



Tudor Grange

Academy Worcester Sixth Form

A-level Sociology Course Guide and Revision Guidance



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Academy Worcester

Sociology

What is Sociology?

Introduction -

Sociology is an immensely challenging and exciting discipline.

- Sociology is the study of human society.
- The study of relationships between groups such as friends and role models.
- The study of social institutions such as family and school.
- The study of social processes that occur such as racism and sexism.

When you study sociology at Rivington and Blackrod High School and Sixth form. You will acquire the knowledge and skills to analyse society in the United Kingdom in the 21st century. You will also gain an understanding of the theories and concepts that form a key part of the current debate about contemporary society and the critical changes taking place.

Sociology will help you make sense of your own experiences and will give you new ways of seeing the social world around you. You will also develop the necessary skills to enable you to assess and evaluate different views and reach conclusions about society, based on a careful consideration of evidence.

You will also develop skills of objective and analytical writing, critical -thinking, discussion and debate. Sociology is a highly valued subject and prepares students for a variety of courses at higher education.

You will also leave the course with skills of use in many careers.

Law • Journalism • Education • Media • Social Work • Market Research • Human Resource • Youth Services • Politics • Social Policy Planning • Probation • Advertising • Criminology • Academic Research • Police

My aim in the Sociology Department is to develop interested and thoughtful sociologists. You are expected to work hard, contribute in every lesson and undertake all of the work required. You will be supported and encouraged to develop the skills of an independent learner.

You will....

- Arrive at lessons on time and ready to learn
- Keep an organized file of notes
- Contribute in class discussions and team tasks
- Listen without prejudice to the view of others and enter into debate without making issues personal
- Ask for help when you need it
- Stick to deadlines
- Catch up on any work missed

In return your teacher will...

- Set challenging tasks that will help you to develop your sociological imagination
- Mark your work and provide feedback that will enable you to progress
- Monitor your progress to ensure that you reach or exceed your target
- Be available by email and in person to discuss any issues raised
- Support you to become an independent learner

Homework - You can expect to receive 2-3 hours of structured homework a week. You are also expected to do at least 2 hours of wider reading a week (whilst this may not be monitored if you do not do this your success will be limited).

A level courses are structured to prepare you for further study at university. All university courses require you to be independent learners able to self-motivate and study beyond the work set by your tutors.

You are also expected to complete wider reading around the topic you are studying.

Refer to the end of the document and additional articles + reading online. The examiners expect you to be able to relate sociological concepts to current news events. It is advised that you look at a news website every day or read a quality newspaper. You are required to **keep an organized file of work**. This should include your classwork, marked homework and notes made from your **own independent study**.

AQA Sociology - Specification Summary

Paper 1 Education with Theory and Methods	Paper 2 Topics in Sociology	Paper 3 Crime with Theory and Methods
Education: • 4 marks - Outline two • 6 mark - Identify three • 10 mark - Applying material from Item ?, analyse two • 30 mark - Assess the claim Methods in Context: 20 marks — Evaluate the strengths and limitations of a method in studying an area of education. Theory and Methods: 10 marks — Outline two	Family and Households • 10 mark Outline two • 10 marks Applying material from Item?, analyse two • 20 mark Assess the claim Media: • 10 mark Outline two • 10 marks Applying material from Item?, analyse two • 20 mark Assess the claim	Crime and Deviance: • 4 marks Outline two • 6 mark Identify three • 10 mark Applying material from Item ?, analyse two • 30 mark Assess the claim Theory and Methods: 10 marks — Outline two 20 Marks – Evaluate
Exam: 2 hours 80 marks 33% of A-Level	Exam: 2 hours 80 marks 33% of A-Level	Exam: 2 hours 80 marks 33% of A-Level

PAPER 1

Education

Students are expected to be familiar with sociological explanations of the following content:

- the role and functions of the education system, including its relationship to the economy and to class structure
- differential educational achievement of social groups by social class, gender and ethnicity in contemporary society
- relationships and processes within schools, with particular reference to teacher/pupil relationships, pupil identities and subcultures, the hidden curriculum, and the organisation of teaching and learning
- the significance of educational policies, including policies of selection, marketisation and privatisation, and policies to achieve greater equality of opportunity or outcome, for an understanding of the structure, role, impact and experience of and access to education; the impact of globalisation on educational policy.

Methods in Context

Students must be able to apply sociological research methods to the study of education.

Theory and Methods

Students must examine the following areas:

- quantitative and qualitative methods of research; research design
- sources of data, including questionnaires, interviews, participant and non-participant observation, experiments, documents and official statistics
- the distinction between primary and secondary data, and between quantitative and qualitative data
- the relationship between positivism, interpretivism and sociological methods; the nature of 'social facts'
- the theoretical, practical and ethical considerations influencing choice of topic, choice of method(s) and the conduct of research
- consensus, conflict, structural and social action theories
- the concepts of modernity and post-modernity in relation to sociological theory
- the nature of science and the extent to which Sociology can be regarded as scientific
- the relationship between theory and methods
- debates about subjectivity, objectivity and value freedom
- the relationship between Sociology and social policy.

PAPER 2

Family and Households

Families and Households

Students are expected to be familiar with sociological explanations of the following content:

- the relationship of the family to the social structure and social change, with particular reference to the economy and to state policies
 - changing patterns of marriage, cohabitation, separation, divorce, childbearing and the life course, including the sociology of personal life, and the diversity of contemporary family and household structures
 - gender roles, domestic labour and power relationships within the family in contemporary society
 - the nature of childhood, and changes in the status of children in the family and society
 - demographic trends in the United Kingdom since 1900: birth rates, death rates, family size, life expectancy, ageing population, and migration and globalisation.
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Media

Students are expected to be familiar with sociological explanations of the following content:

- the new media and their significance for an understanding of the role of the media in contemporary society
- the relationship between ownership and control of the media
- the media, globalisation and popular culture
- the processes of selection and presentation of the content of the news
- media representations of age, social class, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and disability
- the relationship between the media, their content and presentation, and audiences.

PAPER 3

Crime

Students are expected to be familiar with sociological explanations of the following content:

- crime, deviance, social order and social control
- the social distribution of crime and deviance by ethnicity, gender and social class, including recent patterns and trends in crime
- globalisation and crime in contemporary society; the media and crime; green crime; human rights and state crimes
- crime control, surveillance, prevention and punishment, victims, and the role of the criminal justice system and other agencies.

Theory and Methods

Students must examine the following areas:

- quantitative and qualitative methods of research; research design
- sources of data, including questionnaires, interviews, participant and non-participant observation, experiments, documents and official statistics
- the distinction between primary and secondary data, and between quantitative and qualitative data
- the relationship between positivism, interpretivism and sociological methods; the nature of 'social facts'
- the theoretical, practical and ethical considerations influencing choice of topic, choice of method(s) and the conduct of research
- consensus, conflict, structural and social action theories
- the concepts of modernity and post-modernity in relation to sociological theory
- the nature of science and the extent to which Sociology can be regarded as scientific
- the relationship between theory and methods
- debates about subjectivity, objectivity and value freedom
- the relationship between Sociology and social policy.

Command Terms - what do they mean?

Outline- means to set out the main characteristics/features and say how relevant to the question. It is important to make sure that the characteristics are different enough to each other (distinct characteristics that don't overlap). It is good practice to write the points separately so that it is clear to the examiner that they are separate points. Outlining 2 or 3 factors or reasons for 4 or 6 marks should only require a sentence or two each. Use 'leading to' or 'therefore' or 'so' to make sure the point links to the question.

E.g. outline three characteristics of the globalization of culture

"global products such as McDonalds are now found worldwide and so everyone can consume similar food (a part of culture)" (plus 2 more).

Outline and explain- means to set out the main characteristics/features and develop the purpose of the argument or the reasons behind the argument. There are AO2 and AO3 in these 10 mark questions so application, analysis and evaluation is also required even though the question does not explicitly ask for these. Relevant studies/sociologists and contemporary examples should be included. For each reason one or two paragraphs are needed. Again, make sure that the

characteristics are different enough. Using 'because' or 'so' leads the examiner to the explanation.

E.g. Outline and explain two factors inside schools that may contribute to the formation of an ideal pupil identity. (10 marks).

One factor that contributes to the formation of an ideal pupil identity is separating students into different streams. Ball's study in 1981 found that grouping by ability or social classes can lead to greater social class inequalities, lower self-esteems, worse grades and anti-school subcultures. However, for the pupils in the higher ability streams, it can lead to the pupils having more confidence, working better and mostly forming the pro-school subcultures. The pro-school subcultures are the ideal pupil identities as they are often compliant with school rules and teacher's demands, attentive, hardworking and more capable students. Sociologists view streaming as a form of institutionalised labelling as it has a huge impact on students' educational achievement. The educational triage can also link to this streaming theory as Gillborn and Youdell in 2001 claim that there are three streams that affect and differ with how much the teachers encourage and provide extra help. The middle-class students are grouped in the higher ability streams and given extra help and support compared to the lower streams with the working-class and lower ability students who are labelled as 'hopeless'. This means the top streams will be the best students and for most of the ideal pupil groups.

Applying material from the item - requires the use of the item to decide how useful/relevant it is to understanding the theory/concept outlined in the question.

Analyse – means to separate information into components (smaller parts that come together to make up the point/theory/concept/study) and identify their characteristics. Analysis requires consideration of the relevance/generalizability of the point too - bringing in other theories/concepts/studies if relevant (use 'however' ...).

E.g. Analyse two reasons why it might be difficult for sociologists to investigate the extent of state crimes.

"The first reason is that government can cover up state crimes (as referred to in the item). Researchers often have to rely on secondary data such as victim reports or news articles, which may be subjective and therefore not valid. Governments have the power to hide information through the laws they make such as the official secrets Act. In less democratic countries researchers may face imprisonment or torture for trying to find out information on state crimes, for example North Korea. In totalitarian states the media is also controlled by the government therefore the extent to which state crimes can be investigated is made virtually impossible"

Evaluate – means to judge from the available evidence (strengths and weaknesses). Come to a proper backed up conclusion.

E.g. evaluate sociologist's contribution to our understanding of the ownership and control of the media.

"Pluralists would argue that the audience controls the media through their market power – they choose which media to consume and therefore the media companies must cater for their needs. However in contrast Marxist sociologists point to the power that is concentrated in 6 major companies. Marxists disagree with pluralists and claim that the bourgeoisie own and control the media. For example, the public is encouraged to believe in the false needs in advertisements, music videos, and celebrity's lives that encourages capitalism for the benefit of the bourgeoisie."

Assessment Objectives

AO1 (around 46% of A-Level)
<u>Knowledge and Understanding of:</u> - sociological theories, concepts and evidence - sociological research methods This involves you showing you understand sociological theories, concepts and research. You need to write about the studies and concepts that you have learnt, using definitions where appropriate. You can mention relevant issues in the news related to the topic.
AO2 (around 31% of A-Level)
<u>Application of:</u> sociological theories, concepts, evidence and research methods to a range of issues Here you need to show how the knowledge that you have mentioned is relevant to the question. It is important to not just brain dump what you know about a subject but make each point relevant to answering the question. You may present evidence from society or research to back up/illustrate the link to the question. Use 'this suggests that' to show research to show that what you are talking about supports one side of the argument you're creating.
AO3 (around 23% of A-Level)
<u>Analysis and Evaluation of:</u> - sociological theories, concepts, evidence and research methods in order to: - present arguments - make judgements - draw conclusions This requires the ability to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of sociological theories and evidence, and reach conclusions based on the evidence and arguments presented. Arguments should be balanced, showing both sides and conclusions must be made base on the evidence presented. The writing should be like a discussion/debate about the topic, not just lists of strengths and weaknesses.

Essay Writing in Sociology

Writing using PEELE paragraphs is recommended as it provides in-depth detail and allows you to adequately develop on your points.

PEELE Paragraphs in Sociology

For AO1: Knowledge and Understanding	For AO2: Application	For AO3: Analysis and Evaluation
The PEELE paragraph allows you to explain your knowledge in depth with a range of examples. POINT: This shows the examiner that you understand the question.	The PEELE paragraph allows you to show that you can link sociological content to a given context. EVIDENCE: Providing evidence allows you to show that you can apply sociological concepts to the real world. You can	The PEELE paragraph allows you to show that you understand the meaning or the limitations and strengths of various sociological concepts. EXPLAIN: You can show that you know what the point and evidence you have given mean for society.

• You can show off your knowledge as you identify a range of points which link to the question. • This allows you to set us the theme of the consequent paragraph. • It allows you to organise your essay in a way which flows clearly.	use examples from the news or documentaries, or an everyday scenario which demonstrates your point. • You can use statistics to show the prevalence of the point you are trying to make. • You can include evidence from sociologists to back up what you are trying to say. • You can apply key concepts to your paragraphs which show the examiner that you know your stuff.	• You can sate 'this shows that...' this means that...' • You can show your knowledge of strengths/weaknesses LINK: You link your paragraph to the question to show you have understood it.
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Sentence Starters to Support your 'PEELE' Paragraphs when evaluating

Point	Example/Evidence	Explanation	Link to Question
One problem is...	For example...	This shows that...	Consequently...
One weakness is...	For instance...	This would suggest that...	Subsequently...
One positive feature is...	One example of this...	From this, it can be seen...	As a result...
One criticism is...	This was shown by...	These findings show...	In summary...
One issue is...	This was demonstrated by...	This is a problem because...	The implication of this is...
	This can be seen in...	One explanation of this is...	This raises the issue of...
	This was criticised by...	One reason for this could be...	If this is the case, then...
	This was supported by...	This is a problem because...	If this is correct, then...
		This supports/rejects X because...	If this is incorrect then...
			This strengthens...
			This weakens...

AO2 – The Importance of Current, Contemporary Examples

- In order to obtain high marks in the exams, you need to demonstrate that you have a good sociological awareness.
- This involves keeping up to date with current affairs and developments in the real world.
- The best way to do this is to regularly watch the news and read the newspaper (or newspaper apps) and keep a bank of ideas.
- Another way to do this is by watching relevant documentaries and films (of which there are loads) and taking detailed notes.
- In your folder have a sections of all the articles and notes from documentaries you have found and then when you come to write essays you have a range of contemporary links.

- We will do a lot of this in lessons to, but the more of your own you have – the more you stand out.

AO3 - Evaluation in Sociology

Adding a 'however' statement at the end of your 'PEEL' paragraph to provide a critique (or provide support) for the point you have just made. This can be done after each point you make and it is therefore easy to show you have been evaluative.

Mini Evaluation Paragraph

Providing a more extensive evaluation paragraph (of about 4-5 sentences) which critiques the previous 'PEELE' paragraph you have made in more depth. Allows you to explore a range of issues that shows your ability to evaluate a theory in a more complex way.

The Smart Ass Paragraph

Towards the end of the essay (before the conclusion) write a paragraph which challenges the ideas that you have presented earlier in the essay. This can be used in conjunction with the other two types of evaluation, but this allows you to think more deeply about the concepts in the question in relation to sociology as a whole. This shows the examiner that you are a 'Smart Ass' and that you know your stuff.

- Is there anything that you can use from the real world to support/critique what you have said? *(Think about the news/current affairs)*
- How has society changed since the theory idea was written? *(Is there relevance to what has been said? Have developments made the theory outdated?)*
- Is the theory missing out any key elements? *(What does the specific theory overlook, oversimplify or in what ways must you handle the theory with care?)*
- Can the question be questioned? *(How can you provide critique of the words in the question, or the arguments presented in the question/item?)*

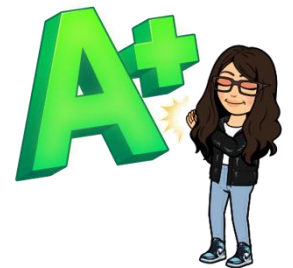
Things to consider when evaluating...

Is the concept/argument still relevant? <i>How old is the theory/research? What was the historical context of it being produced? How has society changed and developed over time?</i>
How would another theory view this idea/argument/perspective? <i>Use one theory to evaluate another. E.g. How does Pluralism challenge Marxism, how does Feminism challenge Functionalism?</i>
What evidence/methodology is this based on and what problems does it raise? <i>Is the evidence valid/reliable/representative?</i>
Is there cross-cultural variation? <i>Is the idea/theory relevant to all societies? Are the arguments ethnocentric?</i>
Is there a division in thinking in an idea? <i>Is there a debate between two aspects? E.g. Internal vs. External</i>
Is the concept contested? Are there questions over its meaning/definition? <i>E.g. what is our understanding of health and illness? How does this change our understanding of health sociology?</i>
Has the theory had an impact? <i>Has the theory provided practical solutions to social problems?</i>
What has the theory ignored? <i>Has it left out aspects which other theories explain? How is this a limitation?</i>
Is there a gender/ethnicity/class/age/disability dimension that the theory/argument has left out?

Is there a social group which is 'invisible' in terms of research? E.g. Disability and access to healthcare

Effective Essay writing

- Read the question carefully
- Underline key words in the question and keep checking that they are being dealt with in your answer
- Make a brief plan before you start writing
- Write a short introduction linking key aspects of the question, defining any key words and saying what your essay will do
- Structure each paragraph as PEEEL (point, evidence, explain and analyse how your evidence supports your point, evaluation, link)
- Each paragraph should deal with a different concept or theory (e.g., Marxist view of education then functionalist view of education).
- Use evidence and examples – from current society and examples in the books.
- Use good grammar and punctuation- check spellings!!
- Use connectives in your writing- therefore, in addition, similarly, furthermore, in relation..... Have a small conclusion with your main points and a link back to the question – don't just repeat though – add a twist (e.g. difficulty of research in that area).
- Most importantly ANSWER THE QUESTION!!!!!!



Essay Format

10 markers – 2 paragraphs

20 markers – 3/4 paragraphs plus introduction and conclusion

30 markers – 5/6 paragraphs plus introduction and conclusion
Introduction Introduce key words/concepts/theories that will be discussed in the essay.

Conclusion Answer the question! Rewrite the question and explain which perspective was the most convincing – not your opinion. You can add a twist, e.g. factors not already applied in question.

Study Skills:

Spaced study is a system of studying that is structured and helps you not only prepare for the lessons but also to reflect on your learning. It is a 5 step process and requires you to be conscientious and actually follow the steps in order for it to be effective.



Remember that this is not revision but study, for revision use the spaced revision system. It is a good idea to work out when you are going to do each of the steps within your free periods so that you stay focused and can use your evenings for prep work.

Step 1 - 30min Lesson prep/review Read the appropriate pages of the textbook /article

Step 2 - Step 2 go to your lesson

Step 3 - Within 24hrs 30 - 40 Min Lesson review, Summarise your notes into a trigger sheet, first from memory, then fill in the gap with your notes / textbook

Step 4 - Checkpoint Look back over your trigger sheet; identify any areas which are not clear, write down questions for your teacher, read back over those areas.

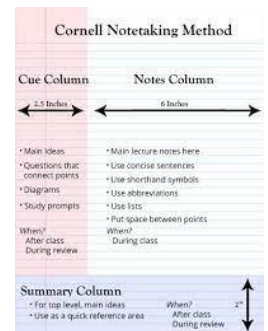
Step 5 – 20-30 Min Exam Practice Create an essay plan for questions linked to this area. Write out one or two paragraphs to check understanding and structure.

Note taking

Note taking can be done in a number of formats but should allow for additional notes to be added during the lessons.

Cornell Notes - The Cornell notes system breaks down your notes in to the assessment objectives for your course. AO1 – Knowledge and understanding
AO2 – Application AO3 – Analysis and Evaluation.

- In the prep reading phase notes are taken in one colour with questions being added to the left hand column for discussion in the lesson or with the teacher. Key words and definitions are in the right hand column so that they are linked to context.
- During the lesson the notes can be added to in a different colour to indicate what knowledge came when. Questions can be crossed off as they are answered in the lesson or can be asked during the process of the lesson.
- The summary box will be filled in after the lesson.



Mind mapping notes can be done in a number of ways. One is to have each branch as one of the assessment objectives, or to have each key theory as a new layer of the MindMap.

- Prep notes can be taken down in one colour and added to in a second.



Doodle notes or visual notes are a more artistic style of note taking. It involves using graphics and drawings as triggers as well representations of the notes. They do not have to be neat but are a way to identify important information, key words and concepts in a way that you are able to remember.

As doodle pages are designed to be messy it means adding new / more information during the lesson won't ruin what you have already done.



Bullet point note taking is probably the most common form. In this system you are summarising the key points of your reading to single sentence bullet points which are then highlighted to indicate the different assessment objectives, key terms or concepts. These can then be annotated and added to in the lesson with information and examples.



more

Use revision cards, include all the assessment objectives and use to make plans for exam questions or working with a peer to test each other.

essay

News: In order to be successful and achieve the highest grades you will need to know about the wider world beyond the textbooks.

Examiners want you to be able to use contemporary examples of events and trends in society in the UK and beyond. One of the easiest ways of consume the news is to use social media to follow account such as the guardian and channel 4 news. Just make sure you are using trusted sources and not being misled by fake news that may be shared by friends. Read with a critical eye and try to link with the sociology course.

Useful Websites

www.aqa.co.uk/subjects/sociology

www.sociologytwynham.com

www.tutor2u.com/sociology

www.resourcd.co.uk

www.getrevising.co.uk

www.advancealevel.co.uk/sociology

www.s-cool.co.uk/a-level/sociology

www.studywise.co.uk/a-level-revision/sociology/

www.revisesociology.com/

www.britsoc.co.uk/

www.ons.gov.uk/

www.youtube.com/channel/UC2YEGWfZ0lihoOD7JNkDx2g/videos



TEAMS- Lessons and resources will be added to here

There are also multiple podcasts that you can listen to which will support you're a-Level in sociology as well as your knowledge and understanding of current affairs.

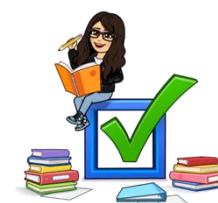
Films, TV Shows and Documentaries

Crime and Deviance Jamie Bulger - A Mother's Story Louis Behind Bars Ross Kemp on Gangs Bowling for Columbine Sex Drugs & Murder: Life in the red light zone (talks about the various issues relating to drug taking, position of women within crime and management strategies for crime) (BBC3) I am Jane Doe (Netflix - trafficking documentary) (Nefflix)	Education Too Poor for Posh School (Cutting Edge) Education Essex/Yorkshire etc... The History Boys (movie) Excluded - Kicked out of School (BBC) Tough Young Teachers (BBC) Dear Sir with Love (old movie) Black is the New Black (Education episode- BBC) Stacey Dooley Investigates ... Worlds worst place to be a woman (BBC) School Swap
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Louis Theroux : Amongst Sex Offenders (Netflix) Children of God (Netflix) Girlhood (Netflix) Cocaine (Netflix) Reggie Yates in a Texan Jail (BBC) Stacey Dooley Investigates ... Saving the cyber sex girls (BBC) Stacey Dooley Investigates ... Mums selling their kids into sex (BBC) I am Slave (Netflix) E-Team (Netflix)	<u>General Sociological Topics</u> Suffragette This is England Train Spotting Riot Club The Help Hidden Figures Pride Civil Liberties East is East Made in Dagenham American Beauty Of Mice and Men The Iron Lady Louis Theroux
<u>The Media</u> I am Jane Doe (Netflix - trafficking documentary) Miss Representation (Netflix) E-Team (Netflix) Outfoxed The Social Network Catfish Control Room	<u>Family and Households</u> Alice and her six dads- YouTube One Man, Six wives and 29 Children- YouTube 17 Kids and Counting 112 Weddings Professor Green- Living in poverty A private Violence- Amazon prime A dangerous Love- YouTube How Does Childhood differ between traditional societies and modern societies- YouTube Overpopulated- YouTube

Books

- The Five – Rubenhold
- Why I'm no longer talking to white people about race-
- Fifty shades of feminism
- Chavs- O. Jones
- The Help- K. Stockett
- The Spirit Level – Wilkinson and Pickett
- No Logo- N. Klien
- Half the Sky - Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn
- Sense of Freedom J. Boyle
- The Millstone – M. Drabble
- One Flew Over the Cuckoo's nest - Ken Kesey
- Watching the English – Kate Fox
- Gang leader for a day - Sudhir Venkatesh
- Black Like Me- J. Howard Griffin
- To Kill a Mocking Bird - Harper Lee



Finally... I am your Sociology Teacher – MISS BIRCH.

If you have any questions or need support at any point throughout the duration of the course, you can contact me on my email below:

Dbirch@worcs.tgacademy.org.uk