



## Higher National Unit specification: general information

**Unit title:** Cultural Studies: An Introduction

**Unit code:** FN1E 34

**Superclass:** FL

**Publication date:** June 2011

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 01

### Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to equip candidates with the tools to examine and recognise the characteristic features of human culture generally leading to an in-depth study of a culture of their choice. This Unit is suitable for candidates who wish to develop a range of skills (research, analysis, evaluation and presentation), which can be applied in other areas of study. This Unit is intended for candidates who wish to broaden their understanding of the role of music in various cultures and will also be of value to those wishing to progress to Higher Education.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- 1 Describe the key features that characterise culture and cultural development.
- 2 Examine selected cultures and describe how the key features typify these cultures.
- 3 Investigate the character and development of a specific cultural group.

### Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Candidates should have good communication skills. These may be demonstrated by the achievement of Core Skill Communication at Higher level or by possession of Higher English and Communication or a suitable HN Communication Unit (SCQF levels 5/6). It would be beneficial if candidates have previous experience in research, analysis, evaluation and/or presentation although not essential to the successful completion of the Unit.

## **General information (cont)**

### **Credit points and level**

2 Higher National Unit credits at SCQF level 7: (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7\*)

*\*SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

### **Core Skills**

There may be opportunities to gather evidence towards Core Skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

### **Context for delivery**

This is an optional Unit in the frameworks for HNC/D Music, Music Business and Sound Production Group Awards. It is recommended that it is taught and assessed within the context of the particular Group Award to which it contributes.

### **Assessment**

The Unit is designed to demonstrate candidates' ability to gather, examine, process and present relevant information. It is suggested that the Instrument of Assessment used in Outcomes 1 and 2 should be a written report and that the remaining Outcome be in the form of a presentation. This will allow candidates to gain experience in collating research materials prior to their presentation. Candidates may choose, where appropriate, to use oral, text, visual and audio elements to enhance their presentation.

It may also be possible for all three Outcomes to be assessed holistically using one project-based Instrument of Assessment. In this case, candidates should adhere to criteria set out for a presentation and include materials gathered for the purpose of the written reports. It is envisaged in this case that the presentation would be of a more comprehensive nature and that materials gathered for the purpose of the written reports be submitted with the presentation for final assessment.

This method of assessment could also include the opportunity to question the candidate's underpinning knowledge.

## Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

**Unit title:** Cultural Studies: An Introduction

**Unit code:** FN1E 34

The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or Skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

### Outcome 1

Describe the key features that characterise culture and cultural development.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Common language
- ◆ Beliefs and Lore — traditions, customs and practices
- ◆ Creative arts — visual, music, literature/writings and drama
- ◆ Religion and Ritual
- ◆ Social structures, political, economic and legal environment
- ◆ Research skills

#### Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can produce a written or oral report including all above bullet point items. Reports must describe the key features characterising human culture and cultural development and candidates must explain how these features affect cultural development and social cohesion.

#### Assessment Guidelines

The assessment for this Outcome could be a written or oral report, or form part of a larger integrated presentation if Outcomes are to be assessed holistically. If assessed holistically a written or oral presentation would have to be presented.

If assessed individually and as a written report, the assessment should occur around the middle of the study period.

Should there be ambiguity regarding a candidate's response, oral questioning may be used to eliminate any doubt as to the candidate's understanding. The lecturer should note questions and responses.

## Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

**Unit title:** Cultural Studies: An Introduction

### Outcome 2

Examine selected cultures and describe how the key features typify these cultures.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Application of key features
- ◆ Representation
- ◆ Production and consumption
- ◆ Social regulation
- ◆ Research skills

#### Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can, for at least two cultural groups:

- ◆ identify and report on how the key features relate to the chosen cultures
- ◆ identify and describe the forms of representation of the chosen cultures
- ◆ identify and describe the production and consumption practices of the chosen cultures
- ◆ describe the regulatory practices of the chosen cultures

Evidence for the Knowledge and/or Skills in this Outcome will be provided in the form of a written or oral report and all of the above must be included as part of candidates' reports. This Outcome requires the candidate to select two cultures for study and outline developmental features.

#### Assessment Guidelines

The assessment for this Outcome could be a written or oral report, or form part of a larger integrated presentation if Outcomes are to be assessed holistically. If assessed holistically a written or oral presentation would have to be presented.

Candidates should use materials and knowledge gathered for Outcome 1 as a basis for their Outcome 2 research.

Should there be ambiguity regarding a candidate's response, oral questioning may be used to eliminate any doubt as to the candidate's understanding. The lecturer should note questions and responses.

## Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

**Unit title:** Cultural Studies: An Introduction

### Outcome 3

Investigate the character and development of a specific cultural group.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Identify aims and objectives of investigating.
- ◆ Gather factual information.
- ◆ Presentation of results of investigation appropriate in terms of language style and content.

#### Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ clearly state the aims and objectives of the investigation
- ◆ structure factual information on chosen culture logically
- ◆ present the results of the investigation appropriately in terms of language style and content

Evidence for the Knowledge and/or Skills in this Outcome will be provided in the form of a written or oral presentation. Candidates should examine the development of their chosen culture in terms of its characteristics, features and values and take account of regional difference.

#### Assessment Guidelines

The assessment for this Outcome could be a written or oral report, or form part of a larger integrated presentation if Outcomes are to be assessed holistically. If assessed holistically a written or oral presentation would have to be presented. Candidates should be encouraged to use materials and knowledge gathered for previous Outcomes as the basis for their Outcome 3 investigation. This could also be an opportunity for candidates to focus on an area of special interest.

Should there be ambiguity regarding a candidate's response, oral questioning may be used to eliminate any doubt as to the candidate's understanding. The lecturer should note questions and responses.

## Higher National Unit specification: support notes

**Unit title:** Cultural Studies: An Introduction

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

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 80 hours.

### Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit is designed to enable candidates to gain an insight into society and their traditions and to study the cultural factors that helped shape development. It is aimed at those who have an interest in culture or to those who wish to go on to further study. The aim should be to raise the candidate's awareness of the distinctive features of the chosen cultures and to encourage them to develop insights into the effect of these features on national characteristics. Candidates should examine the development of a national culture in terms of its characteristics, features and values taking account of regional differences.

The cultural key features will include physical determinants such as boundaries and relief, cultural centres, the historical background, the political and economic system, social and environmental influences, multi-ethnic aspects of cultures, heritage and achievement, the arts and folklore.

### Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

A candidate-centred resource-based learning approach is recommended, supported by lecturer exposition of key points. The inclusion of guest lectures and visits may provide an opportunity to gather evidence.

In order to broaden the focus of the Course some class time could be devoted to the discussion of a variety of topics regarding the chosen culture.

Suggested topics for discussion may include:

- ◆ Arts
- ◆ Eating habits
- ◆ Social behaviour
- ◆ Education system
- ◆ Family life
- ◆ Feminism/equality/diversity
- ◆ Green issues
- ◆ Immigration policy
- ◆ Language
- ◆ Media
- ◆ Music
- ◆ Ethnic diversity
- ◆ Religion/belief systems

## Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

### Unit title: Cultural Studies: An Introduction

Such discussion may also stimulate candidates to undertake further research towards their investigation for Outcome 3. Where possible one or more of the following would be useful:

- ◆ Guest Lecturers on specialised subjects, eg media, politics.
- ◆ Informal visit by people from the cultures under study to answer questions and provide information that may not be available from other sources.
- ◆ Visits, eg art galleries, museums.

Lecturers may find it helpful to set regular written assignments based on, for example, an important historical event or person; comparing and contrasting two regions; outlining the political system. These exercises are not only useful for the candidate in broadening their grasp of the topics and as an aid to revision for assessments but, in the course of their research the candidates may also be stimulated to gather material for their investigation for the third Outcome.

Whilst it may not be appropriate in some instances for candidates to use all criteria (oral, written, visual and audio) in their presentation, it is desirable that they should include at least two.

If this Unit is assessed using one integrated assessment, it should take the form of a presentation. This should be of a more comprehensive nature than that required for a single Outcome.

As it is possible for candidates to use research they have gathered for the purpose of one Outcome as a basis for subsequent Outcomes, tutors should encourage candidates to recognise potential for this in their Unit delivery wherever possible.

### Open learning

This Unit could be delivered by distance learning with suitable support material. Centres will require candidates to deliver the presentation Outcome in person so that they can gain additional evidence by question and answer.

### Opportunities for the use of 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 e-checklists. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Further advice is available in *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education (AA1641, March 2003)*, *SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools (BD2625, June 2005)*.

## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)**

**Unit title:** Cultural Studies: An Introduction

### **Opportunities for developing Core Skills**

There may be opportunities to gather evidence towards Core Skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components.

### **Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs**

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website [www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).



## History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2011

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged.

Additional copies of this Unit specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. Please contact the Business Development and Customer Support team, telephone 0303 333 0330.

## General information for candidates

### Unit title: Cultural Studies: An Introduction

This Unit is designed to give you the knowledge to examine and recognise the characteristic features of a particular culture. It will be beneficial to all candidates studying towards an HND Music qualification with a focus of a particular tradition. An increased awareness of the context of the music you are studying should also enhance your musical performance. You will be expected to undertake research to supplement information received in class and will be supported in your efforts to develop skills in analysis, evaluation and presentation. Most activities you will undertake in this Unit will be classroom based, although there should be opportunity to access online resources, etc. Your own research is fundamental to the successful completion of this Unit.

**Outcome 1** — requires you to have an overview of the key features characterising human culture and cultural development. You will also identify how these features affect cultural development and social cohesion. You will be required to submit a written or oral report for assessment.

**Outcome 2** — requires you to examine at least two cultures and identify what it is that characterise these cultures; identify and report on how key features relate to the chosen cultures. You should also identify and describe the forms of representation, production and consumption practices and regulatory practices of the chosen cultures. The assessment for this Outcome is a written or oral presentation.

**Outcome 3** — you will investigate one culture from Outcome 2, clearly stating the aims and objectives of the investigation. You will examine the development of your chosen culture in terms of its characteristics, features and values and take account of regional differences. You will be required to structure factual information on your chosen culture logically and present the results of the investigation appropriately in terms of language style and content. The assessment for this Outcome will be a presentation. Where appropriate you may use oral, text, visual and audio elements to supplement and enhance your presentation.

It is possible that you will undertake this Unit as a project that will encompass all three Outcomes. In this case, you will be required to give a comprehensive presentation demonstrating your knowledge of the information required for these Outcomes. Any additional information gathered which is not included in your presentation should be submitted as part of your supplementary evidence. This will form part of your assessment and should be submitted at the time of your presentation. In addition you may be questioned after your presentation to gain further information. You are encouraged at all times to be aware of the relationships that exist between the Outcomes so that elements of the research you undertake for Outcome 1 can be used as a basis for your research in Outcome 2 and research from both Outcomes 1 and 2 can form the basis for your presentation in Outcome 3.