



Higher Sociology — draft Course rationale and summary

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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 the National 5 Course and draws on principles and practice papers for the health and wellbeing and social studies curriculum areas.¹ Sociology provides a new context for learning about culture and society using sociological techniques that can be applied to offer a deeper understanding of cultural and social issues in everyday life.

The study of Sociology contributes to developing successful learners by providing opportunities to develop literacy and communication skills by encouraging imaginative thought and prompting learners to ask questions about the social world in which we live.

Through a range of learning opportunities, learners will become more confident individuals by developing the ability to analyse and communicate their own and others' experiences of social life and views of the world.

Learners will become more effective contributors and gain increased awareness of self and others. They will also interact with others to share and develop their understanding of human social experience in different contexts.

Research skills and investigation and analysis skills are used to explore aspects of political, economic, social and cultural life. This will encourage learners to respect others and begin to develop informed views of complex social issues. These skills make an important contribution to the capacity of responsible citizenship.²

Purpose and aims of the Course

The Sociology Course develops learners' sense of themselves as part of society. It provides opportunities for individuals to develop skills in researching and analysing sociological evidence.

The sociological approach to investigating the relationship between society and the individuals who live in it provides opportunities for learners to actively engage with the world they live in and to develop a deeper understanding of societies.

¹ Principles and practice papers

www.ltscotland.org.uk/learningteachingandassessment/curriculumareas/healthandwellbeing/principlesandpractice/index.asp

www.ltscotland.org.uk/learningteachingandassessment/curriculumareas/socialstudies/index.asp

² *Building the Curriculum 3*

www.ltscotland.org.uk/buildingyourcurriculum/policycontext/btc/btc3.asp

This promotes sociological understanding which enhances personal and social wellbeing and capacity for growth.

The Course aims to:

- ◆ develop an understanding that sociology challenges 'common sense' explanations about human social behaviour
- ◆ apply sociological concepts and knowledge to explain aspects of human social behaviour
- ◆ increase understanding of the interdependence of individuals, groups, institutions and societies
- ◆ promote an understanding of cultural and social diversity

Information about typical learners who might do the Course

The Sociology Course is suitable for all learners with an interest in finding out more about the world we live in by investigating the relationship between society and the individuals who live in it.

Learners will find that the Course provides opportunities to develop their research and thinking skills and knowledge of Sociology by extending breadth, challenge and application.

Potential learners should be interested in developing a deeper understanding of the social world in which we live. The Course provides opportunities for individuals to develop confidence in researching and analysing evidence to explain human social experiences and social issues.

Developing the ability to communicate their own and others' experiences of social life and views of the world equips the learner with skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

Through the study of Sociology, learners will develop the skills to: explain and evaluate sociological perspectives and methods; apply research skills used in sociology; analyse, evaluate and accurately reference information; reason and justify points of view when analysing and evaluating sociological issues; and communicate views which demonstrate and apply sociological understanding.

Course summary

Course title: Higher Sociology

SCQF level 6 (24 SCQF credit points)

Course outline

Mandatory Units

Sociology: Human Societies (Higher) (6 SCQF credit points)

Sociology: Culture and Identity (Higher) (6 SCQF credit points)

Sociology: Social Issues (Higher) (6 SCQF credit points)

Course assessment (6 SCQF credit points)

This Course includes six SCQF credit points for 40 additional programmed hours to allow preparation for Course assessment. The Course assessment covers the added value of the Course. Further information on the Course assessment is provided in the Assessment section.

Course structure and conditions of award

The central theme of the Course is to develop a sociological approach to understanding and explaining the social world. Learners will also develop knowledge of the society in which they live and will use research to understand contemporary social issues.

The Course consists of three mandatory Units. Options within the Units offer personalisation and choice from areas of sociological research and understanding.

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

Sociology: Human Societies (Higher)

In this Unit, learners will apply a sociological approach to studying human societies. Learners will engage with sociological questions about the nature of society. They will use sociological perspectives and research methods to enable them to explain and apply sociological approaches to understanding and explaining the social world.

Sociology: Culture and Identity (Higher)

In this Unit, learners develop their knowledge of sociological thought and the concepts and theories used to analyse and explain features of culture and identity. Learners will research and evaluate information from a variety of sources to investigate social and cultural diversity in a range of cultures. Learners will apply their sociological understanding to analysing and evaluating influences on culture and identity.

Sociology: Social Issues (Higher)

In this Unit, learners develop knowledge and understanding of sociology in relation to contemporary social issues. Learners have the opportunity to analyse social issues using sociological perspectives, concepts and theories. Learners will also refer to evidence from a range of sources, including secondary research evidence to demonstrate sociological understanding of a social issue. Learners will be able to use this evidence to support sociological explanations for social issues in the contemporary social world.

The Higher Sociology Course has been constructed to facilitate a hierarchical arrangement with the National 5 Sociology Course (SCQF level 5).

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all the Units as well as the Course assessment. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

Assessment

Information about assessment standards for the Course will be included in the *Course Assessment Specification* which will provide full details including advice on how a learner's overall attainment for the Course will be determined.

Unit 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 these Units will be provided in the *National Assessment Resource*.

Course assessment

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of [added value](#)³. At National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, the added value will be assessed in the Course assessment. The added value for the Course must address the key purposes and aims of the Course as defined in the Course Rationale. It will do this by addressing one or more of breadth, challenge or application.

In the Higher Sociology Course, added value will focus on:

- ◆ breadth
- ◆ challenge
- ◆ application

This is assessed by a [project](#)⁴ and [question paper](#)⁵. The project will require application of understanding and use of sociological techniques gained from across the Units. In the project, learners will undertake secondary research into a sociological question or issue.

The question paper will require demonstration of retention and depth of knowledge and understanding as well as application of skills from across the Units.

³ Definitions can be found here: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html

⁴ See link above for definition.

⁵ See link above for definition.