



Access 3 People and Society — draft Course rationale and summary

August 2011



This edition: August 2011, draft version 1.0

Published by the Scottish Qualifications Authority
The Optima Building, 58 Robertson Street, Glasgow G2 8DQ
Ironmills Road, Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 1LE

www.sqa.org.uk

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2011

Contents

Course rationale	1
Background	1
Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles	2
Course summary	4
Course outline	4
Course structure and conditions of award	4
Assessment	6
Appendix 1	7

Course rationale

Background

All new and revised National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

In this Course, and its component Units, there will be an emphasis on skills development and the application of those skills. Assessment approaches will be proportionate, fit for purpose and will promote best practice, enabling learners to achieve the highest standards they can.

This Course provides learners with opportunities to continue to acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities as well as skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

All Courses provide opportunities for learners to develop breadth, challenge and application, but the focus and balance of the assessment will be appropriate for the subject area.

Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles

This Course builds on a wide range of experiences and outcomes and principles and practices from across several curriculum areas. Courses can be built upon the foundation laid by the principles and practices and experiences and outcomes in the social studies curriculum area, as well as on aspects of health and wellbeing and religious and moral education curriculum areas.¹

The Course will encourage learners to develop important attitudes, including: an open mind and respect for the values, beliefs and cultures of others, an openness to new thinking and ideas, and a sense of responsibility and global citizenship.

By studying this Course, learners are enabled to develop the four capacities in many respects. For example, learners' horizons are extended and they are challenged to look at the world in new ways. Their confidence grows as they begin to understand more about their sense of identity and place in the world. Learners will build up a framework of knowledge and understanding from across the social subjects and social sciences which can help them develop a sense of responsible citizenship.

The investigative and critical thinking activities in this Course give learners important experience in contributing to group work and also working on their own. Learners will acquire attributes which will be important for their life and work.

Through the skills and content of the Course, learners will be encouraged to develop positive attitudes to themselves and others. Learners will develop skills in working with others and in communicating, while the emphasis on using information and making decisions will develop thinking skills. Learners will have opportunities to develop skills in literacy and numeracy.

Purpose and aims of the Course

People and Society is a flexible and inter-disciplinary Course offering learners the opportunity to study themes, issues and topics² of interest and relevance to them. It develops a range of skills as well as knowledge and understanding of people and society from across subject disciplines, drawing on the social studies, health and wellbeing, and religious and moral education curriculum areas. Through the perspectives of inter-disciplinary study, motivating contexts for learning can span subject boundaries, allowing learners to make connections across subject disciplines.

¹www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/howisthecurriculumstructured/experiencesandoutcomes/index.asp

² Throughout this document, the term 'theme' will be taken to include themes, issues and topics.

A deepening understanding of themselves and their society will help develop informed, confident and active learners, ready to make a positive contribution to society.

The Course is flexible and is designed to be appropriate and relevant to learners' needs. It offers significant opportunities for personalisation and choice. The approach taken and themes chosen for study in the Course can be drawn from a range of social subject/social science disciplines.

The main aims of the Course are to enable learners to:

- ◆ develop a greater understanding of society and their place in it
- ◆ gain knowledge of themes and concepts from across social studies and social science disciplines
- ◆ develop an understanding of significant influences on society and individuals
- ◆ develop skills which will enhance opportunities to engage positively in society

Through the flexibility in the Course and its emphasis on skills development, the Course can provide opportunities for learners to work as part of a team, take part in informed discussion, and thereby develop a respect and tolerance for the views of others as well as enhanced self-confidence.

Information about typical learners who might do the Course

The Course is appropriate for a wide range of learners, from those returning to learning and wishing to achieve a broad understanding of society and their place in it, to learners who wish to progress to more specialised qualifications, training, further education or employment.

All Courses in this suite will take account of the needs of all learners and provide sufficient flexibility to enable learners to achieve in different ways and at a different pace.

Important skills for learning, life and work are developed through successful completion of the Course. These skills include identifying sources of information; collecting, selecting and organising information; using information to compare and contrast; using information to make decisions; and using the perspective of different subject disciplines to acquire an understanding of people and society.

People and Society Units and Courses are offered from SCQF level 3 to SCQF level 4. Vertical and lateral progression is possible to more specialised study in other related qualifications, at higher SCQF levels, in the social studies, health and wellbeing, and religious and moral education suites of Courses.

The Course provides an entry qualification for a wide range of Courses in further education and for entry into a range of employment routes.

Course summary

Course title: Access 3 People and Society

SCQF level 3 (18 SCQF credit points)

Course outline

Mandatory Units

People and Society: Investigating Skills (Access 3)	6 SCQF credit points
People and Society: Comparing and Contrasting (Access 3)	6 SCQF credit points
People and Society: Making Decisions (Access 3)	6 SCQF credit points

Course structure and conditions of award

The Course develops a range of cognitive skills in learners. It encourages active and experiential learning in order to develop an understanding of people and society. Learners will acquire and apply relevant knowledge and skills through an interdisciplinary social subjects/social sciences approach, at an appropriate level, in order to understand social themes.

Within each Unit there is flexibility in which theme can be studied, to allow personalisation and choice.

By taking this Course, learners will develop a wide range of important and transferable skills, including identifying sources of information, collecting information from sources, selecting and organising information; using information to compare and contrast; using information to make decisions; and drawing upon knowledge and understanding from a limited range of social subjects/social sciences³.

The Course offers flexibility so that relevant contexts can provide motivating and engaging learning experiences. Themes will be studied on an inter-disciplinary basis and in relation to key ideas⁴ drawn from social subjects and social sciences.

Units are statements of standards for assessment and not programmes of learning and teaching. They can be delivered in a variety of ways.

³ A list of the subject disciplines which can be drawn on by People and Society Units and Courses will appear in the *Course Support Notes*.

⁴ A list of key ideas is shown in Appendix 1.

People and Society: Investigating Skills (Access 3)

In this Unit, learners will develop simple investigating skills by choosing, with assistance, key ideas for study which will allow them to acquire basic knowledge and understanding of people and society. Learners will develop a limited range of simple investigating skills, including identifying a few sources of information for a basic investigation, collecting information from a few sources using a variety of methods of enquiry, and selecting and organising information in a basic way.

People and Society: Comparing and Contrasting (Access 3)

In this Unit, learners will develop simple skills of using information to compare and contrast by choosing, with assistance, key ideas for study which will allow them to acquire basic knowledge and understanding of people and society. Learners will use information from a few simple sources to contrast and/or make comparisons.

People and Society: Making Decisions (Access 3)

In this Unit, learners will develop simple decision-making skills by choosing, with assistance, key ideas for study which will allow them to acquire basic knowledge and understanding of people and society. Learners will use information from a few simple sources to make a decision.

To achieve the Access 3 People and Society Course, learners must pass all of the required Units. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section.

Access 3 Courses are not graded.

Assessment

All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in Unit specifications.

They will be assessed pass/fail within centres.

SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgements are consistent and meet national standards.

Exemplification of possible assessment approaches for Units will be provided in the *National Assessment Resource*.

Draft

Appendix 1

Key Idea	
behaviour	ethics
beliefs	heritage
cause	identity
change	interdependence
citizenship	need
conflict	power
consequence	responsibilities
co-operation	rights
culture	similarity
difference	society
diversity	technology
environment	values
equality	