



Module Specification

Theorising Social Life

Version: 2026-27, v3.0, Approved

Contents

Module Specification	1
Part 1: Information	2
Part 2: Description	2
Part 3: Teaching and learning methods	5
Part 4: Assessment.....	6
Part 5: Contributes towards	8

Part 1: Information

Module title: Theorising Social Life

Module code: UZSY6V-30-2

Level: Level 5

For implementation from: 2026-27

UWE credit rating: 30

ECTS credit rating: 15

College: College of Health, Science & Society

School: CHSS School of Social Sciences

Partner institutions: None

Field: Sociology and Criminology

Module type: Module

Pre-requisites: None

Excluded combinations: None

Co-requisites: None

Continuing professional development: No

Professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements: None

Part 2: Description

Overview: This Social Theory module will be organized thematically, each thematic block introducing key theorists and theories of modern society.

The module taught sessions engage directly with key social theorists and applying these theorists' ideas to selected real world problems.

The module will provide a bridge between the first year module Foundations in

Social Theory and a range of theoretically informed third year optional modules, in addition to the project/placement module.

Features: Not applicable

Educational aims: This module has been developed to facilitate and support the acquisition of subject knowledge, sociological understanding and a range of practical and intellectual skills. At this level students are expected to generate ideas through the analysis of concepts at an abstract level with a command of specialised skills and the formulation of responses to well-defined and abstract problems: analyse and evaluate information; exercise significant judgement across a broad range of functions; and accept responsibility for achieving personal and group outcomes.

Outline syllabus: The syllabus will typically include:

Culture:

Key Theorists: Frankfurt School

Indicative topic areas:

Popular culture

Consumption

Media

Urbanism:

Key Theorists: Simmel and the Chicago School

Indicative Topic Areas:

Urban conflict and struggle

The Global/Postmodern City

Night-time economy

Social Class and Inequality:

Key Theorists: Pierre Bourdieu, Diane Reay.

Indicative Topic Areas:

Social mobility and meritocracy

Social class and education

Social class and health.

Feminism, Family and Intimacy:

Key Theorists: Talcott Parsons, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Kate Millet, Heidi Hartmann.

Indicative topic Areas:

The Human family

The Changing Family

Families of Choice

Race and Ethnicity:

Key Theorists – John Rex, Kenan Malik and Patricia Hill Collins (examples not set in stone)

Indicative Topic Areas:

Genetics, Scientific Racism

Multiculturalism

Intersectionality

Power, Government and Citizenship:

Key theorist: Michel Foucault

Indicative Topic Areas:

Carceral Society

Migration and Population

Sexuality

There are also a series of areas that we see as additional as well as desirable for the module but these areas could be substituted for any of those above on the basis of staff availability year on year and would give us some flexibility to reorganise course content in case of staff illness or research leave. These extra areas are:

Environment, Nature and Risk

Key Theorist: Ulrich Beck, Vandana Shiva

Indicative Topic Areas:

Industrialization, Reflexivity and Risk

The Environment and Identity

Contested Natures

Economy, Work and Technology:

Key Theorist: David Harvey

Indicative Topic Areas:

Global supply chains

Informational Economy

The Precariat

Social Protest and Social Movements:

Key Theorists: Post-industrial society theory (Castells, Melucci, Gorz, Bell)

Indicative topic areas:

Old and new social movements

Global Justice Movement

Nationalism and the Far Right

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: The module will be organized thematically, but each thematic block will introduce key theorists and theories of modern society. The module will be organized into six blocks comprising a lecture introducing key theorists and theory followed by topic areas that allow the theories to be applied, analysed and evaluated.

The module will provide a bridge between the level one social theory module that is focussed on classical sociology and theory-based level three option modules that focus on postmodern and post-structuralist theories and debates.

The module will be delivered via 1-hour weekly lectures, 1 hour weekly seminars and a 1 hour session for book review groups.

Module Learning outcomes: On successful completion of this module students will achieve the following learning outcomes.

MO1 Evaluate theoretical and conceptual approaches of Sociological theoretical paradigms

MO2 Reflexively apply theoretical and conceptual understandings to aspects of contemporary society, and from the global to the local

MO3 Use information-gathering skills necessary to successfully completing the assessments

MO4 Effectively communicate, across a range of assessment types, an applied but critical understanding of theoretical positions in the Sociological canon

Hours to be allocated: 300

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 228 hours

Face-to-face learning = 72 hours

Reading list: The reading list for this module can be accessed at [readinglists.uwe.ac.uk](https://rl.talis.com/3/uwe/lists/02BA4BD2-5915-78AF-D194-EAFCB3D44AC0.html?lang=en-GB&login=1) via the following link <https://rl.talis.com/3/uwe/lists/02BA4BD2-5915-78AF-D194-EAFCB3D44AC0.html?lang=en-GB&login=1>

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy:

Assessment Task 1: An extended book review (1500 words maximum) which will enable students to display their knowledge of the source and their critical evaluation of it. Each book selected will be linked to a key theme addressed within the module eg. class, culture etc.

Assessment Task 2: A self reflective essay (1500 words maximum) which will encourage students to situate themselves within the theories presented and give them the opportunity to apply theory to their own real life contexts of for example, gender, class, employment, environment, etc.

Formative Assessment:

Students will have the opportunity to discuss plans of their summative assessment with the relevant module lecturers within and beyond the workshops, and will receive ongoing formative input in the context of discussion within the seminars.

Assessment tasks:**Written Assignment (First Sit)**

Description: 1500 word book review

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO3, MO4

Reflective Piece (First Sit)

Description: Self-reflective essay (1500 words maximum)

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO2, MO3, MO4

Written Assignment (Resit)

Description: 1500 word book review

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO3, MO4

Reflective Piece (Resit)

Description: Self reflective essay (1500 words maximum)

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO2, MO3, MO4

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Sociology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2022-23

Sociology with Psychology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2024-25

Criminology and Sociology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2024-25

Sociology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2024-25

Sociology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2024-25

Criminology and Sociology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2024-25

Sociology with Psychology [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2024-25

Sociology with Psychology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2024-25

Sociology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2024-25

Criminology and Sociology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2024-25

Criminology and Sociology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2025-26

Sociology with Psychology [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2024-25

Sociology with Psychology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2024-25

Sociology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2024-25

Criminology and Sociology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2022-23

Sociology with Psychology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2022-23

Sociology with Psychology [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2025-26

Sociology with Psychology [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2025-26

Criminology and Sociology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2025-26

Criminology and Sociology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2025-26

Sociology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2022-23

Sociology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2024-25

Sociology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2025-26

Sociology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2025-26

Sociology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2024-25

Sociology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2025-26

Sociology with Psychology [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2024-25

Sociology with Psychology [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2025-26

Sociology with Psychology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2022-23

Sociology with Psychology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2024-25

Criminology and Sociology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2022-23

Sociology with Psychology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2022-23