

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Social Stratification (Intermediate 2)

CODE DV3M 11

COURSE Sociology (Intermediate 2)

SUMMARY

The Unit is designed to introduce candidates to sociology by introducing the concept of social stratification and developing knowledge of the ways individuals and groups are classified by socially generated criteria. Its focus is upon the variety and relative nature of the main systems of social stratification.

The Unit seeks to explore the variety of ways in which individuals may be classified into different social groups using socially generated criteria. The **five** categories of social stratification included in the Unit have considerable impact upon the lives of individuals and social groups.

This is a mandatory Unit of the Intermediate 2 Sociology Course. It can also be taken as a free-standing Unit by candidates who seek to gain introductory knowledge and understanding of categories of social stratification.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Describe the concept and categories of social stratification.
- 2 Evaluate the concept of social stratification.

Administrative Information

Superclass: EE

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

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RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained one of the following, or equivalent:

- ◆ Sociology Unit(s) at Intermediate 1
- ◆ A Standard Grade social subject at General level
- ◆ Standard Grade English at General level or Intermediate 1 Communication

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Intermediate 2 (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5*)

**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

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skill	None
Core Skills component	Critical Thinking at SCQF Level 5

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

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Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit Specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1

Describe the concept and categories of social stratification.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Describe the concept of social stratification correctly.
- (b) Describe various categories of social stratification clearly.
- (c) Describe the sociological significance of social stratification in the UK and other societies.

OUTCOME 2

Evaluate the concept of social stratification.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Analyse the effects of social stratification on society and its members correctly.
- (b) Explain social mobility clearly.
- (c) Analyse and evaluate the relationship between social stratification, social mobility and social inequality in the UK.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE UNIT

The mandatory content/context for this Unit is detailed in the Appendix to the Statement of Standards.

Evidence Requirements apply to the Unit as a whole and, therefore, apply holistically to all Outcomes of the Unit.

Candidates must produce written and/or oral evidence for all Outcomes and Performance Criteria to achieve the Unit. The assessment should take the form of an unseen, closed-book, supervised test that should be completed in one hour or less. It should be taken on a single occasion. The instrument of assessment should take the form of an essay-type response, and should make use of stimulus material as a tool with which to help candidates focus on the question(s) posed. This instrument will provide evidence for both Outcomes.

Evidence for the Unit must include:

- ◆ the concept of social stratification will always be assessed as part of Unit assessment

Categories of social stratification

Three out of the five categories of social stratification and their contribution to social inequality should be covered. However, candidates will only be assessed on **one** of these categories in assessment. Candidates *should not* be informed prior to the Unit assessment which category of social stratification they will be assessed on.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Candidates are required to:

- ◆ describe the categories of social stratification and the social significance of social stratification in the UK
- ◆ analyse the effects of social stratification upon society and its members correctly and explain social mobility clearly
- ◆ analyse and evaluate the relationships between social stratification, social mobility and social inequality in the UK

Candidate responses will be largely descriptive, although some analysis and evaluation is required at this level. The split between knowledge and understanding, and analysis and evaluation in Unit assessment is 70% knowledge and understanding and 30% analysis and evaluation.

Sampling

Assessment of the Unit should incorporate appropriate sampling of Unit content. If a candidate correctly demonstrates knowledge, understanding and analysis of one of the three categories studied then it is inferred that she/he can do the same for the other two. If a candidate correctly identifies features of structured inequality in one of these categories, it is inferred that she/he can identify features of structured inequality in any other category of social stratification covered in learning and teaching. This would ensure that both Outcomes and all Performance Criteria pertaining to them are achieved.

Any requirement for reassessment will be based upon a different sample from the range of content, including a different category of social stratification, where appropriate. Candidates must attempt a different instrument of assessment in its entirety.

Achievement will be decided by the use of a cut-off score. The standard to be applied and the breadth of coverage are illustrated in the National Assessment Bank items available for this Unit. If a centre wishes to design its own assessments for this Unit, they should be of comparable standard.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Social Stratification (Intermediate 2)

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

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

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THE UNIT

The Appendix to the Statement of Standards contains mandatory requirements for this Unit.

The Unit has the same content as *Social Stratification* (Intermediate 1). However, the Units are differentiated by Outcomes, Performance Criteria and Evidence Requirements. There is very limited common content with *Understanding Human Society 1* (Higher), with the small amount there is relating to social class.

The Unit, like its Intermediate 1 counterpart, offers an introduction to categories of social stratification and the social inequality it causes. The Unit is intended to introduce candidates to social stratification by encouraging them to draw upon their own life experiences, where possible, in order to help make complicated explanations more concrete. Candidates should be given the opportunity to discover for themselves the variety of social behaviours within as wide a range of cultural contexts as possible, including the UK. These may include cross-cultural, sub-cultural, contemporary, anthropological and historical settings. Material resources should be made interesting and varied and sociological concepts should be approached in a comparative and descriptive way.

At this level, the introduction to the sociological perspective is achieved through the understanding of sociological concepts like social stratification. By using a contextual and illustrative approach, it is hoped that candidates will explore for themselves the nature of social order, diversity and change by reference to an introductory theoretical focus.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THE UNIT

For candidates studying this Unit as part of the Intermediate 2 Sociology Course, general advice regarding approaches to learning and teaching for the Unit is contained in the Intermediate 2 Course Specification. It is proposed that the learning experience at this level should be varied, to encourage enthusiasm for the subject and to stimulate and prepare candidates for independent study.

As the Unit has the same content as the Unit *Social Stratification* (Intermediate 1), it follows that in a bi-level class, while candidates will cover the same content, Intermediate 1 candidates will not be expected to master it in the same way. In other words, the same depth of knowledge and understanding or the same level of skills development will not be expected of Intermediate 1 candidates.

The Unit should be approached using a wide range of stimulus materials and teaching approaches. Candidates should be encouraged to draw on their own experiences, where appropriate, and should have access to resources such as audio-visual material, invited speakers, Internet, ICT and paper-based resources. Where appropriate, the material should be up to date and relevant to the Unit, the level of study and the interests of the candidates. For Intermediate 2 Sociology it is recognised that the concepts and explanations covered in the Unit should be approached in a largely descriptive way, though some critical understanding of the value and limitations of the concepts and explanations are required at this level.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Social Stratification (Intermediate 2)

Due to the overlapping nature of the Outcomes and Performance Criteria of this Unit, it would be appropriate to deliver the Outcomes and Performance Criteria in an integrative way, where possible.

The emphasis throughout should be on interactive learning, whether through whole class, small group, or individual activity.

Where the Unit is taken as part of the Intermediate 2 Sociology Course, teaching of the sequence of Units is at the discretion of centres. However, there are three possible approaches to the delivery of the Units in the Course.

- 1 This Unit may be taught after the *Studying Human Society: The Sociological Approach* (Intermediate 2) Unit and prior to the *Socialisation* (Intermediate 2) Unit. This approach would allow for movement between Intermediate 2 and Intermediate 1 in the first few months of the Course. As the *Social Stratification* (Intermediate 2) Unit and the Intermediate 1 Unit of the same title have overlapping content, it is envisaged that assessors will be able to decide whether candidates should continue to be presented for the Course at Intermediate 2 or undertake the free standing Intermediate 1 Units.
- 2 An alternative model for introducing candidates to the discipline of sociology may be to begin with *Socialisation* (Intermediate 2), then move on to *Social Stratification* (Intermediate 2), before finally moving on to the conceptually more complex content of *Studying Human Society: The Sociological Approach* (Intermediate 2) Unit. This model would also allow for movement between Intermediate 2 and Intermediate 1 Units.
- 3 For the purposes of progression to or fallback from Higher in the first few months of the Course, the following model may be adopted. As the *Studying Human Society: The Sociological Approach* (Intermediate 2) Unit and the Higher Unit of the same title have overlapping content, assessors will be able to decide the appropriate level for each candidate. Due to the level of demand at Higher, bi-level delivery of Intermediate 2 and Higher for the Unit may be problematic. Beyond the common elements between the Intermediate 2 and Higher *Understanding Human Society: The Sociological Approach* Units and class stratification, the Course content is substantially different.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THE UNIT

The Evidence Requirements provide specific requirements for Unit assessment.

Outcomes and Performance Criteria should be assessed by means of a single holistic instrument of assessment lasting no more than one hour. The Unit assessment must ensure that *all* Outcomes and Performance Criteria are fully met.

The concept of social stratification will always be assessed in the Unit assessment. Three out of the five categories of social stratification will be studied prior to assessment, but only one category will be assessed.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Social Stratification (Intermediate 2)

Sampling of content within the Unit assessment is acceptable. In the Unit the sampling will be from the categories of social stratification covered in learning and teaching. NAB materials provide assessment instruments and guidance on implementation. The question in the NAB requires an essay-type response. Where centres wish to devise their own instruments of assessment, they should refer to the NAB to ensure a comparable standard. It is recommended that centre-devised instruments of assessment should be submitted to SQA for prior moderation.

Evidence should be gathered by means of a single assessment at the end of the Unit. Care should be taken to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for support and reassessment of candidates if required.

CANDIDATES WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

This Unit Specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. 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 document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (SQA, 2004).

National Unit Specification: Appendix to the statement of standards

UNIT Social Stratification (Intermediate 2)

NB: This Appendix is within the Statement of Standards, ie the mandatory requirements of the Unit.

The concept of social stratification

The Unit should begin with definitions of social stratification, such as it being a socially constructed concept, based on structured inequality. The inequality may be in the form of income and wealth, an individual's biological or ethnic make-up, or may be as a result of disability or age. Examples of common sense explanations can be drawn from candidates' every day lives to help illustrate the extent of social stratification.

The categories of social stratification

Three out of the **five** categories of social stratification should be covered in learning and teaching, though candidates will only be assessed in both Unit and Course assessment on **one** of these categories. Candidates should be made fully aware of the considerable impact the chosen categories of social stratification can have upon the lives of individuals and social groups.

The concept of social stratification in modern society should be introduced through a definition and study of **three** of the following categories of social stratification — social class; gender; race and ethnicity; age; disability. Some features of these categories are as follows:

- (a) **Social Class**
 - ◆ distinction between wealth and income and their distribution in society
 - ◆ social mobility and the link between class and life chances
 - ◆ changing nature of class and its relationship to the economy and occupational structure
 - ◆ use of the United Kingdom as an example
- (b) **Gender**
 - ◆ difference between biological notion of sex and the socially constructed notion of gender
 - ◆ nature and consequences of gender role socialisation
 - ◆ gender inequalities in terms of occupation; family; social roles; expectations
 - ◆ use of the United Kingdom as an example
- (c) **Race and Ethnicity**
 - ◆ nature, size and distribution of different racial and ethnic groups in modern society
 - ◆ inequality relating to race and ethnicity; in particular, discrimination in education, employment and on life chances
 - ◆ role of the mass media in the formation of stereotypes and the consequences for ethnic groups
 - ◆ use of the United Kingdom as an example
- (d) **Age**
 - ◆ social construction of the concept of age, including awareness of different notions of childhood, adolescence and old age in different societies
 - ◆ inequalities as a result of age, such as employment, unemployment, low pay, access to benefits and restrictions on social behaviour
 - ◆ implications of changes in the age structure of modern society
 - ◆ use of the United Kingdom as an example

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(e) Disability

- ◆ social construction of disability
- ◆ inequality relating to disability; in particular, discrimination in education, employment and on life chances
- ◆ role of the mass media in the formation of negative stereotypes and the consequences for disabled individuals and groups
- ◆ use of the United Kingdom as an example

In all **five** categories of social stratification other relevant features may be used to supplement these features, providing they are widely recognised as being sociologically appropriate.

The sociological significance of social stratification

The hierarchical and unequal ways in which groups can be formed in society should be addressed, with the effect this may have on an individuals' or social groups' life chances. Basic links to relevant theories of social stratification should be used to demonstrate the sociological importance and social significance of social stratification.

The effects of stratification upon the lives of individuals and groups in terms of inequality and opportunities for social mobility

The above aspects of social stratification should be studied in order to explore the nature of social relationships, processes, structures and issues. Sub-cultural, cross-cultural, historical, contemporary or anthropological examples (including the UK) should be used wherever possible and candidates should be encouraged to apply sociological insights to current social issues or their own life experiences. Cross-cultural and/or anthropological examples may be drawn from the *Socialisation* (Intermediate 2) Unit.