



Higher National Unit specification

General information

Unit title: Supporting Contemporary Families (SCQF level 7)

Unit code: H992 34

Superclass: PN

Publication date: June 2015

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 01

Unit purpose

The Unit is designed to enable learners to examine the evolution of the family throughout history to the present day, identify the diversity of family forms and understand how changes in society affect the family structure. They will demonstrate an understanding of how the state impacts on families through policy and legislation, the challenges and issues faced by families and the support available to families both nationally and in the local community.

The Unit will provide learners with an understanding of the diversity of family life and the challenges which families face. It will also develop the knowledge and skills required to promote best practice to support the diverse range of children and families within the sector.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Describe the evolution of the family to the present day.
- 2 Analyse the challenges and issues faced by families in the 21st Century.
- 3 Demonstrate an understanding of the support available to children and families nationally and in the local community.

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit Credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7)

Recommended entry to the Unit

Learners for this Unit should have effective communication and interpersonal skills and be able to use these skills to give an account of their experiences, reflect on them, make valid conclusions and express strengths and development needs, both personal and organisational.

Higher National Unit specification: General information (cont)

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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.

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.

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards

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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.

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. Learners 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 evolution of the family to the present day.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Research skills
- ◆ Evolution of the family through history including changes to family structures
- ◆ Models of parenting
- ◆ Sociological and demographic changes in relation to current legislation and policy influencing the families
- ◆ Current legislation and policy influencing the family

Outcome 2

Analyse the challenges and issues faced by families in the 21st Century.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Challenges and issues faced by the families
- ◆ Impact of change on the families
- ◆ Agencies and resources available to families to cope with challenges
- ◆ Stages of pregnancy and pre-birth

Outcome 3

Demonstrate an understanding of the support available to children and families nationally and in the local community.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Support available to children and families nationally
- ◆ Support available to children and families in the local community

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Evidence Requirements for this Unit

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

- ◆ Identify relevant cultural and social issues including inequalities impacting on the evolution of the family.
- ◆ Identify and demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of different models of parenting, family contexts and diversity in family life.
- ◆ Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of sociological and demographic changes in relation to current legislation and policy influencing the family.
- ◆ Analyse and explain two challenges and two issues currently faced by families.
- ◆ Explain two types of support available nationally and two types of support available locally, outlining the benefits they provide and highlight any negative impact they may have.
- ◆ Demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge of legislation and policy with particular reference to confidentiality policies and the Data Protection Act.
- ◆ Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the stages of pregnancy and pre-birth.



Higher National Unit Support Notes

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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

Outcome 1

The industrial revolution has been categorised as the era which led to the development of the nuclear family. Since then families have changed, and with the advent of working mothers the extended family evolved bringing with it important bearings on the dynamics of family life.

The family Unit has been influenced and further shaped by cultural, economic, demographic and societal changes which have occurred in post war Britain. The creation of the welfare state has elicited numerous policies with a predominance to dictate to rather than support the very people they were originally designed to help.

Learners should be encouraged to explore these influences and discuss and evaluate the impact of the direction the family structure has taken over the years which has led to their current compositions.

Definitions:

- ◆ Nuclear family 'A couple and their dependent children, regarded as a basic social Unit'. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* 'also called elementary family — a group of people who are united by ties of partnership and parenthood consisting of a pair of adults and their socially recognised children.' *Encyclopædia Britannica*
- ◆ Extended family 'A family which extends beyond the nuclear family to include grandparents and other relatives.' *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* 'A group of relatives, such as those of three generations, who live in close geographic proximity rather than under the same roof.' *The Free Dictionary*

Developmental psychologists have long been interested in how differing models of parenting impacts on child development, acknowledging the importance of parenting in the early years. Research has uncovered convincing links between parenting styles and the effects these styles have on children. This Outcome should also focus on discussing and evaluating at least two different parenting models.

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During the early 1960s, psychologist Diana Baumrind conducted a study on more than 100 preschool-age children (Baumrind, 1967). Utilising various research methods she identified four important dimensions of parenting:

- ◆ Disciplinary strategies
- ◆ Warmth and nurturance
- ◆ Communication styles
- ◆ Expectations of maturity and control

Based on these dimensions, Baumrind suggested that the majority of parents display one of three different parenting styles. Further research by Maccoby and Martin also suggested the addition of a fourth parenting style (1983).

Authoritarian Parenting — Children are expected to follow the strict rules established by the parents. Failure to follow such rules usually results in punishment.

Authoritative Parenting — This parenting style is much more democratic. Authoritative parents are responsive to their children and willing to listen to questions.

Permissive Parenting — Sometimes referred to as indulgent parents, have very few demands to make of their children. These parents rarely discipline their children because they have relatively low expectations of maturity and self-control.

Uninvolved Parenting — Is characterized by few demands, low responsiveness and little communication. While these parents fulfill the child's basic needs, they are generally detached from their child's life.

Learners should review at least two different styles of parenting discussing the positive influences they may bring and also their potential for impacting negatively on Outcomes for their children.

Policy

Exploration is required by the learner of the impact of societal and population changes which have occurred over the past 50 years which has led to issues affecting social and health inequalities in Scotland.

The *Getting it right for every child* approach introduced in 2006 ensures that *anyone* providing that support puts the child or young person — and their family — at the centre. The wellbeing of children and young people is at the heart of *Getting it right for every child*.

During 2008 and 2009 the Scottish Government and COSLA published jointly three linked social policy frameworks: *Equally Well*, the *Early Years Framework* and *Achieving Our Potential*. Each of these addresses the underlying causes of Scotland's health and other inequalities. The concordat set a new context for policy development. It provided a focus for the first time on Outcomes and an opportunity to tackle the big issues facing Scotland. The framework, alongside *Equally Well* and *Achieving our Potential*, was viewed as representing a new dawn in social policy.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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The Child Poverty Strategy Scotland, 2011 was introduced following *The Child Poverty Act 2010* ('the Child Poverty Act') set out UK-wide targets relating to the eradication of child poverty. It provides that it is the duty of the UK Government to ensure that the child poverty targets are met in relation to the year commencing 1 April 2020.

The Strategy states that children and young people growing up in poverty are more vulnerable than their peers to a wide range of negative Outcomes. Evidence shows that growing up in poverty can have a profound and lasting impact on children's Outcomes — income poverty and material deprivation are strongly associated with poorer Outcomes for children.

The Scottish Government's aspiration is for Scotland to be the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up. To demonstrate this commitment the Government invested 18 million pounds in the *National Parenting Strategy* which was launched in October 2012. The strategy seeks to turn this aspiration into practical action — by championing the importance of parenting.

Growing Up in Scotland (GUS) is the longitudinal research study tracking the lives of thousands of children and their families from birth through to the teenage years and beyond. GUS provides new information to help the Scottish Government and others develop policies and services for children and their families so that all children in Scotland have 'the best start in life'. It is funded by the Scottish Government and is carried out by *ScotCen Social Research* in collaboration with the *Centre for Research on Families and Relationships* (CRFR).

Legislation

The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 marked a significant stage in the development of legislation on the care of children in Scotland. It centres on the needs of children and their families and defines both parental responsibilities and rights in relation to children. It sets out the duties and powers available to public authorities to support children and their families and to intervene when the child's welfare requires it.

The most significant legislative change since then is the advent of the *Children and Young People Act (Scotland) 2014*. The Act serves to make provision about the rights of children and young people; to make provision about investigations by the Commissioner for Children and Young People in Scotland; to make provision for and about the provision of services and support for or in relation to children and young people; to make provision for an adoption register; to make provision about children's hearings, detention in secure accommodation and consultation on certain proposals in relation to schools; and for connected purposes.

Learners should be guided to review the principles of the acts and identify the effect they bring to bear on family life.

Finally learners should identify and discuss the extent to which current legislation and policy affects family life and whether the good intentions set out by the Scottish Government are in fact being realised by making a positive difference to parents and their children.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Outcome 2

In 1998 the Scottish Office launched *A Childcare Strategy* for Scotland. It committed government to increasing the availability and affordability of early childhood education and childcare. Since then successive governments, at Westminster and in Edinburgh, have acted to make childcare more affordable for working parents. This infrastructure of support includes the subsidy of parents' childcare costs through the childcare element of *Working Tax Credit*, administered by the Department for Work and Pensions, with levels of support determined by Westminster. Currently working parents on low incomes can receive up to 70 per cent of their childcare costs up to a maximum of £175 per week for one child in childcare and £300 per week for two or more children. From April 2013 tax credits are being gradually merged into the single Universal Credit, but the structure of childcare support will remain broadly similar to Working Tax Credit.

Parenting across Scotland requested the Evidence Request Bank (this is a partnership of the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships, West Lothian Council, Parenting across Scotland, Children in Scotland and the Scottish Government) for an evidence response to the question 'How have family households in Scotland changed over 2001–2011?' The report was published in April 2014 — extracts:

- ◆ More people are cohabiting than before.
- ◆ In 2011, more children were born to unmarried than to married parents for the first time.
- ◆ There are over 163,000 lone parents with 295,000 children (almost one in four families).
- ◆ In 2006, it was predicted that by 2010, stepfamilies would be the dominant family form.
- ◆ One in four children (250,000) is growing up in a family whose income is below the poverty line.
- ◆ 27% of lone parents have a long-standing health problem or disability as do 19% of children living with a lone parent.
- ◆ Around 16,500 children a year experience a parent's imprisonment.
- ◆ Scotland has a higher rate of teenage pregnancy than most other western European countries.
- ◆ Teenage pregnancy is linked to deprivation with the rates of teenage pregnancy in deprived areas more than treble those of the least deprived areas.
- ◆ The average age of becoming a mother increased from 27.4 in 1991 to 29.6 in 2010 and becoming a father from 30 to 32.4.

Social inequality

Inequality is not difference. Saying that people are unequal is saying that some are disadvantaged relative to others; inequality is disadvantage in a social context. The main inequalities in society are class, gender, race and inequalities in income and wealth.

Inequalities are usually represented in one of three patterns:

- ◆ *Hierarchical inequality*. Inequalities stretch from the top to the bottom, with everyone ranked in a relative position. This is the main pattern of inequality in income and wealth.
- ◆ *Stratification*. People are ranked in groups, set at different levels. This model is mainly used in discussions of class and gender.

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- ◆ *Social division.* Societies can be seen as almost divided between groups — 'black' and 'white', men and women, rich and poor. A society which was genuinely 'divided' would not be a society any more, but the image of division is a powerful one: the 19th century politician Benjamin Disraeli, for example, wrote of the rich and poor as 'two nations'.

Social inequality is associated with social problems. *The Spirit Level* shows that societies which are more unequal tend to have not just more poverty, but more crime, more mental illness, more teenage pregnancy and so on.

Policies for equality

The inequalities which people are concerned with, Rae suggests, can concern:

- ◆ Individuals — the comparison is made, for example, between rich and poor people.
- ◆ Blocks in society — like women, racial minorities, old people or regions.
- ◆ Segments — for example, a distinction confined to children or to women.

A policy which corrects one inequality (eg between women and men) can aggravate another (eg between rich and poor, if the beneficiaries are richer women). For example, there is a current argument in India that attempts to avoid gender discrimination will discriminate between castes.

Policies for equality can aim at:

- ◆ *Equality of treatment.* This is treatment without bias, prejudice or special conditions applying to people. (It is not treating everyone the same - equality of treatment in health services does not mean that everyone gets a tracheotomy!)
- ◆ *Equal opportunity.* This can be the opportunity to compete (in which case it is the same as equal treatment), or the chance to compete on the same footing as others (which may require some redress before the competition starts).
- ◆ *Equality of Outcome.* Policies which are concerned with inequalities of income or health status are generally concerned with removing disadvantage in Outcome.

Redistribution

A measure is redistributive if the people who receive goods or services from a measure are not the same as the people who pay. All welfare provision is, by definition, redistributive in some way.

Redistribution does not have to be from rich to poor. Redistribution is conventionally classified as vertical or horizontal. Vertical redistribution may be progressive (from rich to poor) or regressive (from poor to rich). Horizontal redistribution goes from one kind of group to another - from men to women, households without children to families with children, tenants to owner-occupiers.

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The social division of welfare

Titmuss identified several different kinds of redistributive process, arguing that it was not possible to understand the redistributive impact of social policy without taking them fully into account. He referred to a 'social division of welfare', including three main types of welfare:

- ◆ Social welfare (the social services).
- ◆ Fiscal welfare (welfare distributed through the tax system).
- ◆ Occupational welfare (welfare distributed by industry as part of employment).

The classification is fairly crude. The category of fiscal welfare bundles together subsidies, incentives and transfer payments, including income maintenance. Occupational welfare includes perks, salary-related benefits, measures intended to improve the efficiency of the workforce and some philanthropic measures. The classification excludes legal welfare (redistribution through the courts), the voluntary sector and the informal sector. The importance of the idea was, however:

- ◆ To draw attention to different patterns of redistribution.
- ◆ To explain that different kinds of redistribution (for example by tax or by benefits) can have similar effects.
- ◆ To broaden the scope of social policy as a subject.

The 'strategy of equality'

Tawney argued that public spending is the most effective way of redistributing resources. The aim, he writes:

'is not the division of the nation's income into eleven million fragments, to be distributed, without further ado, like cake at a school treat, among its eleven million families. It is, on the contrary, the pooling of its surplus resources by means of taxation, and the use of the funds thus obtained to make accessible to all, irrespective of their income, occupation or social position, the conditions of civilisation which, in the absence of such measures, can only be enjoyed by the rich.'

The provision of universal benefits helps to create equality in its widest sense — the reassurance provided by social protection.

Julian Legrand argues against this that the universal social services are not available equally to all. The universal National Health Service in the UK gives health care disproportionately to middle class people. The state provision of education tends to be regressive, partly because people are poorest when the children are young, but mainly because it is the middle classes who gain most from education after the age of 16. Transport subsidies are worth most to people who travel the greatest distances, who tend to be middle class. And housing subsidies tend to favour home owners, who are more likely to be wealthy. In his view, the 'strategy of equality' proposed by Tawney has failed.

P Spicker, 2006, *Liberty, equality, fraternity*, Policy Press.

Learners should be encouraged to explore the current difficulties faced by families including issues surrounding inequalities of poverty.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Support and Inequalities

There are numerous agencies providing both national and local resources to help families. Examples of these are:

Aberlour, One Parent Families Scotland, Parenting across Scotland, Children 1st, Barnardos Scotland and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation — this is not an exhaustive list and learners should be encouraged to identify particular local resources available.

NHS Health Scotland outlines the importance of pregnancy in the early years agenda. The Scottish Government's *Early Years Framework* defines early years as pre-birth to eight years old. This broad definition of early years to include pre-birth is in recognition of the importance of pregnancy in influencing Outcomes for children. Evidence shows that the impact of the antenatal stage can affect Outcomes, for example health and educational, throughout the entire lifespan of an individual.

All NHS boards have adopted maternity policy principles which advocate women and family centred services, with care tailored to individual need and provided by the most appropriately skilled professional. In adopting these principles, services have been developed to take account of the evidence for improving public health and ensure that maternity care provision reflects wider policy.

In relation to maternity care, they highlight the importance of seamless and early access to services, alongside early tailored intervention for women and families with additional social or medical need.

Health inequalities in the antenatal phase arise from complex social factors. They have the potential to increase the vulnerability of both the pregnant woman and her child, during and after pregnancy.

These include:

- - ◆ substance misuse
 - ◆ domestic abuse
 - ◆ being single
 - ◆ being unemployed
 - ◆ having a partner who is unemployed or employment unclassifiable
 - ◆ being a recent migrant to the UK
 - ◆ speaking no English

Infants of women living in complex social circumstances have an increased risk of dying during the perinatal period. 'Children born to women from more vulnerable groups also experience a higher risk of death or morbidity and face problems with pre-term labour, intrauterine growth restriction, low birth weight, low levels of breastfeeding and higher levels of neonatal complications'.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Antenatal education including childbirth education programmes, parenthood education, prenatal and antenatal classes, and a range of other prenatal and antenatal groups are aimed at reducing the complications of pregnancy and promoting the health and wellbeing of mother and child. Developing evidence has highlighted the importance of pregnancy and the immediate postnatal period in the health of the baby and reducing social and health inequalities.

Emerging knowledge regarding the importance of bonding, attachment and parenting has led to research examining the current content of antenatal education and an assessment of the evidence underpinning practice.

Learners should illustrate the importance of all early years workers understanding the significance of the pre-birth phase particularly in relation to bonding and attachment.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

This Unit is designed to be delivered as part of the Group Award for direct entry learners. It can also be used for workers as continuous professional development. It provides evidence of knowledge and understanding that can be used to evidence Units from the SVQ level 3 Social Services Children and Young People.

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

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

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

Outcomes for this Unit will be assessed holistically. Learners will be expected to produce an integrated report of approximately 2,500 words meeting the Evidence Requirements for all three Outcomes. Cultural and social issues and challenges faced by families in 21st Century society should be addressed supported by relevant legislation and policy in Scotland designed to support children and families.

Learners should be encouraged to undertake autonomous learning through research of current studies. It is essential that learners make reference to relevant legislation, policy and practice throughout.

In order to achieve this Unit, learners are required to present sufficient evidence that they have met all the Knowledge and Skills requirements for each Outcome.

Completion of the Group Award will enable progression to the HND Childhood Practice, SVQ Level 4 and employment at practitioner level. This will allow the learner to register with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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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.

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

Learners will have the opportunity to develop the following Core Skills:

Communication: Written communications will be developed through learners producing written work in a variety of formats: oral communication will be developed through discussion, debate and evidence of engagement with other learners, professionals and key people.

Working with Others: Will be developed as learners will be required to work collaboratively with colleagues from their own and other service areas in the preparation and research for their assignments.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT): Learners will develop their ICT skills through research and the presentation of written assignments.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for learners

Unit title: Supporting Contemporary Families (SCQF level 7)

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 develop knowledge and understanding about the nature of families, the different family forms which currently exist and how you should apply this in practice.

You will study the family as it once was and how it is in contemporary society investigating what has changed and how these changes have altered the society we live in.

You will be given the opportunity to develop your knowledge of current legislation, policy, framework and relevant papers that inform and promote the importance of providing a holistic approach in supporting the child and their family.

You will consider how issues and challenges faced by parents and carers can impact on their ability to provide appropriate care and support for children especially the very young child.

You will study the influence that inequalities in society has on the family and the effects this can have on Outcomes for children.

You will become familiar with examples of best practice of family support, taking cognisance of the significant importance of bonding, attachment and parenting to develop practice which supports children in practice settings.

Through your learning, you will develop your Core Skills in communication, working with others and information communication technology by:

- ◆ Producing written work in a variety of formats: discussion, debate and evidence of engagement with other learners, professionals and key people.
- ◆ Working collaboratively with colleagues from your own and other service areas in preparation and research for their assignments.
- ◆ Research and presentation of written reports.

Your assessment will allow you to complete a research project, producing a report which integrates the knowledge and understanding of all three Outcomes in the Unit, which are:

- 1 Describe the evolution of the family to the present day.
- 2 Analyse the challenges and issues faced by families in the 21st Century.
- 3 Demonstrate an understanding of the support available to children and families nationally and in the local community.