

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Psychology and Sociology in Health Care

Unit code: DR3T 34

Unit purpose: This Unit should enable candidates to understand psychological theories of individual development and sociological theories and concepts, in relation to health issues today. Candidates should be able to apply these theories to health issues in a practice setting.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- 1 Explain psychological theories of individual development and discuss how these can be used to understand the health of an individual today.
- 2 Explain sociological theories and demonstrate the relationship between social factors and health.

Credit points and level: 1 HN Credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Candidates should have good communication skills, both written and oral. These can be evidenced either by the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications for example Higher English or a qualification equivalent to SCQF level 6 or by the completion of a pre-course interview part of which could take the form of a written assignment. The skills to undertake this Unit could also be demonstrated through an employer's reference or the process of application and interview. In addition to this candidates should preferably have undertaken some work experience, paid or voluntary, in a health care setting.

Core Skills: There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of Communication at SCQF level 5 and Problem Solving at SCQF level 5 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

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Unit title: Psychology and Sociology in Health Care

Assessment: The Unit should be assessed by instruments of assessment for each Outcome. One essay relates to individual development and the other relates to sociological theory.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Psychology and Sociology in Health Care

Unit code: DR3T 34

The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Explain two psychological theories of individual development and how these theories relate to health care today

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Psychoanalytic theory
- ◆ Behaviourist theory
- ◆ Psycho social theory
- ◆ Humanistic theory
- ◆ Personality theory

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ Investigate and explain two theories of individual development. Evidence will be presented to demonstrate that two theories have been reviewed and understood. The evidence should show an ability to explain how the health of an individual can be understood in relation to the chosen theories.

Assessment guidelines

Assessment for Outcomes 1 and 2 should be carried out separately. Outcome 1 could be assessed by an essay and should be no more than 1,200 words.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Psychology and Sociology in Health Care

Outcome 2

Explain two sociological theories and the relationship between social factors and health

Knowledge and/or skills

Theoretical perspectives:

- ◆ Functionalism
- ◆ Conflict theory
- ◆ Social action theory
- ◆ Feminism

Factors:

- ◆ Introduction to epidemiology
- ◆ Health issues/problems in contemporary society
- ◆ Socio-economic factors
- ◆ Culture/lifestyle

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ Investigate and review two sociological theories and show an understanding of sociological explanations of aspects of society.
- ◆ Identify a health issue and select sociological factors and perspectives that will show an ability to clearly explain the relationship between social factors and health in contemporary society.

Assessment guidelines

Assessment for Outcomes 1 and 2 should be carried out separately. Outcome 2 could be assessed by an essay and should be no more than 1,200 words.

Administrative Information

Unit code: DR3T 34

Unit title: Psychology and Sociology in Health Care

Superclass category: PK

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Version	Description of change	Date

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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Psychology and Sociology in Health Care

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit is intended to provide candidates with an insight into the psychological and sociological factors that contribute to the health of an individual and to society in general. This Unit should complement the content of other Units in the HNC Allied Health Professions and the HNC Health Care; in particular Physiology for Health Care Professionals that looks at physical body function and the Healthcare Policy Unit in the HNC Allied Health Professions which looks at dimensions of health. This Unit will enable candidates to consider in detail how factors relating to individual development and wider society can also affect health. Candidates should be given an overview of behavioural science theory and related concepts to enable them to select theories for further investigation and review. Examples of how health issues, eg coronary heart disease or depression can be understood using knowledge from psychological and sociological perspectives should be provided to allow candidates to see the application of theory. Candidates should be encouraged to select a health issue that has relevance for people in the client groups with whom they would like to work. It is recommended that the candidate uses the same health issue and applies both psychological and sociological knowledge to demonstrate understanding of the issue from both perspectives.

Outcome 1

Psychoanalytic theory: a condition such as anxiety could be examined using this approach and the use of defence mechanisms in relation to coping with loss could be discussed.

Psychology should be defined as a field of scientific study of human behaviour and this can be compared with common sense explanations of behaviour or 'pop psychology' which attempts to explain behaviour in very simple terms.

This Outcome should develop an understanding of how psychology has developed and grown as a body of knowledge to help explain individual behaviour. Health should be discussed as a subjective concept ie 'you are as healthy as you feel'. Consideration can be given to differences that personality, risk taking behaviour or coping strategies can influence health. It is suggested that candidates be introduced to theory in relation to the perspectives listed.

- ◆ psychoanalytic theory
- ◆ behaviourist theory
- ◆ psycho social theory
- ◆ humanistic theory
- ◆ personality theory (trait/type theory)

It is not intended that all the theories listed should be examined in detail but candidates should be aware of the range of perspectives and the basic concepts from these perspectives.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Psychology and Sociology in Health Care

Candidates should understand that different theoretical approaches offer different insights into human behaviour. For example:

- ◆ Psychoanalytical theory: a condition such as anxiety could be examined using this approach and the use of defence mechanisms in relation to coping with loss could be discussed.
- ◆ Behaviourist theory: shaping desired behaviour, goal setting and the use of reinforcement could be discussed. Development of Social Learning Theory from this approach could be discussed. Smoking behaviour could be discussed using concepts from these theories.
- ◆ Psycho social theory: the relevance of the social relationships to the development of the individual throughout the lifespan should be discussed. Stage theory with conflict resolution needed at each stage for healthy psycho-social development.
- ◆ Humanistic theory: concept of self-image and self-esteem could be related to eating disorders.
- ◆ Personality theory (trait/type theory) could be discussed in relation to coronary heart disease.

Discussion of the different perspectives will help give some insight into how behaviour can be understood and explained. A link should then be made to demonstrate how current therapeutic approaches use these perspectives as a basis for the different actions that can be taken to improve health. The health issues of the individual should be examined from different theoretical perspective to gain insight into the situation.

This input will enable the candidate to select theoretical perspectives and issues that are of particular interest and facilitate further investigation in preparation for assessment.

Outcome 2

Sociology should be defined as a field of scientific study that aims to examine and explain the social world. The 'sociological imagination' (Mills 1959) should be introduced as a means of studying the structure of society at the same time as the lives of individuals. This can help us to understand 'private troubles' in terms of 'public issues'.

An overview of the theoretical perspectives listed below will provide candidates with an understanding of the different views on how society is constructed and the factors within society that relate to health issues.

- ◆ Conflict theory: the economic structure of society could be discussed and inequalities in health can be examined to demonstrate health Outcomes for people of different status in our society. The role of multi-national pharmaceutical companies can be considered in relation to power and ownership of health promoting products which are not available to everyone.
- ◆ Feminist approach: differences between men and women in terms of patterns of medical consultation and diagnosis could be considered as well as life expectancy. Candidate should give consideration to both sociology and medicine as disciplines, which have developed with a male bias.

In order to form an understanding of health as an issue in society, candidate should be introduced to the following topics:

- ◆ epidemiology
- ◆ health issues/problems in contemporary society

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Psychology and Sociology in Health Care

Candidates should be encouraged to use websites to investigate the current health issues, for example; the Scottish Executive website (www.scotland.gov.uk). This would also provide an opportunity for candidates to explore whether there were particular issues concerning a geographical or biographical population that they would wish to investigate further.

Discussion of the following factors should be detailed and wide ranging to provide candidates with an insight into the ways in which personal health issues can be understood in terms of wider social issues.

- ◆ socio-economic factors
- ◆ culture
- ◆ lifestyle

Health Outcomes should then be examined, eg socio-economic status and life expectancy. The concept of culture and sub-cultures should be discussed in terms of defining norms of behaviour. Candidates should then consider lifestyle factors and the impact of these on the health of a society. Local or national health issues can be compared and contrasted with the issues that affect other areas or parts of the world.

This will enable the candidate to select theoretical perspectives that are of particular interest and facilitate further investigation. Candidates should apply their understanding of social factors and demonstrate how health is affected.

This Unit is likely to form part of a Group Award, which is primarily designed to provide candidates with knowledge and skills to work with people in need of health care. It is intended that this Unit will facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of issues that affect health. In delivering the Unit it will be important to emphasise the benefits to the individual and to society of examining health from a range of perspectives. Topical examples from media sources can be used as case studies for discussion. This will provide opportunities for informal formative assessment and enable candidates to understand the requirements of summative assessment.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

Discussion can be facilitated to enable candidates to examine case studies from both psychological and sociological perspectives using a range of theoretical approaches.

Assessment will be by two instruments of assessment, which will be undertaken following the investigation of relevant perspectives. The assessment will be carried out by assignment. Candidates are encouraged to research more fully than tutor input. Evidence of research material used could be listed in references and bibliography provided by the candidate.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Psychology and Sociology in Health Care

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of Communication at SCQF level 5 and Problem Solving at SCQF level 5 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Communication: written communication could be evidenced by the essays undertaken for both Outcomes.

Problem Solving: could be evidenced by the content of the essays where candidates are asked to analyse how psychological and sociological factors impinge on health.

Open learning

This Unit could be delivered by distance learning. However, it would require planning by the centre to ensure the sufficiency and authenticity of candidate's evidence.

Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Alternative Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs*, which is available on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk.

General information for candidates

Unit title: Psychology and sociology in Health Care

In this Unit you will gain an understanding of psychological theories of individual development and sociological theories and concepts. You will be able to relate both psychological theories and sociological concepts to health issues.

Tutor exposition will include:

Outcome 1

- ◆ psychoanalytic theory
- ◆ behaviourist theory
- ◆ psycho social theory
- ◆ humanistic theory
- ◆ personality theory

Outcome 2

- ◆ functionalism
- ◆ conflict theory
- ◆ social action theory
- ◆ feminism
- ◆ introduction to epidemiology
- ◆ health issues/problems in contemporary society
- ◆ socio-economic factor
- ◆ culture/lifestyle

Assessment Method

Outcome 1 will be assessed by an essay of no more than 1,200 words. This essay should include an explanation of two psychological theories of individual development and how these can be used to understand the health of individuals today.

Outcome 2 will be assessed by an essay of no more than 1,200 words. This essay should include an explanation of two sociological theories and the relationship between social factors and health.