



Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Social Policy and Its Application to Social Services Provision

Unit code: DH3L 34

Superclass: PM

Publication date: August 2004

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 03

Unit purpose

To enable candidates to examine current legislation and policy (government and local) relevant to the social care sector and to enable them to apply these in their day to day practice.

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

- ◆ Examine the general processes involved in shaping and implementing social policy and social care provision.
- ◆ Examine the legislation and policy underpinning social care provision.
- ◆ Examine the legislation and policies that promote the rights and responsibilities of individuals.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Candidates should have good communication skills, both written and oral. These may be evidenced by the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications for example Higher English or a qualification equivalent to SCQF level 5 or by the completion of a pre-course interview part of which could take the form of a written assignment.

While it is not essential for candidates to have work experience in a social care setting, some candidates will have undertaken some real work experience, paid or voluntary, in a care setting.

General information (cont)

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit 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.*

Core Skills

There may be opportunities to gather evidence towards Core Skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

- ◆ Communication: oral and written communication will be evidenced through the candidate's direct work with individuals and groups and through the preparation of written assessments
- ◆ Problem Solving: critical thinking, planning and organising, reviewing and evaluating will be evidenced through supervised practice and written assessments.

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.

This Unit is mandatory for the Group Award HNC Social Care.

Assessment

Specific advice on assessment for this Unit is given for each Outcome. Candidates must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified for each Outcome to pass the Unit.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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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

Examine the general processes involved in shaping and implementing social policy and social care provision.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Key influences on development of legislation and policy
- ◆ The distinction between private problems and public issues
- ◆ Sources of funding
- ◆ Statutory, voluntary and private sectors

Evidence Requirements

Each candidate will be required to evidence that they can provide an accurate and clear examination of the factors influencing the formation of social policy. All knowledge points must be covered.

A candidate's response can be judged to be satisfactory when evidence provided is sufficient to meet the requirements by showing that the candidate is able to:

- ◆ Examine the relationship between private problems, public issues and social policy.
- ◆ Examine the influences on the making of social policy. Four influences should be covered.
- ◆ Describe the sectors of statutory, voluntary and private, and their relationship to each other and their contribution to social care provision. This should include the contribution of unpaid carers.
- ◆ Describe the funding mechanisms for social care services, including the financial contribution of individuals to care services.
- ◆ Show an awareness of the influence of European, National and Local Government on policy.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Assessment guidelines

Evidence may be presented as part of a report or in response to specific questions. The assessment should be no more than 1500 words.

Outcome 1 should be assessed before Outcomes 2 and 3.

Outcome 2

Examine the legislation and policy underpinning social care provision.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Legislation relevant to social care and its impact on social care provision
- ◆ Legislation that promotes rights and responsibilities of individuals
- ◆ Current policy initiatives and their impact on social care provision
- ◆ Processes related to the development of policy and procedure within a social care context
- ◆ Codes of Practice and National Care Standards and how they shape social care provision.

Evidence Requirements

Candidates are required to provide evidence of:

- ◆ An understanding of the main provisions of the key pieces of legislation, including the impact on individuals receiving care, carers and social care workers
- ◆ An understanding of rights, duties and responsibilities
- ◆ Identification of the role of social care workers and other key professionals in relation to the application of 3 pieces of legislation
- ◆ Knowledge of the legislation that influences rights and responsibilities of an identified client group
- ◆ An understanding of the impact of policy on a local social care setting with reference to a particular group of individuals receiving care.
- ◆ Identification of the influences of current social policy on agency procedures
- ◆ Identification of the influence of legislation on the development of agency policies and procedures
- ◆ An understanding of the process involved in drawing up agency procedures
- ◆ An analysis of three policies or procedures and how these influence service delivery
- ◆ Knowledge and/or Skills

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Assessment guidelines

This assessment can be completed in two parts.

Part 1 (covering Evidence Requirements 1-4) could be open-book assessment using a case study and specific questions. This should be undertaken in controlled conditions. The case study could be devised to allow candidates to select three scenarios and three pieces of legislation (from a choice of seven). Each year, two scenarios from the case study could be amended and over the course of four years all the scenarios could be changed. Candidates may bring one page of their own notes to the assessment. This assessment could last around 2½ hours.

Part 2 (covering Evidence Requirements 5-9) could be the write up of a project. A project could be set which allows candidates to address all the Evidence Requirements. Candidates should examine three key policies or procedures of an agency. In examining these, candidates should explore the process of producing a policy/procedure and outline the legislative framework that has led to the production of the policy/procedure. Candidates would require access to the policies and procedures of a social care agency. The project should be no more than 1,500 words.

Outcome 3

Examine key influences on rights and responsibilities and consider the role of quality assurance mechanisms in these processes.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Key policies, charters and other key influences on policies to promote the rights and responsibilities of individuals
- ◆ Examine how quality assurance systems can be used to promote and protect the rights and responsibilities of individuals.

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to produce evidence to show that they can:

- ◆ Identify policies and other key influences on action to promote rights and responsibilities
- ◆ Evaluate the effectiveness of quality assurance systems in the promotion and protection of the rights of individuals – this should include 2 of the following: Registration and Inspection; monitoring; complaints; consultations; Codes of Practice, National Care Standards
- ◆ Evaluate how working to the Codes of Practice will impact on how services are delivered

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Assessment guidelines

Evidence may be presented as a written response to specific questions or as part of a presentation. If this assessment is by group presentation it should be supported by a written summary and portfolio of evidence and the tutor must authenticate each candidate's contribution. Candidates should be asked to evaluate the effectiveness of two quality assurance systems within one social care agency.

This Outcome could also be assessed by an extension to the project work for Outcome 2.

Where possible candidates should provide evidence based on their own workplace.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

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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 designed to give candidates an understanding of the policy and legislative framework in which they practice. Many candidates will be employed in, or have experience of, a social care agency, however current employment in a care setting is not a requirement of the Unit. Candidates will require access to the policies and procedures of a range of social care agencies and centres should undertake preparatory work in relation to this prior to delivering the Unit.

The Unit is expressed in generic terms, but should be related to specific agencies and specific groups of individuals receiving care. For example, candidates working with children and young people should use relevant legislation and policy to illustrate the broad concepts. Candidates not employed in a social care agency should ideally use their placement setting to reflect on the policies and legislation which apply to that group. If this is not possible (eg because of late placement arrangements), then research could be undertaken on a particular group of individuals receiving care.

Outcome 1 should be taught first, as this gives candidates the opportunity to examine general themes and concepts. Outcomes 2 and 3 rely on candidate research and could be taught together. Outcomes 2 and 3 give candidates the opportunity to reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of social care provision in relation to a particular client group.

Outcome 1

This Outcome enables candidates to become familiar with the general influences and processes that influence social policy. Candidates are required to understand the role of the state in social policy and social care provision and to identify the major landmarks since Poor Law reform. The relevance of Victorian approaches to vulnerable people and their relationship to current care provision should be considered. This should include the distinction between 'deserving' and 'undeserving', the stigma of the poorhouse and the move towards and away from institutionalised forms of care. This historical overview is important, and should be covered but in summary fashion. This will allow time to explain in more detail how current legislation and policy which workers must adhere to came from. Candidates should also examine the Beveridge reforms, the influence of the New Right and the Conservative government 1979 – 97 and New Labour's approach to welfare. More recently the influences of 'Changing Lives 21st century review', 'Adults with Incapacity', 'Same as You', GIRFCC, 'In Control' 'Protection of Vulnerable Groups 2007', and changes to legislation in relation to Health should be studied. In examining historical perspectives, candidates should be encouraged to relate the influence of the past to current care provision, including the contributions of the sectors of the mixed economy of care and the funding of care services.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Using the example of one major piece of social care legislation, for example the NHS & Community Care Act 1990 or Children (Scotland) Act 1995, Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001, Community Care and Health (Scotland) Act 2002, candidates should consider the influences on the Act. This will include the process by which private troubles do or do not come to be seen as public issues. Candidates are expected to understand the influence of political trends, pressure groups and consultation with individuals receiving care. The influence of documents such as The Same As You? on care provision should be considered here. Candidates should be aware that application of legislation in the workplace will be inspected by the Care Commission and the fact that the Health Inspection Agency may take over from April 2011. The concept of need is central and should be examined in relation to competing rights and demands, including the pros and cons of the tendering process.

While it is not expected that candidates should cover the separate stages of a Bill becoming an Act of Parliament, an overview of the responsibilities of post-devolution parliaments is required. This could include an examination of different approaches to welfare eg 'free' personal care for older people in Scotland.

Web links suitable for exploring these approaches are:-

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/91931/0021949.pdf> (changing lives)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/children-families/pvglegislation>

<http://www.carecommission.com>

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2000/4/pdfs/asp_20000004_en.pdf (Adults with incapacity)

Outcome 2

It is important that candidates understand the ways in which social policy underpins the making of different pieces of legislation eg The Griffiths Report which preceded the NHS & Community Care Act 1990. By the end of the Outcome candidates should be aware of the key sections of these Acts. They should also know how to access information about legislation and be aware of the differences between rights, duties and responsibilities.

Candidates should look at legislation and policies that promote the rights and responsibilities of individuals. This will be achieved by examining legislation such as The Human Rights Act 1998 as well as specific sections of other key pieces of legislation. As well as understanding legislation, candidates should be able to apply this to practice and consider the effectiveness of legislation, in the light of the many Public Enquiries from which new legislation comes. Some examples of important public enquiries are Baby P, the Kerlaw Enquiry, Ms Z etc, Caleb Ness and the investigation into the Rosebank nursing home fire, etc.

Candidates should be able to consider the legislative framework within which services are delivered. They should also be aware of how legislation impacts on their role and tasks in terms of service delivery. For example the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 will inform the decisions made in the plan of care for the individual, similarly with other client groups.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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It is important that the teaching for this Outcome offers the opportunity to explore local policy and procedure within a workplace setting. Candidates should understand the rationale behind the policy and not just be aware of what the policy says. This Outcome in particular links well to the Protection Unit, and therefore Evidence Requirements from parts of both this and the Protection Unit can be assessed together.

Outcome 3

In this Outcome, candidates look at influences on rights and responsibilities. This will be achieved by examining key policies and charters and the impact they have in meeting rights and responsibilities. Candidates should study key policies and charters in relation to one group of individuals receiving care eg. adults with learning disability, children and young people who are accommodated, older people who receive day services etc.

Quality assurance systems should be investigated. The candidate should be encouraged to explore the full range of quality assurance systems within an agency. This should include Registration and Inspection, monitoring, complaints, consultation with individuals receiving care and the public, and methods of workplace evaluation eg agency development plans.

The National Care Standards and Employee's Codes of Practice should be explored in terms of workplace evaluation and individual worker evaluation. This may include worker appraisal systems. The application of 'whistleblowing' legislation ie the Public Interest Disclosure Act (1998) could also be examined.

The aim of this part of the Outcome is to assist the candidate to consider the various methods available both as an individual and as an agency to ensure individuals' rights are upheld and to consider ways in which the quality of service is maintained.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This Unit is likely to form part of the Group Award HNC Social Care, which is designed to give candidates the knowledge, skills and values required to practice in a social care agency. It would be expected that the candidate would, on completion, be able to have a more objective understanding of social care provision. This should assist the candidate in future progression by helping them to gain knowledge in relation to social policy and quality assurance systems.

It is likely that this Unit will be delivered towards the beginning of the award, for full time candidates prior to placement, so it is important that delivery of the Unit takes account of the need to make explicit links between social policy and social care provision. Candidates who are employed in a social care setting, those on day release, evening or distance learning routes to the award, should be able to provide links between their day to day practice and the content of the Unit.

Links should be made to the impact of discrimination and rights covered in other units of the HNC. All assessments should be properly referenced. The SSSC has learning bytes on its website – these are suitable material for most Units of the HNC.

<http://workforcesolutions.sssc.uk.com/>

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Open learning

This Unit could be delivered by open or distance learning.

For information on normal open learning arrangements, please refer to the SQA guide *Assessment and Quality Assurance of Open and Distance Learning* (SQA, 2000).

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Narrative relating to assessment guidance transferred from Evidence Requirements section to Assessment Guidelines section.	08/05/07
03	Updating of information provided in the Support Notes Section.	11/04/11

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General information for candidates

Unit title: Social Policy and Its Application to Social Services Provision

This Unit is designed to enable you to examine current legislation and policy relevant to the social care field. It will also enable you to relate and apply legislation and policy to your day to day practice.

On completion of this Unit you should be able to:

- ◆ Examine the legislation and policy underpinning social care provision
- ◆ Examine the legislation and policies that promote the rights and responsibilities of individuals
- ◆ Understand the range of quality assurance mechanisms that can be used to ensure quality of service provision is maintained.

A variety of assessment methods will be used in this Unit: projects, case studies, group presentations and extended response questions.