

SOCIOLOGY
Higher

Fourth edition – published March 2002

**NOTE OF CHANGES TO ARRANGEMENTS
FOURTH EDITION PUBLISHED MARCH 2002**

COURSE TITLE: Sociology (Higher)

COURSE NUMBER: C074 12

National Course Specification

Course Details: External Assessment now comprises one question paper.

National Unit Specification:

All Units: No Changes

National Course Specification

SOCIOLOGY (HIGHER)

COURSE NUMBER C074 12

COURSE STRUCTURE

The course comprises three mandatory units:

<i>D432 12</i>	<i>Studying Human Society – The Sociological Approach (H)</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>
<i>D433 12</i>	<i>Understanding Human Society 1 (H)</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>
<i>D434 12</i>	<i>Understanding Human Society 2 (H)</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>

In common with all courses, this course includes 40 hours over and above the 120 hours for the component units. This is for induction, extending the range of learning and teaching approaches, support, consolidation, integration of learning and preparation for external assessment. This time is an important element of the course and advice on its use is included in the course details.

The units may be taught concurrently or sequentially. It is recommended, however, that Studying Human Society: The Sociological Approach be offered first to establish the sociological perspective.

Administrative Information

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National Course Specification: general information (cont)

COURSE Sociology (Higher)

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre. However, it would be beneficial if candidates had achieved the following:

- a Standard Grade in a social subject at grade 1 or 2 or an equivalent Intermediate 2 course or units
- Intermediate 2 Sociology course or units
- any other relevant qualification at an appropriate level

and Standard Grade English at grade 1 or 2 or Communication at Intermediate 2.

CORE SKILLS

This course gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete core skills for the course	None
Core skills components for the course	Critical Thinking H

For information about the automatic certification of core skills for any individual unit in this course, please refer to the general information section at the beginning of the unit.

Additional information about core skills is published in *Automatic Certification of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 1999).

National Course Specification: course details

COURSE Sociology (Higher)

RATIONALE

A general rationale for the study of sociology by candidates over the age of 16 is given in the Introduction to the Arrangements Document and applies to all levels of sociology.

The aim of sociology at Higher is to develop a knowledge and understanding of sociological concepts, theories and methods and their distinctive approach to the analysis and explanation of substantive areas of society. It will promote the ability to interpret, analyse and evaluate sociological arguments, evidence and research methods in a critical way.

COURSE CONTENT

The course is divided into three units which focus upon the variety of sociological theories and the perspectives they give to the explanation of human social behaviour. Four substantive sociological topics, one mandatory (the sociology of class stratification) and three optional, will be chosen as study themes to develop knowledge and understanding of the characteristics of sociology. The topics offered represent recognised main areas of sociology. They are arranged in two coherent groups to facilitate integration of learning and breadth of course content.

The external assessment will require candidates to use their knowledge and understanding of sociology and to apply critical and analytical skills to answer questions drawn from the whole course. In addition, candidates will be required to undertake a data response exercise which will draw not only on their knowledge and understanding of sociology but also on their ability to analyse and synthesise information. It would be appropriate to use some of the additional 40 hours for developing these skills.

It is intended that candidates should develop, throughout the study of sociological topics, an understanding of the concepts and perspectives which characterise sociology. For this reason an integrated approach is recommended which avoids the separation of theoretical perspectives from the substantive topics on which they focus. A non-sociological approach will not meet the requirements of this framework.

Studying Human Society: The Sociological Approach (H)

All sociology rests upon concepts, theories and methods which characterise its distinctive approach in explaining human social behaviour. This unit introduces the variety of sociological theories and the particular perspectives they give to the explanation of human social behaviour. It includes an analysis of structural, action and feminist perspectives. It also establishes the link between those theories and the actual research methods and strategies which may be adopted to provide evidence for sociologists. In this way, it distinguishes sociological knowledge from common sense or personal opinion and establishes the nature of sociological problems.

The unit should take account of the similarities and differences between theories, by examining their differing analyses, explanations and methodological strategies, as applied to a wide range of examples drawn from contemporary or historical material. It is recommended that the concepts of socialisation and social stratification should be used in an illustrative way for this purpose.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Sociology (Higher)

Understanding Human Society 1 (H)

This unit focuses on the sociological understanding of two substantive areas of human social behaviour. The unit is divided into four topic areas and candidates must study the mandatory topic of the sociology of class stratification plus **one** topic chosen from three options. The unit focuses upon Britain, but wherever possible, cross-cultural or anthropological studies should be used for purposes of comparison.

Mandatory Topic

Sociology of class stratification

- Meaning and forms of social stratification and the creation of inequality, change and diversity.
- Sociological perspectives on class stratification.
- Changes to class, income and wealth in contemporary society.
- Social mobility.
- Class and other areas of social life – studies, education, poverty and politics.

Optional Topics

Topic 1

Sociology of education

- The changing structure of education in Britain.
- The role of education in modern industrial society analysed from the main sociological perspectives.
- Differential achievement in education, sources of educational inequality – class, gender and ethnicity.
- Education and other areas of social life – economy, family and law.

Topic 2

Sociology of work and non-work

- Nature and meaning of work and non-work, organisation and change.
- Perspectives on work and leisure.
- Issues regarding work in industrial society – industrial conflict, unemployment and the retreat from work to leisure.
- Work and other areas of social life – family, law, poverty, class, health, ethnicity.

Topic 3

Sociology of deviance

- Nature and definition of crime and deviance, change and diversity.
- Theories of crime and deviance.
- Measurement, extent and distribution of crime and deviance.
- Crime, deviance and other areas of social life - media, family, work and education.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Sociology (Higher)

Understanding Human Society 2 (H)

This unit focuses upon two substantive areas of human social behaviour. The unit is divided into four topic areas and candidates must study **two** of these topics.

Optional Topics

Topic 1

Sociology of the family

- The structure and organisation of the family, diversity and change.
- Theoretical perspectives on the family.
- Aspects of modern family life – general and conjugal roles, power and patriarchy.
- The family in crisis? – marriage breakdown, violence and one-parent families.

Topic 2

Sociology of welfare and poverty

- Definition and measurement of poverty.
- Sociological perspectives on poverty and welfare.
- Poverty and the welfare state.
- The welfare state and social inequality – class, gender and ethnic minorities.

Topic 3

Sociology of health and medicine

- Definitions of health and illness and their social construction.
- Sociological approaches to health, illness and medicine.
- Inequality in health.
- The role and power of medicine.
- Health and other areas of social life, eg work, family.

Topic 4

Sociology of the mass media

- Nature and form of the mass media – trends in organisation and control.
- Theoretical approaches to the mass media.
- Inequality in health.
- Mass media as agents of socialisation – representation of women and ethnic minorities.
- Issues regarding the mass media, media content and effects upon media audiences – political influence and violence.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Sociology (Higher)

ASSESSMENT

To gain the award, the candidates must pass all the unit assessments as well as the external assessment. External assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the course award.

When units are taken as component parts of a course, candidates will have the opportunity to achieve at levels beyond that required to attain each of the unit outcomes. This attainment may, where appropriate, be recorded and used to contribute towards course estimates and to provide evidence for appeals. Additional details are provided, where appropriate, with exemplar assessment materials. Further information on the key principles of assessment are provided in the paper *Assessment*, published by HSDU in May 1996.

At Higher, the three key elements of knowledge and understanding, analysis and interpretation, and evaluation are assessed in the following ways.

Knowledge and understanding

Candidates should be able to demonstrate wide-ranging and detailed knowledge and understanding of aspects of social life and the relevant concepts, theories and methods employed by sociologists in their explanation. The range of knowledge should extend to an understanding of key theoretical and empirical issues surrounding sociological topics, plus an ability to refer to relevant sources. Descriptions should be extended, using relevant and detailed illustrations and references, with good knowledge of a range of sociological studies relevant to topics and issues in sociology.

Analysis and interpretation

Candidates should be able to select from, interpret and analyse different sociological theories and sources of evidence. In so doing, candidates should be able to present information in a balanced, logical and coherent manner, which focuses clearly on the issues under review. Candidates should be able to use, with confidence, the language and concepts of sociology and demonstrate clear and in-depth understanding of the interrelatedness of evidence and theory. Assessment of issues should be critical and comprehensive and should reflect confidence in dealing with more complex arguments.

The ability to synthesise knowledge and to apply it to a range of sociological issues should be evident at this level.

Evaluation

Candidates should demonstrate the ability to make balanced evaluations of sociological arguments and evidence and base these upon justified and sustained arguments. Explanations offered and methods used by sociologists should be examined critically and conclusions drawn should be well developed and reasoned, and reflect clear sociological understanding.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Sociology (Higher)

DETAILS OF THE INSTRUMENTS FOR EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

The external assessment will consist of one 3 hour paper with four sections.

Section A is compulsory and candidates must answer all questions. The questions will sample from the Unit Studying Human Society: The Sociological Approach. This section will have six to ten questions, with marks for each question ranging from 4 to 8 marks. 45 marks will be allocated to this section, and this makes up one third of the total marks for the external assessment.

Section B is compulsory and requires the candidate to give an extended response to a question on class stratification which is a mandatory topic in the unit Understanding Human Society 1. The question in this section will always ask for theories and studies, but may also sample from other Outcomes and performance criteria, eg asking for features, changes, areas or aspects. 30 marks will be awarded to this question.

Sections C and D

Section C will have a question on each topic from Understanding Human Society 1.

Section D will have a question on each topic in Understanding Human Society 2.

Candidates are required to give extended responses to two questions, either one from Section C and one from Section D, or two from Section D. The questions in this section will always ask for theories and studies, but may also sample from other Outcomes and performance criteria, eg asking for features, changes, areas or aspects. 30 marks will be awarded to each question.

The Course award will be based on the total score of 135 marks.

Evidence of attainment in the form of coursework and/or internal unit assessments may be used in relation to course estimates and appeals.

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

Course assessment will require candidates to:

- retain and integrate the knowledge and understanding of selected aspects of social life and the terminology, concepts, theories and methods employed in sociology
- select from, make comparisons between and analyse different types of relevant evidence
- evaluate information and draw reasonable conclusions
- synthesise a diverse range of sociological information and be able to draw clear conclusions.

The following descriptions are of expected performances at grade C and grade A. They are intended to assist candidates, teachers/lecturers and users of the certificate and to help establish standards when question papers are being set. The grade of the award will be based on the total score obtained in the examination.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Sociology (Higher)

To achieve a grade C in Higher Sociology, candidates should be able to demonstrate reasonably accurate knowledge and understanding of sociological concepts, theories, methods and their application to chosen substantive topics. Sound analysis of relevant issues should be present in explanations, though a tendency towards description is likely. Some familiarity with sociological literature should be evident but may not be entirely relevant or complete.

To achieve a grade A in Higher sociology, candidates should be able to demonstrate impressively detailed knowledge and understanding of most of the relevant material required for a complete answer to the questions. Answers should have both breadth and depth of knowledge and should include theoretical and methodological matters plus sophisticated explanations and detailed illustrative points. There will be evidence of in-depth analysis of relevant sociology including evaluated and critical points. Candidates will use sustained arguments and will focus answers upon the questions as set. The quality of analysis, use of logical argument, quality of evidence referred to (its diversity, topicality and so forth) and originality should justify this high grade.

Relationship of course to component units

The course consists of three component units plus an additional 40 hours study. The external assessment tests the candidates' knowledge and understanding of the content covered in all three units and their ability to demonstrate and integrate sociological skills acquired throughout the course. The criteria for a grade C in this course reflect closely the level of competence required for success in its component units.

Learning and teaching approaches should reflect the aims and rationale of the subject as outlined previously. The learning experience should be varied and interesting, to encourage enthusiasm for the subject and to prepare candidates for independent study.

The following learning experiences are essential to the course and the additional 40 hours should be used to develop the appropriate learning and teaching strategies.

Candidates should:

- develop awareness of cultural and social diversity
- use key sociological concepts and theories to understand cultural and social diversity
- understand that sociology is based upon evidence which is collected in a disciplined way
- understand and interpret sociological ideas and evidence
- display evaluative skills
- understand the interdependence of individuals, groups, institutions and societies
- take part in debate regarding the nature of sociology
- develop communication and other core transferable skills.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Sociology (Higher)

A variety of teaching approaches is critical and candidates should be given every opportunity to participate in whole-class activity, in small groups and as individuals. The approach should be candidate-centred and activity-based, but whole-class teaching can play a part in a flexible programme as a means of establishing understanding.

In this process it will be essential to include a wide range of interesting stimulus materials and approaches including audio-visual materials, invited speakers, visits, paper-based resources and IT resources. The resources should be accessible, interesting and manageable for this level and should allow candidates to draw upon and reflect on their own experiences.

Candidates should have a clear notion of targets and should experience ownership of the planned programme. Regular opportunities for remediation and review should be included in the programme. Opportunity should also be given to candidates to:

- set learning objectives
- review progress
- assess and develop existing knowledge
- seek and receive learning support.

This course specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special 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 SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment and Certification Arrangements for Candidates with Special Needs/Candidates whose First Language is not English* (SQA, 1998).

SUBJECT GUIDES

A Subject Guide to accompany the Arrangements Documents has been produced by Higher Still Development Unit (HSDU) in partnership with the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum (SCCC) and Scottish Further Education Unit (SFEU). The Guide provides further advice and information about:

- support materials for each course
- learning and teaching approaches in addition to the information provided in the Arrangements document
- assessment
- ensuring appropriate access for candidates with special educational needs.

The Subject Guide is intended to support the information contained in the Arrangements document. The SQA Arrangements documents contain the standards against which candidates are assessed.

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT	Studying Human Society – The Sociological Approach (Higher)
NUMBER	D432 12
COURSE	Sociology (Higher)

SUMMARY

This is a mandatory component unit of Sociology Higher. It can also be undertaken as a free-standing unit.

This unit is designed to introduce candidates to the variety of sociological theories and methods of research which characterise the discipline of sociology. It enables candidates to describe, explain, evaluate and apply an understanding of the principal features of the main sociological theories and their associated methods of research. It provides a framework for understanding the particular nature of the sociological perspective. By examining the main theoretical perspectives candidates will be able to evaluate their contribution to our understanding of the nature and development of human societies and the individuals who comprise them and will be able to use them by applying them to particular aspects of our society.

This unit is designed to meet the needs of:

- candidates undertaking a Higher course of sociology
- candidates undertaking a Scottish Group Award at Higher or Advanced Higher
- candidates who want a grounding in sociological theories and methods.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Explain how key sociological theories contribute to an understanding of human social behaviour.
- 2 Analyse sociological theories.
- 3 Evaluate the main methods and research strategies used by sociologists.

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT Studying Human Society – The Sociological Approach (Higher)

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre. However, it would be beneficial if candidates had achieved the following:

- a Standard Grade in a social subject at grade 1 or 2 or an equivalent Intermediate 2 course or units
- Intermediate 2 Sociology
- any other relevant qualification at an appropriate level.

and Standard Grade English at grade 1 or 2 or Communication at Intermediate 2.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Higher

CORE SKILLS

This unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete core skills for the unit	None
Core skills components for the unit	Critical Thinking H

Additional information about core skills is published in *Automatic Certification of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 1999).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Studying Human Society – The Sociological Approach (Higher)

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

Explain how key sociological theories contribute to an understanding of human social behaviour.

Performance criteria

- (a) Key sociological theories are identified correctly.
- (b) The principal features of the main sociological theories are explained clearly, using relevant examples.

Note on range for the outcome

Key sociological theories:

- structural theories:
 - consensus structuralism
 - conflict structuralism
- action theories
- feminist theories.

Evidence requirements

- PC (a) Written or oral evidence that the candidate can identify two contrasting structural theories, one action theory and one feminist theory.
- PC (b) Written or oral explanation, which outlines those features of structural theories (consensus and conflict), feminist and action theories which make them distinct. The evidence should include appropriate reference to the sociologists who developed the theories and should demonstrate an ability to illustrate how the theories explain human social behaviour.

OUTCOME 2

Analyse sociological theories.

Performance criteria

- (a) The similarities and differences between consensus and conflict structuralism are outlined clearly.
- (b) The similarities and differences between structural and action Sociology are outlined clearly.
- (c) The strengths and weaknesses of structural and action Sociology are analysed in a balanced way, using relevant examples.
- (d) Conclusions drawn from the analysis of sociological theories are valid.

Evidence requirements

Written or oral evidence which covers the performance criteria.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Studying Human Society – The Sociological Approach (Higher)

OUTCOME 3

Evaluate the main methods and research strategies used by sociologists.

Performance criteria

- (a) The distinction between common sense and sociological knowledge is correct and clear.
- (b) The research strategies used by sociologists are explained correctly.
- (c) The main quantitative methods used by sociologists are described correctly.
- (d) The main qualitative methods used by sociologists are described correctly.
- (e) The relative advantages and disadvantages of qualitative and quantitative methods are explained clearly.

Note on range for the outcome

Research strategies: theory/hypothesis/operationalisation (choice of research technique, definition of concepts, setting measurements and sampling)/fieldwork/ processing of results.

Quantitative methods:

- postal questionnaires and structured interviews
- use of secondary sources – official statistics.

Qualitative methods:

- observation, participant observation and unstructured interviews
- use of secondary sources – personal documents (diaries, letters and personal accounts).

Evidence requirements

Written or oral evidence which covers the performance criteria and range.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Studying Human Society – The Sociological Approach (Higher)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

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

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

This unit introduces candidates to the variety of sociological theories and the particular perspectives they give to the explanation of human social behaviour. It also establishes the link between sociological theories and the research methods and strategies which may be adopted. It is the intention of the unit to establish good understanding of the perspectives and research methods which underpin sociology and to encourage candidates to recognise the similarities and differences between their differing analyses, explanations and methodological strategies.

While some candidates may have studied sociology before (possibly at Intermediate 2), for others it will be their first experience of the subject and for this reason its content should be treated in an introductory way and as a means of establishing the sociological approach. Sociological concepts, theories and methods should all be supported by relevant examples. These may be drawn from Intermediate 2 (socialisation and stratification). This would not only offer a means of furthering already acquired sociological knowledge, but may also provide for those candidates new to the subject who may need to adjust their level of study after joining the course. Alternatively, the content of this unit may be integrated into Understanding Human Society 1 and Understanding Human Society 2, with selected sociological topics serving as the means of covering sociological theory and methods.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

General proposals regarding approaches to learning and teaching are contained in the course details. It is proposed that the learning experience at this level should be interesting, to encourage enthusiasm for the subject and to stimulate and prepare candidates for independent study.

The unit should be approached using a wide range of stimulus materials and teaching approaches. Candidates should be encouraged to draw upon their own experiences and should have access to resources such as audio-visual material, invited speakers, IT and paper-based resources. The material should be up to date and relevant to the unit, the level of study and the interests of the candidates. The emphasis throughout should be on active learning, whether as part of a whole class, as small groups, or as individuals.

The outcomes are interconnected and should be approached as such. It is recommended that, wherever possible, outcomes should be covered in an integrated way. An outcome-by-outcome approach, which could lead a compartmentalised view of sociology, should be avoided. If it is appropriate then the unit may be integrated with Understanding Human Society 1 and Understanding Human Society 2 using the sociology of aspects of society as the means of describing and analysing theoretical perspectives and methods.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Studying Human Society – The Sociological Approach (Higher)

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Centres may use the instruments of assessment which are considered to be most appropriate. Examples of instruments of assessment that could be used are as follows:

The National Assessment Bank will provide assessment instruments and guidance on implementation. This does not preclude teachers/lecturers devising their own assessment tasks. Evidence of attainment of the outcomes for this unit may be provided through a variety of methods of assessment. Extended essays, assignments, structured questions or projects may all be used. It is proposed that a data response exercise should form part of the external assessment of this unit, so it would be sensible to use this approach to assessment for at least some part of the internal assessment. It is likely that the most suitable combination of assessment instruments will arise from the way the unit has been delivered and whether it has been integrated into other units. However, the nature of the unit is such that an outcome-by-outcome approach is less appropriate than a more holistic strategy. Where an integrated strategy is adopted, it will be necessary to identify, in the candidate's response, where each outcome has been met.

If the evidence is gathered by means of a single assessment towards the end of the unit, care should be taken to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for remediation and reassessment if required. Where a candidate has failed to achieve one or more of the outcomes it is only necessary to reassess those outcomes which the candidate failed to achieve.

Where assessments are set which allow candidates to demonstrate performance beyond the minimum standard required, evidence gathered for internal unit assessment may also be used for grade prediction and for appeals for external cause assessment. For information on the grade descriptions for external assessment, refer to the sociology Higher course details.

SPECIAL NEEDS

This course specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special 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 SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment and Certification Arrangements for Candidates with Special Needs/Candidates whose First Language is not English* (SQA, 1998).

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT	Understanding Human Society 1 (Higher)
NUMBER	D433 12
COURSE	Sociology (Higher)

SUMMARY

This is a mandatory component unit of Higher Sociology. It can also be undertaken as a free-standing unit.

This unit focuses on the sociological understanding of two substantive areas of human social behaviour. The unit is divided into four topic areas and candidates must study the mandatory topic, the sociology of class stratification, plus one topic chosen from three related options – the sociology of education, the sociology of work and non-work and the sociology of deviance. The unit focuses upon Britain but, wherever possible, cross-cultural or anthropological studies should be used for purposes of comparison.

It is designed to develop the candidate's ability to apply sociological perspectives when analysing aspects of society by referring to relevant sociological studies and evidence.

This unit is designed to meet the needs of:

- candidates undertaking a Higher course in sociology
- candidates undertaking a Scottish Group Award at Higher or Advanced Higher
- candidates who wish a grounding in the sociology of class stratification and other related sociological topics.

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT Understanding Human Society 1 (Higher)

OUTCOMES

- 1 Describe key features of sociological topics and their relationship to other areas of human society.
- 2 Explain how sociological perspectives contribute to an understanding of human society.
- 3 Explain selected aspects of sociological topics using different sociological perspectives.
- 4 Evaluate sociological evidence and arguments related to selected aspects of sociological topics.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre. However, it would be beneficial if candidates had achieved the following:

- a Standard Grade in a social subject at grade 1 or 2 or an equivalent Intermediate 2 course or units
- Intermediate 2 Sociology
- any other relevant qualification at an appropriate level.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Higher.

CORE SKILLS

This unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete core skills for the unit	None
Core skills components for the unit	Critical Thinking H

Additional information about core skills is published in *Automatic Certification of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 1999).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Understanding Human Society 1 (Higher)

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 key features of sociological topics and their relationship to other areas of human society.

Performance criteria

- (a) Key features of the topics are described succinctly and correctly.
- (b) Changes relating to topics are outlined correctly.
- (c) The relationship of topics to other areas of society is outlined clearly and correctly.

Evidence requirements

Written or oral evidence to ensure coverage of the performance criteria for both the mandatory topic and the chosen optional topic.

OUTCOME 2

Explain how sociological perspectives contribute to an understanding of human society.

Performance criteria

- (a) Relevant and contrasting sociological perspectives are applied to topics correctly.
- (b) Issues relating to the application of different sociological perspectives to topics are explained clearly and correctly.
- (c) Conclusions regarding the use of contrasting sociological perspectives to illuminate the topics are valid.

Evidence requirements

Written or oral evidence to ensure coverage of the performance criteria for both the mandatory topic and the chosen optional topic.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Understanding Human Society 1 (Higher)

OUTCOME 3

Explain selected aspects of sociological topics using different sociological perspectives and studies.

Performance criteria

- (a) Selected aspects of topics are explained in a balanced way, taking account of different sociological studies and perspectives.
- (b) Appropriate evidence is drawn from a range of sociological studies to support the explanations.
- (c) Sustained arguments are developed, based on evidence and examples drawn from relevant sociological studies.

Evidence requirements

Written or oral evidence to ensure coverage of the performance criteria for both the mandatory topic and the chosen optional topic.

Only one aspect or issue should be selected for analysis and evaluation from each of the two sociological topics.

OUTCOME 4

Evaluate sociological evidence and arguments related to selected aspects of sociological topics

Performance criteria

- (a) Evaluations are balanced and refer to evidence and arguments made by sociologists.
- (b) Relevant and developed conclusions are reached regarding aspects of the topics.

Evidence requirements

Written or oral evidence to ensure coverage of the performance criteria for both the mandatory topic and the chosen optional topic.

Only one aspect or issue should be selected for analysis and evaluation from each of the two sociological topics.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Understanding Human Society 1 (Higher)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

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

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

Each substantive topic area of sociology included in this unit serves to broaden and deepen sociological understanding. The unit focuses upon Britain but wherever possible, cross-cultural or anthropological studies should be used for comparison.

There is one mandatory sociological topic – class stratification, and a choice of one from three optional sociological topics – education, work and non-work, and deviance.

The main emphasis of this unit is upon the sociology of chosen topics. Outcome 1 should be seen therefore as an opportunity to introduce, give an overview of and contextualise the topics and should not be allocated a disproportionate amount of time or attention.

Within each topic area, there is an opportunity to select *for sociological analysis and evaluation*, aspects or issues associated with that topic (Outcomes 3 and 4). The following aspects or issues are thought to be appropriate at this level.

Mandatory topic

Sociology of class stratification

Aspects: changes to class, income and wealth in contemporary society
social closure and social mobility.

Optional topics

Topic 1: Sociology of education

Aspects: differential achievement in education – class, gender and ethnicity
education and stratification - inequality and educational opportunity
vocationalism and education
education and work.

Topic 2: Sociology of work and non-work

Aspects: work in contemporary society – technology and change
industrial conflict
unemployment
work and gender, ethnicity and age
leisure.

Topic 3: Sociology of deviance

Aspects: crime and deviance compared
gender
ethnicity
labelling official statistics and representation of crime.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Understanding Human Society 1 (Higher)

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

General proposals regarding approaches to learning and teaching are contained in the course details. It is proposed that the learning experience at this level should be interesting, to encourage enthusiasm for the subject and to stimulate and prepare candidates for independent study.

The unit should be approached using a wide range of stimulus materials and teaching approaches. Candidates should be encouraged to draw upon their own experiences and should have access to resources such as audio-visual material, invited speakers, IT and paper-based resources. The material should be up to date and relevant to the unit, the level of study and the interests of the candidates. The emphasis throughout should be upon active learning, whether as part of a whole class, as small groups, or as individuals.

The outcomes are interconnected and should be approached as such. It is recommended that, wherever possible, outcomes should be covered in an integrated way; for example, by using the chosen sociological topic to cover all outcomes. An outcome-by-outcome approach, which could lead to a compartmentalised view of sociology, should be avoided.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

The National Assessment Bank will provide assessment instruments and guidance on implementation. This does not preclude teachers/lecturers from devising their own assessment tasks. Evidence of attainment of the outcomes for this unit may be provided through a variety of methods of assessment. Extended essays, assignments, structured questions or projects may all be used. It is proposed that a data response exercise should form part of the external assessment of Higher Sociology, so it would be sensible to use this approach to assessment for at least some part of the internal assessment. It is likely that the most suitable combination of assessment instruments will arise from the way the unit has been delivered and whether it has been integrated with other units. However, the nature of the unit is such that an outcome-by-outcome approach is less appropriate than a more holistic strategy. Where an integrated strategy is adopted, it will be necessary to identify, in the candidate's response, where each outcome has been met.

If the evidence is gathered by means of a single assessment towards the end of the unit then care should be taken to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for remediation and reassessment if required. Where a candidate has failed to achieve one or more of the outcomes it is only necessary to reassess those outcomes which the candidate has failed to achieve.

Where assessments are set which allow candidates to demonstrate performance beyond the minimum standard required, evidence gathered for internal unit assessment may also be used for grade prediction and for appeals for external course assessment. For information on the grade descriptions for external assessment, refer to the sociology Higher course details.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Understanding Human Society 1 (Higher)

SPECIAL NEEDS

This course specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special 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 SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment and Certification Arrangements for Candidates with Special Needs/Candidates whose First Language is not English* (SQA, 1998).

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT	Understanding Human Society 2 (Higher)
NUMBER	D434 12
COURSE	Sociology (Higher)

SUMMARY

This is a mandatory component unit of Higher Sociology. It can also be undertaken as a free-standing unit.

This unit focuses on the sociological understanding of two substantive areas of human social behaviour. The unit is divided into four topic areas and candidates must study two topics chosen from the following areas – the sociology of the family, the sociology of welfare and poverty, the sociology of health and medicine, the sociology of the mass media. The unit focuses upon Britain but, wherever possible, cross-cultural or anthropological studies should be used for comparison.

It is designed to develop the candidate's ability to apply sociological perspectives to analyse aspects of society, with the use of relevant sociological understanding, studies and evidence.

This unit is designed to meet the needs of:

- candidates undertaking a Higher course in Sociology
- candidates undertaking a Scottish Group Award at Higher or Advanced Higher
- candidates who want a grounding in the sociological understanding of human society.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Describe key features of sociological topics and their relationship to other areas of human society.
- 2 Explain how sociological perspectives contribute to an understanding of human society.
- 3 Explain selected aspects of sociological topics using different sociological perspectives.
- 4 Evaluate sociological evidence and arguments related to selected aspects of sociological topics.

Administrative Information

Superclass:	EE
Publication date:	November 1999
Source:	Scottish Qualifications Authority
Version:	03

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT Understanding Human Society 2 (Higher)

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre. However, it would be beneficial if candidates had achieved one of the following:

- a Standard Grade in a social subject at grade 1 or 2 or an equivalent Intermediate 2 course or units
- Intermediate 2 Sociology
- any other relevant qualification at an appropriate level.

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CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Higher.

CORE SKILLS

This unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete core skills for the unit	None
Core skills components for the unit	Critical Thinking H

Additional information about core skills is published in *Automatic Certification of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 1999).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Understanding Human Society 2 (Higher)

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 key features of sociological topics and their relationship to other areas of human society.

Performance criteria

- (a) Key features of the topics are described succinctly and correctly.
- (b) Changes relating to topics are outlined correctly.
- (c) The relationship of topics to other areas of society is outlined clearly and correctly.

Evidence requirements

Written or oral evidence to ensure coverage of the performance criteria for the two chosen topics.

OUTCOME 2

Explain how sociological perspectives contribute to an understanding of human society.

Performance criteria

- (a) Relevant and contrasting sociological perspectives are applied to topics correctly.
- (b) Issues relating to the application of different sociological perspectives to topics are explained clearly and correctly.
- (c) Conclusions regarding the use of contrasting sociological perspectives to illuminate the topics are valid.

Evidence requirements

Written or oral evidence to ensure coverage of the performance criteria for the two chosen topics.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Understanding Human Society 2 (Higher)

OUTCOME 3

Explain selected aspects of sociological topics by using different sociological perspectives and studies.

Performance criteria

- (a) Selected aspects of topics are explained in a balanced way, taking account of different sociological studies and perspectives.
- (b) Appropriate evidence is drawn from a range of sociological studies to support the explanations.
- (c) Sustained arguments are developed based on evidence and examples drawn from relevant sociological studies.

Evidence requirements

Written or oral evidence to ensure coverage of the performance criteria for the two chosen topics.

Only one aspect or issue should be selected for analysis and evaluation from each of the two sociological topics.

OUTCOME 4

Evaluate sociological evidence and arguments related to selected aspects of sociological topics.

Performance criteria

- (a) Evaluations are balanced and refer to evidence and arguments made by sociologists.
- (b) Relevant and developed conclusions are reached regarding aspects of the.

Evidence requirements

Written or oral evidence to ensure coverage of the performance criteria for the two chosen topics.

Only one aspect or issue should be selected for analysis and evaluation from each of the two sociological topics.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Understanding Human Society 2 (Higher)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

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

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

Each substantive topic area of sociology included in this unit serves to broaden and deepen sociological understanding. The unit focuses upon Britain but wherever possible, cross-cultural or anthropological studies should be used for comparison.

There is a choice of two from four sociological optional topics – family, welfare and poverty, health and medicine, and the mass media.

The main emphasis of this unit is upon the sociology of chosen topics. Outcome 1 should be seen therefore as an opportunity to introduce, give an overview of and contextualise the topic and should not be allocated a disproportionate amount of time or attention.

Within each topic area, there is an opportunity to select *for sociological analysis and evaluation*, aspects or issues associated with that topic (Outcomes 3 and 4). The following aspects or issues are thought to be appropriate at this level.

Topic 1: Sociology of the family

Aspects: changing family patterns

conjugal roles, power and patriarchy

family in crisis? – marriage breakdown, domestic violence and child abuse.

Topic 2: Sociology of welfare and poverty

Aspects: poverty and the welfare state

the welfare state and social inequality – class, gender and ethnicity.

Topic 3: Sociology of health and medicine

Aspects: inequality and health – class, region, gender and ethnicity

power of medicine

world health.

Topic 4: Sociology of the mass media

Aspects: the mass media and representation – gender and ethnicity

Socialisation and the mass media – bias, attitude formation and violence.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Understanding Human Society 2 (Higher)

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UNIT Understanding Human Society 2 (Higher)

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