme is grounded in a critical and pluralist sociological tradition, encouraging engagement with key sociological theories, concepts and debates while recognising the diversity of perspectives within the discipline.

The programme develops students' understanding of social structures, power relations and inequalities, including those relating to class, race, gender, ethnicity, disability, culture and global social processes. Students are supported to apply sociological knowledge to a range of contemporary social issues, including those associated with work, education, politics, technology, digital society and social change.

A central focus of the programme is the development of strong analytical and critical thinking skills, underpinned by an understanding of sociological research methods and ethical enquiry. Students are introduced to qualitative and quantitative approaches to research and supported to develop confidence in evaluating evidence, constructing arguments and undertaking independent enquiry.

The programme also supports students to develop transferable skills applicable across a range of contexts. These include effective communication, collaboration, self-

management, adaptability and digital literacy. Through engagement with sociological perspectives, students develop ethical awareness, social responsibility and an informed understanding of diversity and inclusion in contemporary society.

Overall, the programme supports students to become reflective, critically informed graduates, well prepared for postgraduate study, employment in a range of sectors, and active engagement in social, civic and professional life.

2.2 Relationship to other programmes and awards

(Where the award is part of a hierarchy of awards/programmes, this section describes the articulation between them, opportunities for progression upon completion of the programme, and arrangements for bridging modules or induction)

Students enrolling on the BA (Hons) Sociology programme come from a wide range of educational and professional backgrounds. Many students progress from Access to Higher Education Diplomas in Humanities and Social Sciences, while others enter from vocational qualifications such as BTEC programmes, or from A-Level study. The programme also attracts a significant proportion of mature learners who bring diverse life and work experiences to their studies. This varied entry profile reflects the University Centre's commitment to widening participation and to supporting students from non-traditional routes into higher education.

The BA (Hons) Sociology forms part of the Social Sciences suite at the University Centre and is validated alongside BA (Hons) Psychosocial Studies and BA (Hons) Criminology. The programme operates within a shared modular framework, often referred to as the 'social science matrix', which enables the sharing of modules across cognate disciplines. A number of core and optional modules are shared with BA (Hons) Psychosocial Studies, while selected modules are also shared with BA (Hons) Criminology. This structure supports interdisciplinary learning, efficient curriculum design, and consistency in academic standards across programmes.

All students within the Social Sciences suite undertake a common Level 5 Research Skills module (validated under Psychosocial Studies), ensuring coherence in research training and methodological development. This shared provision supports progression in research literacy and prepares students for advanced study at Level 6, including independent research and extended analytical work.

Successful completion of the BA (Hons) Sociology provides graduates with a strong foundation for progression to postgraduate study in sociology and related social science disciplines, as well as for employment across a range of sectors. The programme's emphasis on sociological analysis, critical thinking, ethical awareness and transferable skills supports progression into areas such as social research, public and voluntary sector roles, education, policy-related work, community engagement and further academic study.

2.3 For Foundation Degrees, please list where the 60 credit work-related learning takes place. For apprenticeships an articulation of how the work based learning and academic content are organised with the award.
N/A

2.4 List of all exit awards
BA (Hons) Sociology – 360 credits (Levels 4–6) BA Sociology Ordinary Degree (300 Credits) ● To be eligible for an Ordinary Degree, a student must have successfully completed 240 credits at Levels 4 and 5, and 60 credits at Level 6, excluding the dissertation . Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) Sociology – 240 credits Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) Sociology – 120 credits

3. Programme structure and learning outcomes

(The structure for any part-time delivery should be presented separately in this section.)
Please adjust 'levels' to reflect SCQF if applicable

Programme Structure – FULL TIME - LEVEL 4				
Compulsory modules	**Credit points**	**Is module compensatable?**	**Semester runs in**	**Available as SRM?**
Making the Invisible Visible: How Sociology Helps Us Understand the World	30	No	Year 1, Sem 1	Yes
Capitalism, Class & Inequality	15	Yes	Year 1, Sem 1	No
Globalisation & its Effects	15	Yes	Year 1, Sem 1	No
People, Policy & Community: Making Social Change	30	No	Year 1, Sem 2	Yes
Alternative Lives in the Margins: Deviance, Subculture and Belonging	15	Yes	Year 1, Sem 2	No
Culture, Gender, Identity	15	Yes	Year 1, Sem 2	No

Programme Structure – PART TIME - LEVEL 4				
Compulsory modules	Credit points	Is module compensatable?	Semester runs in	Available as SRM?
Making the Invisible Visible: How Sociology Helps Us Understand the World	30	No	Year 1, Sem 1	Yes
Capitalism, Class & Inequality	15	Yes	Year 1, Sem 1	No
Globalisation & its Effects	15	Yes	Year 2, Sem 1	No

People, Policy & Community: Making Social Change	30	No	Year 1, Sem 2	Yes
Alternative Lives in the Margins: Deviance, Subculture and Belonging	15	Yes	Year 1, Sem 2	No
Culture, Gender, Identity	15	Yes	Year 2, Sem 2	No

Intended learning outcomes at Level 4 are listed below:

Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 4	
3A. Knowledge and understanding	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
A1 Describe key sociological concepts, perspectives and theories and explain their relevance to understanding social life. A2 Identify forms of social inequality, diversity and power and outline how these shape individuals, groups and institutions. A3 Describe the purpose and basic principles of sociological research, including introductory qualitative and quantitative approaches and ethical considerations.	Learning and teaching focus on introducing core sociological concepts, theories and debates, supporting students to understand how sociology explains social life and inequality. Teaching is delivered through lectures, seminars and workshops that encourage engagement with key ideas and their application to contemporary social issues. Learning activities provide structured support to help students develop confidence in sociological thinking and academic study. Assessment is coursework-based and includes essays, short written tasks and applied assignments that assess students' understanding of sociological knowledge. Formative assessment is embedded through feedback on drafts and guided activities, supporting students' transition into undergraduate-level study and preparing them for progression to higher levels.

3B. Cognitive skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
B1 Apply sociological concepts and ideas to the analysis of everyday and contemporary social issues in a structured and supported manner. B2 Demonstrate the ability to identify sociological explanations and distinguish them from common-sense or non-sociological accounts.	Teaching supports the development of foundational analytical skills by encouraging students to question assumptions and begin to use sociological explanations to interpret social issues. Seminars and guided activities support structured analysis and the application of sociological ideas in a supported learning environment. Assessment focuses on the development of emerging analytical skills through coursework such as essays, short analytical tasks and presentations. Formative feedback supports students in developing confidence in sociological analysis and reflective learning.

3C. Practical and professional skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
C1 Locate, use and reference appropriate academic and other sources relevant to sociological study. C2 Communicate sociological knowledge clearly in written and oral forms, using appropriate academic conventions.	Learning activities introduce students to practical skills relevant to sociological study, including working with information, evidence and digital tools. Teaching through workshops and guided tasks supports the development of clear communication, ethical awareness and appropriate academic conventions. Assessment methods include reports, briefing-style tasks and presentations that enable students to demonstrate practical application of sociological knowledge and professional communication. Formative assessment supports skill development through guided activities and feedback.

3D. Key/transferable skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
D1 Apply a structured problem-solving approach to sociological questions, identifying relevant information and proposing reasoned responses. D2 Demonstrate effective self-management by planning and organising study tasks, prioritising work, and meeting deadlines. D3 Use digital and information tools appropriately to locate, evaluate and manage information relevant to study and wider contexts.	Teaching supports the development of transferable skills including problem-solving, self-management and digital literacy. Learning activities embedded within academic skills provision encourage students to plan, organise and manage their learning effectively, while developing confidence in independent study. Assessment supports the development of transferable skills through coursework that requires organisation, time management and effective communication. Formative feedback enables students to reflect on their learning practices and build skills in preparation for progression to higher levels of study.

Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) Sociology – 120 credits

Programme Structure – FULL TIME - LEVEL 5					
Compulsory modules	**Credit points**	**Optional Modules**	**Credit points**	**Is module compensatable?**	**Semester runs in**
Research for Social Change: Methods and Practice	30			No	Year 2, Sem 1-2
Critical Social Theory	15			Yes	Year 2, Sem 1
Sociology of The City	15			Yes	Year 2, Sem 2
People, Work & Learning: Rethinking Organisations & Opportunity			30	No	Year 2, Sem 1
		Bodies and Inequalities: A Sociological Perspective on Health	30	No	Year 2, Sem 2
		Popular Culture, Media and Society	30	No	Year 2, Sem 2
		Justice, Harm and the Good Society	30	No	Year 2, Sem 2
		UNLOCKED: Interdisciplinary Strategies for Solving Real-World Challenges	30	No	Year 2, Sem 2

Programme Structure – PART TIME - LEVEL 5					
Compulsory modules	**Credit points**	**Optional Modules**	**Credit points**	**Is module compensatable?**	**Semester runs in**

Research for Social Change: Methods and Practice	30			No	Year 3, Sem 1-2
Critical Social Theory	15			Yes	Year 3, Sem 1
Sociology of The City	15			Yes	Year 3, Sem 2
People, Work & Learning: Rethinking Organisations & Opportunity	30		30	No	Year 2, Sem 1
		Bodies and Inequalities: A Sociological Perspective on Health	30	No	Year 2, Sem 2
		Popular Culture, Media and Society	30	No	Year 2, Sem 2
		Justice, Harm and the Good Society	30	No	Year 2, Sem 2
		UNLOCKED: Interdisciplinary Strategies for Solving Real-World Challenges	30	No	Year 2, Sem 2

Programme Structure – Single Registerable Modules				
Compulsory modules	**Credit points**	**Pre-Requisite as SRM**	**Is module compensatable?**	**Semester runs in**
Bodies and Inequalities: A Sociological Perspective on Health	30	N/A	No	2
Research for Social Change: Methods and Practice	30	N/A	No	1-2
People, Work & Learning: Rethinking Organisations & Opportunity	30	N/A	No	1

Programme Structure – Single Registerable Modules				
Compulsory modules	**Credit points**	**Pre-Requisite as SRM**	**Is module compensatable?**	**Semester runs in**
Popular Culture, Media and Society	30	N/A	No	2
Justice, Harm and the Good Society	30	N/A	No	2
UNLOCKED: Interdisciplinary Strategies for Solving Real-World Challenges	30	N/A	No	2

Intended learning outcomes at Level 5 are listed below:

Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 5	
3A. Knowledge and understanding	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
A1 Analyse key sociological theories and concepts and evaluate their usefulness in explaining social processes and inequalities. A2 Examine relationships between individuals, groups, institutions and social structures across a range of social contexts. A3 Demonstrate understanding of sociological research methods, including the strengths and limitations of qualitative and quantitative approaches.	Learning and teaching focus on developing deeper analytical engagement with sociological theories, concepts and debates. Teaching activities encourage students to evaluate the usefulness of different theoretical perspectives in explaining social processes and inequalities, and to examine relationships between individuals, groups, institutions and social structures across a range of social contexts. Learning activities also support developing understanding of sociological research methods, including consideration of the strengths and limitations of qualitative and quantitative approaches. Assessment is coursework-based and includes essays, analytical reports and applied written tasks that require students to analyse sociological theories, evaluate evidence and demonstrate understanding of research methods. Formative assessment supports learning through draft submissions, feedback and guided activities that help students develop confidence in analytical judgement and methodological awareness.

3B. Cognitive skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
B1 Evaluate sociological evidence and competing explanations using structured critical analysis. B2 Apply sociological perspectives to analyse contemporary social issues, drawing on theory, evidence and research.	Teaching supports the development of structured critical analysis and evaluation of sociological evidence. Learning activities encourage students to assess competing sociological explanations and to apply sociological perspectives to the analysis of contemporary social issues,

3B. Cognitive skills	
	drawing on theory, research and evidence. Teaching increasingly requires students to justify interpretations and engage independently with sociological material. Assessment focuses on coursework such as essays, analytical tasks and applied written formats that require evaluation of evidence, comparison of perspectives and construction of reasoned arguments. Formative feedback supports students in strengthening analytical structure, use of evidence and critical engagement.

3C. Practical and professional skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
C1 Select and apply appropriate sociological research methods with increasing independence, justifying methodological choices. C2 Demonstrate ethical awareness in the design, interpretation and presentation of sociological research and analysis.	Learning activities support increasing independence in the selection and application of sociological research methods. Teaching emphasises the relationship between research questions, methodological choice and evidence, alongside ethical considerations such as consent, representation and responsible use of data. Workshops and guided tasks support the development of professional academic practices in research planning and presentation. Assessment includes research-focused coursework such as methodological analyses, applied research reports or project-based tasks that require students to justify methodological choices and demonstrate ethical awareness. Formative assessment supports skill development through feedback and opportunities for reflection on research practice.

3D. Key/transferable skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
D1 Work independently and collaboratively, demonstrating initiative, organisation and responsibility for learning. D2 Communicate complex sociological ideas clearly and effectively using formats and styles appropriate to different audiences, demonstrating graduate-level professionalism.	Teaching supports the development of transferable skills associated with increased independence, organisation and professional communication. Learning activities encourage students to take responsibility for managing their learning, planning tasks and engaging proactively with feedback, while developing confidence in communicating sociological ideas using appropriate formats. Assessment supports the development of transferable skills through coursework that requires effective organisation, initiative and professional communication. Tasks may include extended written work, applied formats and presentations that require students to select appropriate structures and styles for different purposes. Formative feedback supports reflection on learning strategies and communication skills.

Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) Sociology – 240 credits

Programme Structure – FULL TIME - LEVEL 6						
Compulsory modules	**Credit points**	**Optional modules**	**Credit points**	**Is module compensatable?**	**Semester runs in**	**Available as single registerable module?**
Independent Research Project: Social Science (UMP)	30			No	Year 3, Sem 1-2	No
Sociological Futures: Humanity, Earth, and Nature	15			Yes	Year 3, Sem 2	No
		Feminist Theory and Activism: From the First Wave to the Digital Age	15	Yes	Year 3, Sem 1	No
		Sociology of Social Work and Social Care	15	Yes	Year 3, Sem 1	No
		Race, Society and Decolonialism	15	Yes	Year 3, Sem 1	No
		Power and Pixels: Sociology of the Digital Age	15	Yes	Year 3, Sem 1	No
		The Sociology of Sexuality	15	Yes	Year 3, Sem 2	No
		Activism and Social Change	15	Yes	Year 3, Sem 2	No
		Global South and the Sociological Imagination	15	Yes	Year 3, Sem 2	No
		Sport Culture and Society	15	Yes	Year 3, Sem 1	No
		Sociological Perspectives on Evil	15	Yes	Year 3, Sem 2	No

Programme Structure – PART TIME - LEVEL 6						
Compulsory modules	**Credit points**	**Optional modules**	**Credit points**	**Is module compensatable?**	**Semester runs in**	**Available as single**

Programme Structure – PART TIME - LEVEL 6						
						registerable module?
Independent Research Project: Social Science (UMP)	30			No	Year 4, Sem 1-2	No
Sociological Futures: Humanity, Earth, and Nature	15			Yes	Year 4, Sem 2	No
		Feminist Theory and Activism: From the First Wave to the Digital Age	15	Yes	Year 3, Sem 1/Year 4, Sem 1	No
		Sociology of Social Work and Social Care	15	Yes	Year 3, Sem 1/Year 4, Sem 1	No
		Race, Society and Decolonialism	15	Yes	Year 3, Sem 1/Year 4, Sem 1	No
		Power and Pixels: Sociology of the Digital Age	15	Yes	Year 3, Sem 1/Year 4, Sem 1	No
		The Sociology of Sexuality	15	Yes	Year 3, Sem 2/Year 4, Sem 2	No
		Activism and Social Change	15	Yes	Year 3, Sem 2/Year 4, Sem 2	No
		Global South and the Sociological Imagination	15	Yes	Year 3, Sem 2/Year 4, Sem 2	No
		Sport Culture and Society	15	Yes	Year 3, Sem 1/Year 4, Sem 1	No
		Sociological Perspectives on Evil	15	Yes	Year 3, Sem 2/Year 4, Sem 2	No

Intended learning outcomes at Level 6 are listed below:

Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 6	
3A. Knowledge and understanding	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
A1 Critically evaluate sociological theories, debates and research to construct sustained and well-evidenced sociological arguments. A2 Synthesise sociological knowledge to analyse complex social issues, including those relating to inequality, power, social change and global processes. A3 Demonstrate advanced understanding of sociological research methodologies and ethical frameworks, including their application to independent enquiry.	Learning and teaching focus on advanced engagement with sociological theory, research and debate, supporting students to critically evaluate and synthesise sociological knowledge. Teaching activities require sustained independent reading and critical discussion, enabling students to analyse complex social issues relating to inequality, power, social change and global processes. Learning activities also support advanced understanding of research methodologies and ethical frameworks, particularly in relation to independent enquiry. Assessment is coursework-based and includes extended analytical essays, independent research projects or other substantial written tasks that require students to construct sustained, well-evidenced sociological arguments. Formative assessment through supervision and feedback supports the refinement of arguments, methodological judgement and academic independence.

3B. Cognitive skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
B1 Critically assess and synthesise evidence from a range of sources to evaluate competing sociological explanations. B2 Demonstrate reflexivity in evaluating assumptions, positionality and the social contexts shaping sociological knowledge.	Teaching supports advanced cognitive skills in critical evaluation, synthesis and reflexive judgement. Learning activities encourage students to assess and integrate evidence from a wide range of sources, evaluate competing sociological explanations and reflect on assumptions, positionality and the social contexts shaping sociological

3B. Cognitive skills	
	knowledge. Assessment focuses on coursework that requires synthesis of theory, evidence and critical reflection, including extended written work and independent research outputs. Formative feedback supports the development of analytical depth, reflexivity and independent critical judgement.

3C. Practical and professional skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
C1 Design, conduct and communicate an independent piece of sociological research or applied analysis, demonstrating methodological, ethical and analytical judgement. C2 Apply sociological knowledge to social, public or civic contexts, demonstrating awareness of social responsibility and ethical implications.	Learning activities support the design, conduct and communication of independent sociological research or applied analysis. Teaching emphasises methodological rigour, ethical judgement and the integration of theory, method and evidence, alongside consideration of the social, public and civic relevance of sociological knowledge. Assessment includes an independent research project, dissertation or substantial applied analysis that requires students to demonstrate methodological, ethical and analytical judgement. Formative assessment through supervision and feedback supports the development of professional academic practice and confidence in independent enquiry.

3D. Key/transferable skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
D1 Demonstrate a high level of autonomy, self-direction and responsibility in managing learning and complex tasks. D2 Communicate complex sociological ideas clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences, demonstrating graduate-level professionalism.	Teaching supports a high level of autonomy, self-direction and responsibility in managing learning and complex tasks. Learning activities encourage students to plan and manage substantial pieces of work independently and to communicate sociological ideas using formats and styles appropriate to different purposes and audiences. Assessment supports the development of transferable skills through coursework that requires independent organisation, professional communication and effective management of complex tasks. Formative feedback supports reflection on learning, communication and professional practice in preparation for postgraduate study or graduate-level employment.Formative assessment supports the development of autonomy and professional practice through supervision, draft feedback and structured guidance, enabling students to refine communication, strengthen self-direction and consolidate transferable skills.

BA (Hons) Sociology – 360 credits (Levels 4–6)

BA Sociology (Ordinary) – 300 credits

4. Distinctive features of the programme structure

- **Where applicable, this section provides details on distinctive featurs such as:**
  - where in the structure above a professional/placement year fits in and how it may affect progression
  - any restrictions regarding the availability of elective modules
  - where in the programme structure students must make a choice of pathway/route
- **Additional considerations for apprenticeships:**
  - how the delivery of the academic award fits in with the wider apprenticeship
  - the integration of the 'on the job' and 'off the job' training
  - how the academic award fits within the assessment of the apprenticeship

The BA (Hons) Sociology is structured around a coherent progression from foundational sociological knowledge and skills at Level 4, through increased analytical depth and methodological confidence at Level 5, to independent and applied sociological enquiry at Level 6. The programme does not include a professional placement year or compulsory work-based learning component.

The programme forms part of the University Centre's Social Sciences suite and operates within a shared modular framework (the social science matrix). This structure enables the sharing of selected modules across cognate disciplines, supporting interdisciplinary learning, efficient curriculum design and consistency of academic standards. Core modules are complemented by optional modules at appropriate points in the programme, allowing students a degree of choice while maintaining a clear sociological focus.

There are no formal pathways or routes within the programme. All students follow the same overall programme structure, with optional modules providing flexibility and breadth within the discipline. Optional modules provide flexibility and breadth within the programme and are normally available as set out in the programme structure. In a small number of cases, the availability of specific options may be influenced by factors such as cohort size or timetabling, with alternative options provided where necessary.

5. Support for students and their learning
(For apprenticeships this should include details of how student learning is supported in the workplace)

The BA (Hons) Sociology programme benefits from the close and supportive learning environment that characterises the student experience at University Centre Peterborough. Small cohort sizes and accessible teaching staff enable students to receive personalised academic and pastoral support throughout their studies, supporting engagement, confidence and progression.

Each student is allocated a personal tutor who provides one-to-one academic support through scheduled tutorials each semester, with additional meetings available where required. Personal tutoring sessions are used to review academic progress, discuss

assessment feedback and identify any issues that may be affecting engagement or performance. Tutors support students to identify individual learning needs and, where appropriate, direct them towards relevant resources or specialist support services.

Students have access to the UCP Support team for guidance on matters such as illness, personal circumstances, wellbeing concerns and mitigating requests. Teaching staff work closely with UCP Support to ensure that communication is clear and that students receive timely and appropriate advice on processes that may affect their studies.

Academic and digital support is available through library and study skills provision, including workshops and resources focused on academic writing, referencing, research skills, presentations and the effective use of digital tools. Assignment support is embedded within modules, and students have access to clear, accessible learning materials through the institutional virtual learning environment.

Professional development support is provided through UCP Futures, which offers guidance on career planning, job applications, interview preparation, CV writing and professional networking. Students are able to access individual advice and group sessions that support understanding of how sociological knowledge and transferable skills connect to employment and further study.

Overall, the integrated systems of academic guidance, pastoral support and professional development provide a coherent framework that supports students to progress confidently through the programme and achieve the intended learning outcomes.

6. Criteria for admission
(For apprenticeships this should include details of how the criteria will be used with employers who will be recruiting apprentices.)

Applicants are normally required to have five GCSEs at grade C/4 or above, including English, and 88 UCAS tariff points. UCAS points should normally be achieved through a relevant qualification, such as:

- A Levels
- BTEC Level 3 National Diploma
- International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma
- Access to Higher Education Diploma
- Relevant work or professional experience

Overseas qualifications judged to be equivalent to the above are also accepted.

Applicants who do not meet the standard entry requirements may be considered through an interview to assess equivalent qualifications, prior learning or relevant experience.

A Level General Studies and AS Levels are accepted when taken alongside other full Level 3 qualifications.

Applicants whose first language is not English are required to demonstrate English language proficiency, normally through an IELTS score of 6.0 or above, or an equivalent recognised English language qualification.

7. Language of study

English

8. Information about non-OU standard assessment regulations (including Professional Statutory Recognised Body requirements)

N/A

9. For apprenticeships in England, summary of how the End Point Assessment (EPA) links to the academic award

N/A

10. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning including the student experience

University Centre Peterborough (UCP) has an established framework for monitoring, evaluating and enhancing the quality and standards of teaching, learning and the student experience. This framework is underpinned by reflective practice, peer engagement and the systematic use of evidence to inform continuous improvement across programmes.

Teaching quality is evaluated through an enhancement-focused peer review process coordinated by the UCP Quality Department. All academic staff participate in this process on a regular cycle. The approach emphasises reflective dialogue, shared learning and developmental feedback rather than summative judgement. Peer review provides structured opportunities to discuss pedagogical approaches, curriculum design and assessment practice, supporting ongoing enhancement at module, programme and team level.

Staff development plays a central role in maintaining and enhancing academic standards. UCP provides a minimum of three staff development days each year, alongside targeted training focused on areas such as research ethics, inclusive teaching practice, digital learning and academic scholarship. All new academic staff undertake a structured induction and mentoring programme led by Higher Education Managers, ensuring familiarity with institutional quality processes, regulatory frameworks and expectations for higher education teaching.

Professional learning and the dissemination of good practice are further supported through an annual Higher Education Learning and Teaching Conference, held each summer. The conference provides a forum for staff to share pedagogical innovation, reflect on sector developments and engage with scholarship across disciplines. A designated Learning and Teaching Lead for Higher Education oversees professional development activity, including mentoring and support for Advance HE Fellowship recognition.

Institutional commitment to high-quality learning and teaching was recognised through the award of Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) Silver in 2023, to which the Social Sciences team contributed. The Sociology, Psychosocial Studies and Criminology programmes were highlighted for student-centred approaches to curriculum design, assessment practice and wellbeing support.

Enhancement activity within the Social Sciences team has informed ongoing programme development. For example, structured tutorial approaches have incorporated reflective and skills-focused activities to support student wellbeing, academic engagement and progression. In addition, the introduction of asynchronous digital resources to complement dissertation supervision has provided flexible, on-demand support aligned to individual research timelines. Module evaluations indicated that these developments enhanced students' perceptions of support, flexibility and autonomy.

Student voice is integral to the evaluation and enhancement of teaching and learning. Module evaluation surveys are conducted each semester and are supplemented by in-class feedback, student representative engagement and discussion at the Student Engagement, Learning and Teaching Committee (SELT). Feedback from these mechanisms informs action planning at module and programme level and contributes to a culture of continuous improvement.

11. Changes made to the programme since last (re)validation

Since the previous validation, the BA (Hons) Sociology programme has undergone a structured review and refresh to ensure continued relevance, coherence and alignment with sector expectations, while maintaining its core disciplinary focus.

The programme structure has been reviewed and refined, with several modules revised, combined or retitled to improve clarity, coherence and progression across levels. In particular, related thematic areas have been brought together to strengthen

conceptual integration and reduce unnecessary duplication, while maintaining appropriate academic breadth.

Module learning outcomes and assessment strategies have been systematically reviewed to ensure consistent workload, clear developmental progression from Levels 4 to 6, and constructive alignment with the revised programme learning outcomes. Assessment has been refined to strengthen applied, analytical and transferable skills, using a range of coursework-based assessment formats designed to support engagement, inclusivity and the development of graduate capabilities.

The curriculum has been updated to strengthen its applied and outward-facing focus, making clearer connections between sociological theory, research and contemporary social issues, including those relevant to local and regional contexts. Greater emphasis has been placed on employability, research literacy and ethical awareness across all levels of the programme.

It is important to note that while the structure appears different, only four modules are entirely new. These are ‘L5 Justice, Harm and the Good Society’, ‘L5 Sociology of the City’, ‘L6 The Global South and the Sociological Imagination’ and ‘L6 Sociology of Social Work and Social Care’. The majority of changes involve combining existing 15-credit modules into cohesive 30-credit blocks to allow for greater depth of study.

The programme has been mapped to the revised Social Science Matrix, supporting the sharing of selected core modules with the BA (Hons) Psychosocial Studies and BA (Hons) Criminology programmes. In particular, core research skills and independent research modules are shared with Psychosocial Studies, ensuring consistency in research training and assessment while supporting interdisciplinary learning.

The revalidated programme aligns with the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Sociology (2019) and the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education (2024). The QAA consultation draft for the revised Sociology benchmark has also been cross checked.. Programme documentation, including the programme specification and module descriptors, has been updated accordingly to reflect these changes and to align with institutional and partnership quality assurance requirements.

Annexe 1: Curriculum map

Annexe 2: Notes on completing the OU programme specification template

Annexe 1 - Curriculum map

This table indicates which study units assume responsibility for delivering (shaded) and assessing (▯) particular programme learning outcomes. Please amend this mapping to suit frameworks used within the different nations if appropriate.

Level	Study module/unit	A1	A2	A3	B1	B2	C1	C2	D1	D2	D3	Available as an Single Registrable Module
4	People, Policy & Community: Making Social Change	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		Yes
	Making the Invisible Visible: How Sociology Helps Us Understand the World	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes
	Globalisation and its Effects	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	No
	Culture, Gender, Identity	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	No
	Capitalism, Class and Inequality	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	No
	Alternative Lives in the Margins: Deviance, Subculture and Belonging	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		No

Level	Study module/unit	A1	A2	A3	B1	B2	C1	C2	D1	D2	Available as an Single Registrable Module
5	UNLOCKED: Interdisciplinary Strategies for Solving Real-World Challenges	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes
	Sociology of The City	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	No
	Research for Social Change: Methods and Practice	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes
	Popular Culture, Media and Society	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes
	People, Work & Learning: Rethinking Organisations & Opportunity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes
	Justice, Harm and the Good Society	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	Yes
	Critical Social Theory	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	No
	Bodies and Inequalities: A Sociological Perspective on Health	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	Yes

Level	Study module/unit	A1	A2	A3	B1	B2	C1	C2	D1	D2	Available as an Single Registrable Module
6	Activism and Social Change	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	No
	The Sociology of Sexuality	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		No

	The Global South and the Sociological Imagination	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	No
	Sport, Culture and Society	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	No
	Sociology of Social Work and Social Care	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	No
	Sociological Perspectives on Evil	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		No
	Sociological Futures: Nature, Earth, and Humanity	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		No
	Race, Society and Decolonialism	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		No
	Power and Pixels: Sociology of the Digital Age	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	No
	Independent Research Project: Social Science (UMP)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	No
	Feminist Theory and Activism	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	No

Annexe 2: Notes on completing programme specification templates

1 **-** This programme specification should be mapped against the learning outcomes detailed in module specifications.

2 – The expectations regarding student achievement and attributes described by the learning outcome in section 3 must be appropriate to the level of the award within the **QAA frameworks for HE qualifications**: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/Pages/default.aspx

3 – Learning outcomes must also reflect the detailed statements of graduate attributes set out in **QAA subject benchmark statements** that are relevant to the programme/award: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/subject-guidance/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statements.aspx

4 – In section 3, the learning and teaching methods deployed should enable the achievement of the full range of intended learning outcomes. Similarly, the choice of assessment methods in section 3 should enable students to demonstrate the achievement of related learning outcomes. Overall, assessment should cover the full range of learning outcomes.

5 - Where the programme contains validated **exit awards** (e.g. CertHE, DipHE, PGDip), learning outcomes must be clearly specified for each award.

6 - For programmes with distinctive study **routes or pathways** the specific rationale and learning outcomes for each route must be provided.

7 – Validated programmes delivered in **languages other than English** must have programme specifications both in English and the language of delivery.