

Higher Sociology

Teaching notes

You can use these notes as a basis for teaching the Higher Sociology course. These are a suggestion only and follow the sequence outlined in Approach 1. The notes are not intended to be exhaustive, and you should complement them with additional tasks to ensure learning and consolidation.

Teaching aid

This is designed to assist you when using the Higher Sociology note resources.

Human Society

Lesson 1

In addition to the PowerPoint, you should direct learners to the Course Specification, with particular reference to pages 4–12.

If learners have not previously studied sociology, then a good 'starter' would be to ask them to write down what they think sociology is. Even when course choices have apparently been made on the basis of subject descriptors, many learners have misconceptions about sociology.

Lesson 2

It is important that learners understand sociological concepts, and you should emphasise that common sense is not sociology. Additional tasks could include getting learners to try to create their own differences before getting to the final slide.

Lesson 3

You should add examples to help expand answers. Include areas where structures clearly influence lives and life chances, and examples of real-life individuals who have helped to effect structural changes in society. To assess their understanding, you could ask learners to create a table of differences between the structural and action perspectives, showing where they differ in matched points.

Lessons 4–9

You should present each of the theories in context and expand upon and exemplify them. These slides provide a starting point and give the areas that should be covered for assessment. Learners should know at least three features. You should cover similarities and differences between theories, giving examples where possible. Learners find it useful to explore these theories more and to find real-life examples to aid their learning. They must explore the similarities and differences between consensus and conflict; structural and action; and between individual theories.

Lessons 10–12

You should give examples of each type of research method, and direct learners to a real piece of research to illustrate each one. You should cover how to choose appropriate research methods, explaining that broad, structural theories favour quantitative methods and action theories favour qualitative methods, and the reasons for this. Validity and reliability are not assessed discretely in this section, but are necessary for evaluating research methods and used in other sections to evaluate research studies.

Learners should be prepared to describe and explain features, strengths and weaknesses of theories as well as similarities and differences. They should also be prepared to explain the features, advantages and disadvantages of each research method.

Culture and identity

Lesson 1

You should give definitions of some of the key terms in this section.

Lesson 2

You should look at the key concept of socialisation. Although you may have covered this in section 1, it is important that learners have a good understanding of socialisation and the agents of socialisation, including their contested place in sociological theories. You should provide learners with examples.

Lesson 3

The link on the slide looking at diversity, prejudice and discrimination is to a Scottish Government website which contains several case studies. Collectively, they make up a piece of research rich in examples of these concepts. You could build a task around this resource.

Lesson 4

You should look at the formation of gender identity, including the theories of functionalism, feminism and Marxism. This could provide a starting point for an essay on this topic, along with the study in lesson 5. Further reading and exemplification would also be required.

Lesson 5

As with lesson 4, you should give learners examples and encourage them to read around the subject to supplement the lessons.

Lesson 6

You should look at labelling theory, which comes under the action perspective and is the only new theory in this section.

Lesson 7

You should cover the mandatory study for this section.

Lesson 8

You should cover age as one of the mandatory characteristics in this section.

Lesson 9

You should look at sub-culture and include Marxist and feminist theoretical approaches. You should supplement this with a relevant study and take an in-depth look at a culture and a sub-culture.

Social issues

You should cover the mandatory social issue of social mobility and another social issue in depth. You should apply theoretical and research knowledge to both, and give suitable examples.

Learners are given mandatory studies for social mobility, and should understand these in terms of their findings, strengths and weaknesses.

Learners should also be able to explain the findings and evaluation of studies related to their other social issue. For both social mobility and the other social issue, learners should be able to link the studies to sociological theories.

Lesson 1

You should define social mobility, absolute mobility and relative mobility.

Lesson 2

You should look at measuring social class.

Lessons 3 and 4

You should cover the two mandatory studies for this section.

Lesson 5

You should look at sociological theory and social mobility and give features, strengths and weaknesses for three of these theories.

Assignment

You should give learners an overview of the requirements of their coursework, including an expansion of the four areas of the assignment.