



Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Geography A: The Geography of Inequality

Unit code: FJ39 34

Superclass: RF

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Version: 02

Unit purpose

This unit is designed to introduce candidates to the subject of social/human geography by examining one specific aspect which is particularly relevant to Social Science – inequality. The unit will develop the idea of patterns, introduce candidates to Geographical Methods and Techniques (GMTs) and will develop analytical and evaluative skills by examining and attempting to explain these patterns. It is intended for candidates who have a general interest in Geography as well as those who would use it as the basis for further study.

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

- 1 Identify and describe patterns of inequality.
- 2 Explain inequality from a geographical perspective
- 3 Describe and evaluate strategies for reducing inequality

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Candidates should possess good communication skills and numeracy skills. Other knowledge, skills and experience relevant to the Unit would also be beneficial.

The previous study of Geography through Units and National Qualifications at SCQF Levels 5 or 6, or other similar qualifications, is desirable but not essential.

Ultimately, entry is at the discretion of the centre.

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 are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Communication* at SCQF 6 and *ICT* and *Numeracy* 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.

Assessment

This Unit will be holistically assessed by a single instrument of assessment covering all Unit Outcomes. This will take the form of an open-book assessment covering all unit outcomes.

An exemplar instrument of assessment and marking guidelines has been produced to indicate the national standard of achievement required at SCQF level 7.

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

Identify and describe patterns of inequality

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Patterns of inequality in one areal context
- ◆ Key features of the pattern of inequality

Note: The areal contexts are global; Europe (or other continent); UK; Scotland or a specific area/city. The same areal context should be used for Outcomes 2 and 3.

Outcome 2

Explain inequality from a geographical perspective

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Physical and human factors.
- ◆ The use of GMTs to explain how these factors contribute to inequality

Outcome 3

Describe and evaluate strategies for reducing inequality

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Appropriate strategies for reducing inequality
- ◆ Strengths of strategies
- ◆ Weaknesses of strategies
- ◆ Evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategies

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Geography A: The Geography of Inequality

Evidence Requirements for the Unit

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

- ◆ produce a map showing inequalities for their chosen areal context
- ◆ describe the pattern shown
- ◆ explain the physical and human factors which contribute to the pattern shown
- ◆ describe a minimum of two strategies to reduce inequalities in the chosen areal context (two strategies could be described in depth or several strategies in less depth)
- ◆ Evaluate a minimum of two strategies in terms of their effectiveness in reducing inequalities

This Unit will be holistically assessed by a single open-book instrument of assessment covering all Unit Outcomes. The candidate should be given information eg. table of indicators for the chosen areal context.

The assessment for Outcome 1 is linked with the assessment for Outcomes 2 and 3 by instructing candidates to produce a map showing inequality, describe and explain the pattern of inequality and evaluate strategies for reducing inequality. The same areal context should be used throughout.

Candidates will need to demonstrate that they can use geographical methods and techniques (GMTs) to produce maps showing patterns of inequality in **one** areal context (global, Europe (or other continent), UK, Scotland or a specific area/city), describe and explain these patterns and evaluate strategies to reduce inequalities.

In response to the task set, candidates must convey complex ideas in a well-structured and coherent form.

Regardless of the assessment method chosen, the candidate must submit a bibliography presented in a standard referencing format, such as Harvard.

Assessment Guidelines

There is a wide variety of methods of assessment that would allow candidates to meet the evidence requirements. The following are suggestions and there may be other methods that would be suitable. Centres are reminded that Prior Verification would help to ensure that the national standard is being met.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Geography A: The Geography of Inequality

This assessment could take the form of an open-book essay *or* a set of structured questions with an expected candidate response of approximately 1500 words *or* an individual oral presentation *or* a poster exhibition with expected candidate's response of 10 to 12 minutes in presentation or explanation of poster *or* any other method that is appropriate to meet the evidence requirements. Candidates could also provide the evidence requirements in the form of an individual Blog or creation of a website, with approximately 1500 words.

It is possible to combine the oral presentation with the poster exhibition, where the candidate shows the pattern of inequality in a poster and covers the explanation and strategies in an oral presentation on the same occasion. Where this occurs, the total time for all aspects would be 10 to 12 minutes (rather than 10 to 12 minutes each). See 'Guidance on delivery and assessment' for further details. It is recommended that oral presentations are recorded in some form.

Tutors should make candidates aware of the importance of the judicious selection of appropriate academic sources, as they prepare for production of their response.

NB: It is important that the language used in the assessment instrument reflects SCQF level 7 in each type of task.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Geography A: The Geography of Inequality

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 is one of a suite of Units that covers Geography within HNC/D Social Sciences Group Awards. This unit prepares candidates for *Geography B: Urban Geography*.

This unit can be taught as a free-standing unit or as part of the HNC/D Social Sciences Group Awards.

The aim of this unit is to provide an introduction to the subject of social geography which is particularly relevant to social science and introduces candidates to a geographical perspective and to geographical methods and techniques.

Centres should choose one areal context (eg global; Europe (or other continent); UK, Scotland or there is scope for choosing one particular area or city) depending on preference and/or resources available.

Within the chosen context reference can be made to other contexts as appropriate, for example, if looking at the UK it would be appropriate to discuss the influence of Europe on the wealth of the South East region. This same areal context should be followed through into Outcomes 2 and 3.

It is envisaged that candidates would use statistical /numerical data in order to produce maps showing inequality in the chosen region/country. This would give the opportunity to discuss how inequality is measured in different contexts and a variety of indicators could be examined. This should lead naturally to an analysis of why there is inequality. Consideration of the contribution of both human (political, social, economic) and physical factors should be given. Themes such as health differences, life expectancy, economic/regional development, crime, rural/urban differences etc. could be explored as appropriate.

Finally a number of strategies for reducing inequality should be discussed and evaluated. For example, in a global context the issue of trading inequalities could be solved by fairer trade, cancelling debt in particular countries could be considered as a strategy for reducing poverty etc.

In Europe, regional assistance programmes and in the UK, de-centralisation of political power from London, could be possible strategies to be evaluated.

The uniqueness of a geographical approach should be emphasised throughout so that by the end of the unit candidates have a clear idea of what the subject of Geography is actually about, what a geographical perspective entails and how to use a variety of geographical methods and techniques.

Candidates should also be encouraged to think about how this approach could be used for other topics and how geography can make a valuable contribution to the study of Social Science.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Geography A: The Geography of Inequality

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

There is no single best way to deliver this unit and a variety of approaches could be used which suit the needs of candidates with varied learning styles. Candidates should be encouraged to make use of IT and where appropriate field-work could be incorporated.

Centres should structure the teaching programme to allow time for development of Core Skills and other transferable skills and for assessment practice within the notional hours suggested.

Centres should design an appropriate assessment instrument based on a method that is suitable in allowing candidates to meet the evidence requirements. This can be written or oral (depending on the needs of the candidates and the organisational aspects for the Centre in choosing particular methods). If an oral method is chosen, it is recommended that Centres record this (either by DVD or digital recorder etc.) or provide assessor notes on the presentation for External Verification purposes. Oral presentations (or poster exhibitions) must be done individually as each candidate has to show evidence of meeting all evidence requirements, so a group presentation would not be suitable.

If the Centre is using a Blog or creation of a website as the way of gathering evidence, this should not be in the public domain. Rather it should be on an Intranet or private area of a VLE to reduce the likelihood of plagiarism. Authentication of the candidate's work is essential. It would be helpful to collect notes or PPT presentation materials from the candidate as further evidence of meeting SCQF level 7 in the presentation.

Tutors should make candidates aware of the importance of the judicious selection of appropriate academic sources in researching the topics. They should be encouraged to choose academic sources rather than generic search engines, to enable them to be more confident of information and to be more equipped to progress to SCQF level 8 Units or further study.

A Centre can choose to use a mixture of methods across a cohort, as it may be more suitable for some candidates to give a written response and for others to use an oral method or to create a 'Blog' etc. It is possible to combine the poster exhibition with an oral presentation, where, for example, a candidate may produce a detailed poster of a map showing patterns of inequality and would cover the other two outcomes in an oral presentation using PPT or a mind map as a visual aid. Alternatively, they could cover the pattern and explanation and evaluate strategies as part of a following oral presentation. The time across the whole assessment with all evidence requirements covered would be 10 – 12 minutes (not 10 – 12 minutes each for the poster and for the oral presentation, but rather combining both in the time). They should also be done on the same occasion. Whichever method is chosen the candidates should be allowed access to notes, text books or other materials, as the assessment must be conducted open-book.

Centres should make sure they can authenticate each candidate's work. This may be done by questioning the candidate about their work, by seeing drafts of work under construction, by having partial write-up in presence of an assessor or by using an anti-plagiarism tool, such as Turnitin or SafeAssign, which checks Internet sites.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Geography A: The Geography of Inequality

Remediation should be done by a review of the original work. Candidates should be asked to hand in a complete piece of work, with amendments incorporated in the appropriate context, rather than a large add-on at the end, or asked to fully rewrite their work to a prescribed format if it did not meet requirements. Oral clarification could be used for minor omissions or to clarify minor detail. If it is thought appropriate that a candidate tackle a different topic or question, then that new submission would count as a reassessment.

In oral work, candidates can be questioned by the assessor at the end of their presentation or explanation, where minor omissions occur, or where clarity is required. This would help to reduce the need for reassessment. However, where more work is required to meet the evidence requirements (eg where the quality of evidence is poor in a presentation) another presentation of the same duration, on the same topic or question as the original would be required. Only where a different topic or question is attempted would this be classed as reassessment.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

The delivery and assessment of this Unit may contribute towards the development of the Core Skills of *Communication*, *Numeracy* and *ICT*. It can also support the development of other transferable skills, such as, essay writing, referencing, citation and bibliography skills and thinking, analytical and critical skills.

It is possible to develop **Communication at SCQF level 6** if the assessment takes the form of an essay or oral presentation. **For written communication at SCQF level 6 the skill is: produce well structured written communication on complex topics.** To develop this skill candidates can be encouraged in both formative and summative assessment to present all essential ideas/information and supporting detail in a logical and effective order; use a structure that is organised and use paragraphing to make distinctions between facts, opinions, arguments and conclusion, use a format, layout, and word choice which are appropriate to the content and context, and use spelling, punctuation, vocabulary and sentence structures which are consistently accurate. It is part of the evidence requirements for the Unit to ensure candidates convey complex ideas in a well-structured and coherent way. This can be stressed in delivery and in formative work, as well as being considered in summative assessment.

The candidates could be tasked with producing a written communication which presents, analyses, and evaluates a substantial body of information. These skills can be developed through formative activities, without being formally assessed for certification of the Core Skill. The topic of describing and evaluating strategies for reducing inequalities is complex, so should easily fit with SCQF level 6.

It is important to develop essay-writing skills for candidates' future progression. In doing this candidates should also be encouraged to use an appropriate referencing method, such as Harvard, for any formative or summative essays. Referencing, citation and bibliography skills are best developed using the vehicle of formative essay writing. It is part of the summative assessment to have an appropriate bibliography submitted in a standard referencing format.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Geography A: The Geography of Inequality

For oral communication at SCQF level 6 the skill is: produce and respond to oral communication on a complex topic. In both formative and summative assessment the candidate could be encouraged to give a detailed oral presentation on the reasons for inequalities and the strategies to reduce inequality, which would be a complex topic. The specific skills of using an appropriate level of vocabulary, consistent spoken language structures and formality, conveying all essential information, opinions, or ideas with supporting detail accurately and coherently, and with varied emphasis as appropriate and responding to others, taking account of their contributions would be developed in an oral presentation or in an oral explanation of a poster exhibition. Although a summative assessment would require individual work and individual presentation, a formative assessment could be constructed that would encourage candidates to work in a small group, with a few people contributing to the presentation. This may allow a candidate to experience the demands of oral presentation before choosing this as an option for summative assessment of the Unit (if the Centre is able to give a choice).

As it is important that candidates submit a bibliography (or reference section) in a standard format, such as Harvard for the summative assessment, even oral assessment methods should incorporate an appropriate bibliography.

For the Core Skill of Information and Communication Technology at SCQF level 5 the skills are: 'Accessing Information, use ICT independently, effectively, and responsibly to access information within a range of tasks' and 'Providing/Creating Information, use ICT independently, effectively, and responsibly to carry out a range of processing tasks'. This Unit can help to develop such skills by the use of mini formative presentations using PowerPoint or other ICT presentation tool that will also support the development of oral communication. A summative assessment using ICT presentation methods is also possible. Specific areas of accessing information using Internet searches or VLE use and providing and creating information can be developed in such tasks. Creating a Blog or a website for the summative assessment is another way in which this Core Skill can be developed. This could be used where candidates (and their lecturer) have particular skills and interest in ICT.

The Core Skill of Numeracy at SCQF level 5 the skills are: Using Number, apply a range of numerical skills in various everyday situations and Using Graphical Information, interpret and communicate graphical information in everyday situations. This unit can help develop such skills when using statistical indicators. These individual indicators often have to be ranked and/or combined to form composite indicators to make illustrating the data on maps simpler. Calculations such as averages may also be calculated to illustrate inequalities. Candidates will also interpret information from tables, graphs, charts and/or diagrams.

Thinking, analytical and critical skills could be developed by posing questions at appropriate points in the delivery, enabling discussion and promoting the need for candidates to take responsibility for learning by encouraging the development of research skills via the Internet or using text books.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Geography A: The Geography of Inequality

Curriculum for Excellence

The Curriculum for Excellence aspires to place learners at the centre of the curriculum and develop their capacities as Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens and Effective Contributors. All four capacities will be developed throughout this unit.

This unit will develop the literacy and communication skills of the learners by way of formative and summative assessments. Independent learning is required throughout this unit, whilst the opportunity is available for group learning through formative tasks. The subject of geography demands analytical skills, independent thinking, and through reasoned evaluation encourages learners to reach satisfactory conclusions. Numerical skills are improved through analysing statistical and graphical data. Further opportunity is offered to develop technological skills by way of researching via the internet, the production of word documents, PowerPoint presentations, blogs and/or the creation of a website. Collectively these skills contribute towards the creation of a **Successful Learner**.

Time management skills should improve during the delivery of this Unit, as should the ability to relate to others through formative tasks. The topics in Geography A should allow the learner to develop their own thoughts of the world around them, and they will be given the opportunity to express these views within the classroom setting. This should lend to the emergence of a **Confident Individual**, particularly if they gain success in the achievement of the Unit.

Geography A can also contribute to learners becoming **Responsible Citizens** by allowing the opportunity to develop knowledge and understanding of why inequality exists today in a global, national and/or local context. Candidates will be encouraged to develop a clearer understanding of how the situation has arisen, the consequences and action required. Furthermore, informed, ethical views of complex issues (eg trading inequalities) can be developed, as can an understanding of different cultures.

Learners can become **Effective Contributors** to society by learning to work together effectively in teams within the class setting. This can be achieved through group-work where they can apply critical thinking within new contexts. In planning group tasks, evaluating data and presenting their findings, learners will also develop problem solving skills. Both oral and written communication skills will also be developed. This can be achieved through written work, individual PowerPoint presentations, and the creation of blogs and websites.

All these skills can be developed within the Unit. As individuals some learners may even change their attitudes and behaviour as a result of having a wider understanding of the issues related to inequality.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Geography A: The Geography of Inequality

Open learning

This Unit could be delivered by open or distance learning; however, it would require planning by the centre to ensure sufficiency and authenticity of candidate evidence.

A written response in the form of an essay or answers to structured questions could be posted or emailed to the assessor or uploaded onto a VLE. An oral presentation could be used that would be recorded on DVD and sent to the assessor, or could be done using video-conferencing or web-link and observed by the assessor.

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 | Amendment to Outcome 3. Clarification of remediation and reassessment requirements. | 06/02/13 |
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General information for candidates

Unit title: Geography A: The Geography of Inequality

This unit aims to introduce you to the subject of social/human geography by examining one particular aspect which is particularly relevant to Social Science – inequality.

You will identify patterns of inequality and explain them. You will be encouraged to think about the reasons for such inequality and to think about if/how these inequalities could be reduced.

Through this topic you will learn to use a number of geographical techniques and you will learn about the unique contribution that geography makes to an understanding of both social science and to the world.

At the end of the unit you will be presented with a task where you have to show the pattern of inequalities, describe the pattern, suggest reasons for these inequalities and suggest strategies to reduce inequalities. You will be given the task/question at an appropriate point in the delivery of the Unit. The assessment may be a written essay of approximately 1500 words or a set of structured questions with an expected response of approximately 1500 words or an oral presentation of 10 to 12 minutes or a poster exhibition of 10 to 12 minutes oral explanation or another method decided by your Centre. Your centre will inform you of the chosen method, which will be *open-book*. This means that you will be allowed access to materials (eg, text books, notes, VLE).

As you progress through the unit material, you will be encouraged to develop the core skills of *Communication* at SCQF 6 and *ICT* and *Numeracy* at SCQF level 5 through the variety of activities you will undertake.

You will also be given opportunities throughout the Unit to develop as a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor.