



## National Unit Specification

### General information

**Unit title:** Influences on Mental Health and Wellbeing (SCQF level 6)

**Unit code:** J77H 46

**Superclass:** PH

**Publication date:** March 2023

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 01

### Unit purpose

This unit is a mandatory unit of the Mental Health and Wellbeing award at level 6 and is also available as a free-standing unit. It may provide progression for those learners who have successfully completed the National 5 Mental Health and Wellbeing award. It is also suitable for learners who have not previously studied Mental Health and Wellbeing at level 4 or 5.

This unit is suitable for anyone who wishes to work in the service industry or health and social care. It may also be of interest to those who wish to study occupational health and human resources.

The purpose of this unit is to help learners understand the range of factors which influence mental health and wellbeing. The unit introduces biological, psychological, sociological and cultural perspectives which influence how we understand mental health and wellbeing. Learners will be encouraged to develop a deeper understanding of the theory, knowledge and range of influences on mental health and wellbeing. Learners will have the opportunity to investigate different models and approaches which inform public health and service responses to mental health promotion and support for mental health concerns.

### Outcomes

On successful completion of the unit the learner will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of perspectives which influence our understanding of mental health and wellbeing.
2. Explain how theoretical approaches inform understanding of mental health and wellbeing.
3. Investigate current models and approaches used to influence mental health and wellbeing for the individual or society.

## **National Unit Specification: General information (continued)**

**Unit title:** Influences on Mental Health and Wellbeing (SCQF level 6)

### **Credit points and level**

1 National Unit credit at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 6:  
(6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6).

### **Recommended entry to the unit**

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

- ◆ The level 5 award in Mental Health and Wellbeing.
- ◆ The level 5 Influences on Mental Health and Wellbeing unit.
- ◆ The skills, knowledge and understanding required for completion of level 5 units.

### **Core Skills**

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the support notes for this unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this unit.

### **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.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard. A list of existing ASPs is available to download from SQA's website (<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46233.2769.html>).

### **Equality and inclusion**

This unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website [www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).

## **National Unit Specification: Statement of standards**

**Unit title:** Influences on Mental Health and Wellbeing (SCQF level 6)

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 SQA.

### **Outcome 1**

Demonstrate an understanding of perspectives which influence our understanding of mental health and wellbeing.

#### **Performance criteria**

- (a) Describe biological perspectives which influence our understanding of mental health and wellbeing.
- (b) Describe psychological perspectives which influence our understanding of mental health and wellbeing.
- (c) Describe sociological perspectives which influence our understanding of mental health and wellbeing.
- (d) Describe cultural perspectives which influence our understanding of mental health and wellbeing.

### **Outcome 2**

Explain how theoretical approaches inform understanding of mental health and wellbeing.

#### **Performance criteria**

- (a) Describe theoretical approaches which inform the perspectives influencing our understanding of mental health and wellbeing.
- (b) Demonstrate an understanding of mental health and wellbeing using knowledge of theoretical approaches.

### **Outcome 3**

Investigate current models and approaches used to influence mental health and wellbeing for the individual or society.

#### **Performance criteria**

- (a) Define the term 'Models of Practice'.
- (b) Describe models and approaches used to treat, support and promote mental health and wellbeing.
- (c) Demonstrate an understanding of how models and approaches treat, support and promote mental health and wellbeing.

## National Unit Specification: Statement of standards (continued)

**Unit title:** Influences on Mental Health and Wellbeing (SCQF level 6)

### Evidence requirements for this unit

Evidence is required to demonstrate that learners have achieved all outcomes and performance criteria.

Evidence can be gathered in a range of ways which will assess learners' knowledge, understanding and application across the outcomes and performance criteria.

Where learners have worked in a group, there should be evidence of their individual contribution.

### Outcome 1

Learners must:

- ◆ Describe **three key features** of a biological perspective of mental health and wellbeing.
- ◆ Describe **three key features** of a psychological perspective of mental health and wellbeing.
- ◆ Describe **three key features** of a sociological perspective of mental health and wellbeing.
- ◆ Describe **three key features** of a cultural perspective of mental health and wellbeing.

### Outcome 2

Learners must:

- ◆ Describe **two theories** from any of the four perspectives: Biological, Psychological, Sociological and Cultural.
- ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of mental health and wellbeing using the two theories.

### Outcome 3

Learners must:

- ◆ Describe **five key features of two models supporting** mental health and wellbeing.

Learners will research and provide practice examples of how these models can:

- ◆ promote mental health and wellbeing.
- ◆ prevent mental health illness or,
- ◆ support treatment and/or recovery of mental illness.



## **National Unit Support Notes**

**Unit title:** Influences on Mental Health and Wellbeing (SCQF level 6)

Unit support notes are offered as guidance and 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**

Those involved in the delivery of this unit should be aware of the potentially sensitive nature of some of the issues to be discussed and investigated in this unit, particularly in relation to individual learner's circumstances.

The content of the level 6 award follows on from the level 4 and 5 mental health and wellbeing awards. It is important to re-emphasise that these awards are not an exploration of mental illness but designed to support learners to consider the knowledge which informs a much broader understanding of mental health and wellbeing for individuals and wider society.

The content will provide the learner with an introduction to different perspectives and a range of theories within each of these perspectives. This will enable the learner to develop critical thinking skills and begin to understand the complexity of the issues which have an influence on mental health and wellbeing.

The learning outcomes provide the facilitator with an opportunity to design a learning experience which is personalised to learners. There is scope to study a wide range of theories and topics of specific interest.

#### **Outcome 1**

Learners will be introduced to four perspectives which will allow them to consider different ways mental health and wellbeing can be influenced:

##### **Biological perspective**

Learners will consider how the biological perspective assumes mental health and wellbeing is caused by our biology. Learners will have the opportunity to explore the historical context of the biological approach and why, by the late 19th Century, there was a general consensus within the medical profession that mental illness was caused either by brain disease or genetics.

At the time, most of the research was carried out by comparing brain anatomy from autopsies with the behavioural or cognitive abilities displayed by individuals. It is important to emphasise that until the 21st century, there was no research into the live brain and to correlate brain dysfunction with behaviours and symptoms.

## **National Unit Support Notes (continued)**

### **Unit title:** Influences on Mental Health and Wellbeing (SCQF level 6)

Learners will gain an insight into how this knowledge evolved leading to significant discoveries for treatment, diagnosis of mental illness and the use of diagnostic tools such as DSM and ICD 10.

Over the years neuroscientists have gained an increasingly sophisticated and scientific knowledge of the biology and physiology of the brain. This is explored in greater depth in the level 6 unit, Understanding Brain Health.

Learners will also consider how mental health exists on a spectrum, and the impact of health determinants on mental health and wellbeing.

### **Psychological perspective**

Learners will explore psychological perspectives of mental health and wellbeing which argue that emotion, thoughts, perception, and behavioural responses cannot be explained only by biological perspectives. Learners will gain an understanding of how:

- ◆ psychology crosses the boundaries between natural science and social science.
- ◆ it takes account of the experience of the individual.
- ◆ the unconscious and the conscious mind process our emotions and how this influences our behaviours.

There are three main schools of thought which support the language of psychology: psychoanalytic, cognitive behavioural and humanistic approach. It is important to understand that these schools of thought focus their attention on different aspects of the human being. Learners will develop a broad understanding of how each of these perspectives help us understand mental health and wellbeing. Psychoanalytic approaches recognise the influence of human development across the life course and cognitive behavioural approaches consider how we learn from others or are conditioned to feel, think and respond in particular ways by our interactions with others and our environment. The humanistic approach assumes that we are innately built as humans to strive however the formation of our 'self-concept' is significant for our emotional wellbeing and resilience to setbacks.

### **Sociological perspective**

Sociological perspectives argue the mental health of the individual is nurtured by wider society, power structures, the quality of relationships, and the norms and functions of a society. The sociological perspectives are sometimes known as social causation or social determinants of mental health and wellbeing. These are wide and varied and include disadvantage, all forms of discrimination, stigma and labelling, poverty, loneliness, adversity, gender inequality, social inequality, power, coercion and control. Learners will develop an understanding of the importance of recognising social determinants of mental health and wellbeing and the evidence that supports this.

## National Unit Support Notes (continued)

**Unit title:** Influences on Mental Health and Wellbeing (SCQF level 6)

### Cultural perspective

Western cultural approaches to health are often 'predicated on a model that focuses on individual intrapsychic experience or individual pathology, while other traditions may be based more on community or familial processes' (Tribe, 2005). Tribe highlights in this quote the importance of recognising culturally different perspectives in relation to mental health and wellbeing.

Learners will explore what we mean by culture and acknowledge that it is rooted in constructivism in so far that it includes the study of values, beliefs, traditions, ethnic identity, language, religion and race. What we consider as healthy expression of emotions and activity that promotes mental health and wellbeing varies from one culture to another. Even the words used to describe mental health and wellbeing and the meaning conveyed varies vastly across cultures and communities. Understanding traditions and religious rituals such as meditation, rites of passage and cultural values such as collectivism and holistic approaches to promoting mental health by connecting mind, body and soul are for many cultures, an important aspect for understanding the factors which influence mental health and wellbeing.

### Outcome 2

Learners will have the opportunity to explore relevant theories in relation to the different perspectives. Facilitators can explore a wide range of options and are encouraged to tailor the learning opportunities to the needs and interests of the learner. Learners will be introduced to **at least two theories**. This enables learners to gain a greater understanding of how knowledge is constructed and how this informs the various approaches and models of practice which will be discussed in outcome 3. Learners will apply each theory to a case study to demonstrate understanding.

There is a wide range of theories facilitators could consider:

#### Biological theories:

- ◆ Eugenic Theory — theories of genetic causation and epi genetics. One of the most significant and morally disturbing events was the Nazi's extermination of 'mentally disturbed' people as a result of Eugenic Theory.
- ◆ Organic pathology — assumption that organic disease is one in which there are detectable physical or biochemical changes within the brain, for example dementia, MS, Huntington's disease, chemically induced brain damage, physical damage to the brain.
- ◆ Neuroscience — study of the structure and function of the brain and central nervous system and the neuro physiological mechanisms underlying mental disorders.

#### Psychological Theories:

- ◆ Psychoanalytical theory — Freud Psychosocial theory, Erikson Developmental Theory, Bowlby Attachment theory.
- ◆ Cognitive behavioural theory — Pavlov — Cognitive conditioning, Skinner-operant conditioning, Bandura-social Learning theory.
- ◆ Humanistic theory — Rogers person centred theory, Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

## National Unit Support Notes (continued)

**Unit title:** Influences on Mental Health and Wellbeing (SCQF level 6)

### Sociological Theories:

- ◆ The sociology of mental health — Pilgrim and Rogers (2020).
- ◆ Social Perspectives of madness — Beresford, P (2010).
- ◆ Social determinants of mental health — Read and Bentall (2010).
- ◆ Adverse Childhood experiences — Felitti et al (1998)
- ◆ Inequality — Wilson and Pickett (2018) Mental Health Foundation (2016), (2018), (2019), (2020).
- ◆ Loneliness — Hari (2018) Mental Health Foundation (2010).
- ◆ Labelling theory — Scheff (1974).

### Cultural theories:

- ◆ Irving Goffman's work on Stigma.
- ◆ Tahira Abdullah (2011) — Stigma and Cultural understanding of mental health.
- ◆ Hechanova and Waelde (2017) — Impact of cultural diversity on understanding mental health.

There is now a growing body of evidence which specifically refers to the important influence of spirituality and religion in relation to mental health and wellbeing:

- ◆ Worthington and Aten (2009) cited in Freeth (2020) define types of spirituality; Connection, religious, humanistic, with nature and cosmos.
- ◆ Mental Health Foundation (2006) explore the impact of spirituality on mental health.

Another area of growing interest is workplace cultures, particularly hybrid working arrangements and the impact of COVID-19 on people's sense of safety and security.

This is not an exhaustive list or a prescribed list. Research in the field of mental health and wellbeing is constantly evolving therefore facilitators are free to explore contemporary learning and evidence in each of these areas of study.

### Outcome 3

Learners will explore what a model of practice is and how this informs ways of working with people.

Models and approaches could include:

- ◆ The Medical Model.
- ◆ The Biopsychosocial Model.
- ◆ The Recovery and Strengths Based Model.
- ◆ Peer Support Approach.
- ◆ Public Health Approach — Socio ecological Model (WHO).
- ◆ The Power Threat Meaning Framework.
- ◆ Trauma Informed Approach.

## National Unit Support Notes (continued)

**Unit title:** Influences on Mental Health and Wellbeing (SCQF level 6)

This is not a definitive or exhaustive list and facilitators are free to teach other relevant models.

Learners will be supported and encouraged to investigate where these models and approaches are implemented and how they support the treatment of or prevent and promote mental health and wellbeing.

### Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

It may be helpful to cover the content of this unit on an outcome by outcome basis, in the order presented in the unit. The person delivering this unit should have experience or knowledge of safeguarding individuals as some of the course content may directly relate to individual learners.

Learners should be made aware of the various sources of support available to them within the classroom, the institution and local supports and recommended online supports. Other sources of support include:

#### Information Sources:

NHS Inform — <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/mental-health>

Clear Your Head — <https://clearyourhead.scot/>

Aye Feel — Young Scot <https://young.scot/campaigns/national/aye-fee>

#### Helplines and text services:

Childline: 0800 1111.

YoungMinds Crisis Messenger text service:

Text YM to 85258

Text SHOUT to 85258 <https://giveusashout.org/>

Samaritans:

Call 116 123

Chat online

Email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

Use of social media such as YouTube and podcast materials, documentaries and online resources could form part of the delivery along with guest speakers, classroom discussions and research activities.

### Guidance on approaches to assessment of this unit

To achieve this unit, learners must meet all learning outcomes and evidence requirements. Where possible centres should ensure assessments are integrated into learning and generated naturally through the teaching and learning experience. When learners experience a range of assessment methods it helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

## National Unit Support Notes (continued)

### Unit title: Influences on Mental Health and Wellbeing (SCQF level 6)

Assessment evidence can be drawn from a variety of sources and presented in a variety of formats. The evidence does not need to be gathered in one activity but can be assembled from a variety of tasks and assessments carried out throughout the unit. Evidence may be presented for individual outcomes or gathered for the unit or alongside other units in the award.

Those delivering the unit should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, and understanding of their learners, to determine the most appropriate ways to generate evidence.

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners. The following are suggestions only:

- ◆ information leaflet.
- ◆ poster.
- ◆ report.
- ◆ a presentation or a filmed interview or documentary.
- ◆ wiki report/blog.
- ◆ podcast.
- ◆ or any other appropriate method agreed by the learner and assessor.

Centres are encouraged to submit centre-devised assessment for prior verification to ensure that the national standard is being met.

### Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the evidence requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at [www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment](http://www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment).

### Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

Opportunities for developing aspects of Core Skills should be incorporated where they arise naturally in the teaching and learning process. Teaching methods such as class discussion will develop Communication skills. Learners may also have the opportunity to develop Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and presentation skills through research and presentation. It may be possible to undertake group work as part of the research for this unit in which case learners could develop skills relating to Working with Others. Learners will also have the opportunity to develop problem solving skills as they develop the ability to think critically about mental health and wellbeing. As learners investigate evidence to support their investigations on perspectives, theories and models they will have the opportunity to develop Numeracy skills as they may come across statistical data and graphs.

## **National Unit Support Notes (continued)**

**Unit title:** Influences on Mental Health and Wellbeing (SCQF level 6)

Consideration of their own 'digital footprint' may provide opportunity for development of employability and citizenship skills and developing a deeper more informed understanding of mental health and wellbeing will enable learners to proactively manage their own mental health and wellbeing and more effectively support colleagues and peers.

## History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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Unit template: June 2017

## General information for learners

### **Unit title:** Influences on Mental Health and Wellbeing (SCQF level 6)

This section will help you decide whether this is the unit for you by explaining what the unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

This unit will help you understand the range of factors which influence our mental health and wellbeing. The unit provides an introduction to biological, psychological, sociological and cultural perspectives on how we understand mental health and wellbeing. You will be encouraged to develop a deeper understanding of the theory and knowledge which informs our understanding and the range of influences which can affect mental health and wellbeing. You will have the opportunity to investigate different models and approaches which inform public health and service responses to mental health promotion and, support for mental health problems.

This unit is suitable for anyone who has interest in developing a deeper understanding of mental health and wellbeing. It may be of particular interest to anyone wishing to work in human resources, community development, public policy and public health, public sector and frontline services, such as health and social care, medicine or emergency services.

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, you would benefit from having one of the following, or equivalent:

- ◆ The level 5 award in Mental Health and Wellbeing.
- ◆ The level 5 Influences on Mental Health and Wellbeing unit.
- ◆ The skills, knowledge and understanding required for successful completion of level 5 units.

The content of the level 6 award follows on from the level 4 and 5 Mental Health and Wellbeing awards. It is important to re-emphasise that these awards are not an exploration of mental illness but designed to provide you with the knowledge which informs a much broader understanding of mental health and wellbeing and what that looks like for the individual and for wider society.

On successful completion of the unit the learner will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of perspectives which influence our understanding of mental health and wellbeing.
2. Explain how theoretical approaches inform understanding of mental health and wellbeing.
3. Investigate current models and approaches used to influence mental health and wellbeing for the individual or society.

Assessment evidence can be drawn from a variety of sources and presented in a variety of formats. The evidence does not require to be achieved in one activity but can be assembled from a variety of tasks and assessments carried out throughout the course. Evidence may be presented for individual outcomes or gathered for the unit or alongside other units in the award.

## General information for learners (continued)

**Unit title:** Factors Influencing Mental Health and Wellbeing  
(SCQF level 6)

You must meet **all learning outcomes and evidence requirements** to fully achieve this unit. You could demonstrate your knowledge using a range of methods which could include:

- ◆ information leaflet.
- ◆ poster.
- ◆ report.
- ◆ presentation, filmed interview or documentary.
- ◆ wiki blog/report.
- ◆ podcast.
- ◆ or any other appropriate method.