



Higher National Unit specification

General information

Unit title: Social Anthropology: Who does it and how to do it
(SCQF level 6)

Unit code: HG55 33

Superclass: EE

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Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 01

Unit purpose

The purpose of this unit is to enable learners to identify the distinctive nature of the subject of social anthropology, and to examine in detail some of the many roles it may play in the contemporary world. The unit offers an understanding of the field by considering what social anthropologists do: first, the essential aspects of training undertaken by professional anthropologists and then ways in which a social anthropological background may also be found in many other careers. These include international business and finance, journalism, diplomacy, sport and tourism. The unit also asks learners to think about how social anthropology might contribute to contemporary global concerns, such as threats to the environment, large numbers of displaced people, and the implications of advances in genetic engineering.

The unit is available for beginners who want to see what the subject involves and whether they would like to pursue it at a higher level, but ideally it builds on the SCQF level 5 unit, HG1M 45 *Social Anthropology: Understanding Our Place in the World*, which offers some hands-on experience of the field.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Describe the essential elements of training used by professional social anthropologists
- 2 Explain how social anthropological training can be of benefit to the contemporary world
- 3 Explain how the application of social anthropological knowledge and skills might be of benefit to a major contemporary problem.

Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 6: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6)

Recommended entry to the unit

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, and the unit can stand alone, learners would benefit from having achieved:

HG1M 45 Social Anthropology: Understanding Our Place in the World

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.

This is a stand-alone unit which may introduce the subject of social anthropology to those with no prior background in the field, but ideally builds on the SCQF level 5 unit, HG1M 45 *Social Anthropology: Understanding Our Place in the World*.

It may also be offered as an optional unit to learners taking a National Certificate in Social Sciences SCQF level 6, or Higher National Certificate or Diploma in Social Sciences, SCQF levels 7 and 8.

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.

This unit is designed to offer equality and inclusion to learners of any background.

Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards

Unit title: Social Anthropology: Who does it and how to do it
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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.

Outcome 1

Describe the essential elements of training used by professional social anthropologists

Knowledge and/or Skill

- ◆ The research method called participant observation
- ◆ Ethical issues associated with social anthropological research
- ◆ Examining languages in their social context
- ◆ The value of and reading ethnography

Outcome 2

Explain how social anthropological training can be of benefit to the contemporary world

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ A range of occupations in which trained anthropologists are employed in the contemporary world
- ◆ Ways in which anthropological training makes a distinctive contribution to the contemporary world

Outcome 3

Explain how the application of social anthropological knowledge and skills might be of benefit to a major contemporary problem.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Ethnographic accounts of a people whose local knowledge offers a deep understanding of global problems
- ◆ Ways in which social anthropological knowledge and skills can be applied to a problematic situation in the contemporary wider world

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Evidence Requirements for this unit

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills across all Outcomes by showing that they can describe and illustrate the distinctive features of the subject of social anthropology and its possible uses in the contemporary world.

NB It is essential that Outcome 1 is delivered before the other Outcomes.

Outcome 1

The learner will describe correctly the nature, value and possible pitfalls of the research method of participant observation.

He/she will give a clear description of ethical issues associated with social anthropological research. He/she will explain clearly the importance of examining languages in their social context.

The learner will also be required to read and explain the value of at least one ethnography for gaining a deep and insightful understanding of the people being described.

Evidence of achievement can be presented in any suitable form, oral and/or written.

The assessments will be undertaken in open-book conditions. The centre should take steps to ensure the authenticity of the learner's work.

Outcome 2

The learner will provide examples of a minimum of two occupational areas where social anthropologists can be employed in the contemporary world. They should go on to explain clearly ways in which their skills make a distinctive contribution to the contemporary world.

Evidence of achievement can be presented in any suitable form, oral and/or written.

The assessments will be undertaken in open-book conditions. The centre should take steps to ensure the authenticity of the learner's work.

Outcome 3

The learner will examine closely an ethnography of one particular people and explain clearly how the findings of this study could contribute towards a deeper understanding of bigger global issues in the contemporary world.

The learner will go on to describe at least one way in which the findings from an ethnology might be applied to a problematic situation in the contemporary world.

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Evidence of achievement can be presented in any suitable form, oral and/or written.

The assessments will be undertaken in open-book conditions. The centre should take steps to ensure the authenticity of the learner's work.

Higher National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Social Anthropology: Who does it and how to do it
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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.

For teaching Social Anthropology units, it is recommended that the instruction be interactive, drawing on the existing experience of the learners in their own social worlds, but also encouraging them to learn from each other, and from members of their local communities of various generations, as well as from writings, films and social media about peoples in other parts of the world. The aim is to discover different ways of thinking, and this is not a subject that can be memorised and learned by rote, nor can the findings be built on the testing of hypotheses. It needs to be an experience-based process in which engaging with people is an essential part of the learning. Thus, encouraging learners to carry out small field projects, and to share their findings in class, would be of benefit at any level.

This learning can involve any and all aspects of daily life, for example looking at the food people eat, when they eat it and with whom, and how these practises have changed over time. It can take into account the music people like, whether they play instruments, sing or perhaps dance, and how music influences their lives. Asking about objects that people value can introduce all sorts of ideas about relationships, about places, and about important occasions and ceremonies in their lives. Collecting a variety of examples is an excellent way to learn, and learners may be encouraged to take photographs, make video clips and record conversations, as well as writing notes, so that eventually they build up a portfolio of materials for assessment.

The learners can of course also learn by listening to lectures, by watching films and by visiting museums and other sites, as well as by reading and talking to people. This note is simply to add a bit of detail about the method of participant observation that social anthropologists characteristically use. The ability to do this can be absorbed gradually by developing an awareness of the way things work in social life, and encouraging learners to open their eyes and ears to what they experience every day is a great way to have them learn.

Guidance on the content and context for this unit

This unit is one of four units that aim to introduce social anthropology to schools and colleges. The unit builds on the knowledge, skills and experiences gained in unit HG1M 45 *Social Anthropology: Understanding Our Place in the World* at SCQF level 5 where teachers/tutors are invited to introduce a range of social anthropological work to learners, who would learn chiefly by investigating differences amongst themselves, and between their own lives and those of others, possibly in far-flung places. Units at SCQF levels 7 and 8 introduce the history and some of the important theories of social anthropology, while this SCQF level 6 unit focuses on the distinctive features of social anthropology by introducing a range of things that practising social anthropologists do.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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The research methods professional anthropologists use are the chief factor that distinguishes the discipline from others with similar interests, and the proposal is that the key elements of training required to understand and practice these methods be introduced first, using examples from the enormous corpus of work written by social anthropologists, both the ethnography they write and the descriptions — blogs, films and even tweets, as well as published work — about the participant observation they have done. There is a good range of choice for teachers/tutors, who can assess the level and quality best suited to their cohort of learners, but finding examples where language is discussed — even differences in the dominant English language — would fit the second part of the Outcome, and schools/colleges where Gaelic and Doric are in use could have an immediate advantage, as could those with immigrants still practising their own languages. Because participant observation may potentially be seen as intrusive, yet explaining in too much detail what the research is about could negatively impact on its outcome, there needs to be discussion in class about ethical issues involved before learners do their own projects. For example, a study on the use of polite (or rude) language would influence the speech of people who knew that was the aim, whereas they should know that an outsider is listening to them talking because they have an anthropological project to do. These things are usually discussed specifically in ethnographies, so the reading of them is very valuable.

The second Outcome ask learners to find ways in which anthropologists are contributing to the contemporary world, and teachers/tutors may choose from local and global examples to start the process: Alexandra Shulman, Editor-in-Chief, British Vogue, for example, and Doctor Jim Yong Kim, president of the World Bank Group, is a good global case as is Gillian Tett, a managing editor at the Financial Times. Harvard Business School has been teaching and publishing about the importance of anthropology to business, but even a simple internet search comes up with examples that learners could investigate in other fields such as journalism, diplomacy, sport and tourism. Academic social anthropologists are sometimes invited to comment on legal cases involving people from an area where they have worked, and they may also work as advocates for the human rights of an Indigenous People they know well. The aim here is to demonstrate a range of occupations that benefit from even an initial introduction to the depth of knowledge an anthropological study can unearth. In all these cases, a learner should be able to identify the contribution that a particular practitioner is making to their own (contemporary) world because of the ability they have gained to understand the people they work with, notably when their cultural background is different to their own.

Outcome 3 asks learners to be a bit creative, and think about how the findings of a social anthropological study might reveal understandings of big issues that have been overlooked in the contemporary world. For example, many Indigenous Peoples are shown to live sustainably within their own environment, although very often suffering from the imposition of capitalist ventures that ignore them and ideas they might offer for alleviating some of the problems of climate change; a serious examination of the ethnography of one particular people could reveal interesting indigenous science about relations with animals and plants, and local cures for illness (perhaps picked up by pharmaceutical companies). Alternatively, a detailed study of a tribal people might reveal ways that neighbours from different backgrounds can coexist quite happily, a matter not always well understood when big nations enter into local conflicts.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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On the other hand, an understanding of situations of local conflict could aid in coming to terms with problems surrounding the movement of large numbers of displaced people. Ethical issues surrounding scientific advances in surrogate parenthood and genetic engineering might offer another possibility. Again there is a range of choice for teachers/tutors to choose. After looking at a range of social anthropological studies, the learner will have a basis on which to consider contemporary problems and consider and suggest how social anthropological skills might be applied to help resolve these.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

General Introduction

NB It is essential that Outcome 1 is delivered before the other Outcomes.

All learning and teaching should be learner-centred, participative, interactive and practical. Learners must be encouraged, and provided with opportunities, to take an active role in and assume some responsibility for their own learning. A facilitative approach can be pursued either face-to-face with learners or as part of an online support, involving appropriate teacher/tutor or learner interventions as required to help with knowledge acquisition and skills development. Passive and rote learning or the mere reproduction of information from other sources is not acceptable.

The use of new technologies should be encouraged for researching, communicating and presenting information. This will assist in the development of a range of different skills, for example:

- ◆ Use of ICT
- ◆ Written and oral language skills
- ◆ Selection of current, appropriate sources of information
- ◆ Research
- ◆ Note taking
- ◆ Working independently and collaboratively
- ◆ Learning and study skills/skills in self-directed study
- ◆ Time management

Co-operative working with other learners to gather and exchange information should be encouraged as far as is practical. Some activities should be pre-planned and learners briefed in advance. In any group work, the teacher/tutor should ensure the rotation of roles and responsibilities, eg who leads or manages a group discussion. Learners should be encouraged and supported, in a secure environment, to challenge their 'comfort zone'. This practice will reflect the realities of the workplace where employees are expected to be flexible and versatile. Such an approach to learning and teaching will also develop skills in:

- ◆ Negotiation
- ◆ Collaboration
- ◆ Team work/interaction with others

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- ◆ Initiative
- ◆ Resilience
- ◆ Peer respect
- ◆ Responsibility/sense of ownership
- ◆ Personal effectiveness
- ◆ Problem solving

The introduction of learners to the ethnography of particular peoples might be beneficial throughout the teaching of this unit. Individuals or groups can choose to focus on a range of different peoples.

Outcome 1

The focus of this Outcome is on developing the learner's knowledge about the key elements of training used by a social anthropologist. Participant observation is the distinctive method that needs to be learned, and although other methods like interviewing are used by social anthropologists, they need to be carried out in an open-ended fashion that allows the interviewee to speak freely, rather than focussing on the answers to very specific questions.

Classroom activities could thus be quite varied so that a talk or a film about the way an anthropologist has carried out fieldwork could be followed by asking members of the class to try out the methods amongst themselves. They could, for example, experiment with different ways of finding out about each other's real or imagined background, and then discover the possible pitfalls of recording what they have found out and reporting back, considering also the ethics of interfering in the lives of others in such a way. Asking learners to report on a local social event they have attended could also be interesting, and a range of observations could be compared and evaluated in class. Discussions about the variations in language use could also offer an opportunity for group activities, and one exercise could be to ask learners to talk to elder members of their own families about how words and phrases change over time. The advantage of doing this in the learner's own home is that they are already a participant and their observations can be recorded quite informally. Those with fluency in two or more languages could be given a great sense of value in such exercises, as groups might be asked to discuss the way that humour, skills, or knowledge, are shared or hidden. The value of reading ethnography is that learners can learn about various ways in which the authors achieved the aims of doing participant observation without interfering negatively in the lives of those they worked with. They thus provide models for the training that anthropologists need to acquire.

Outcome 2

The focus of this Outcome is on the way in which trained anthropologists are employed in the contemporary world and how/why their training makes a distinctive contribution to the contemporary world.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Social Anthropology: Who does it and how to do it
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Learners should be encouraged, alone or as part of a group, to try and identify key figures in, for example, business, politics, finance, journalism, etc. who have a background in social anthropology. Associations of applied anthropologists meet regularly and publish articles about their work, (see, for example, <http://www.applied-anthropology.com/>) as searching their websites is a good place to start.

Learners might write to anthropologists, or people with an anthropological training, and ask them to explain how it has helped them — or they might look up on-line discussions about the field to gain information on how social anthropologists feel that their training makes a distinctive contribution to the contemporary world.

Using books, films or social media should be encouraged for the purposes of research.

Outcome 3

The focus of this Outcome is on explaining how the application of social anthropological knowledge and skills might be of benefit to a major contemporary problem.

The teacher/tutor should provide the learners with ethnographic accounts of a people whose local knowledge offers a deep understanding of global problems. Small groups of learners could be given different ethnographic accounts and then come back together as a class to discuss their findings. Separating into small groups again, the learners could think about and discuss current major contemporary problems that could possibly benefit from the application of social anthropological knowledge and skills. The groups could again reform as a whole class group and discuss and share their ideas.

Information about particular peoples and their knowledge and skills can also be sought on line as many peoples put up their own websites, and observers other than anthropologists post descriptions of their experiences too. There are also many very accessible films about groups of people, some made by anthropologists, some made by the people themselves, and some made for prime time television (Human Planet, Tribes, Predators and Me, etc.)

This Outcome offers an opportunity for learners to think about ways that their world could be improved were some of the knowledge held by people who live in different circumstances to be recognised and shared more widely.

Visits to museums and local culture centres might be beneficial for this part of the unit. People living in, for example, rural areas could be questioned about their local knowledge and traditions.

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 for learners.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Social Anthropology: Who does it and how to do it
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All assessments are open-book. However, the centre should take steps to ensure the authenticity of the learner's work. Learners could complete assessments outside the centre with appropriate checks in place or in the class under supervision. Use can be made of e assessment if feasible.

Outcome 1

Knowledge of the method of participant observation and the ethical issues surrounding it could be tested, for example, by essays, extended answers to structured questions, oral presentations and poster presentations.

To explain the importance of examining languages in their social context, a learner might generate example from their own study and experience, while others may recount cases that they have looked at in class.

The ability to read and explain the value of ethnography could be assessed by responding to questions about a resource that they have chosen and studied.

Outcome 2

The first part of this Outcome could be assessed through, for example, a poster presentation, a blog, an e-collage or an illustrated list of anthropologists at work.

The second part of the Outcome — assessing why social anthropologists' training makes a distinctive contribution to the contemporary world - could be assessed in a variety of forms, for example, an essay or oral presentation, a report including excerpts from interviews, letters or emails exchanged with social anthropologists. The report might also include photographs and links to audio files.

Outcome 3

The learner could use the same ethnography that was used in Outcome 1.

Assessment may take advantage of local and timely interests.

Assessment of the first part of this Outcome could include, for example, an essay or oral presentation, extended responses to structured questions, a poster presentation or a blog.

The final part of the assessment, demonstrating any creative or original thought a learner might have given to the learning, could be assessed in class presentations or interviews with the assessor. The crucial feature here is to produce evidence of having considered the approach an indigenous system of knowledge might offer to a matter which is perceived as a problem within the contemporary world.

All oral work should, where possible, be audio recorded or audio and visually recorded.

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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.

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

There are plenty of opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Communication and Working with Others* naturally in various parts of this unit, indeed the sharing of information collected could be an important part of the learning process.

Developing the skills associated with *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* can also be developed in this unit, as learners are encouraged to find examples of the cases they are studying through Google and other search engines, as well as in social media. Some of the assessment may also be e-assessment, so making a further contribution to this Core Skill.

As for other essential skills, all of enterprise, employability, sustainable development and citizenship can be drawn out of the work expected for this unit, indeed some aspects of the work are directly concerned with achieving these essential skills.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for learners

Unit title: Social Anthropology: Who does it and how to do it
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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 introduces the distinctive nature of the subject of social anthropology by looking at the way anthropologists are trained, and examining some of the roles they may play in the contemporary world, for example in international business and finance, in journalism, diplomacy, sport and tourism, as well as in passing on the subject through teaching.

Learners need no prior training, although it would be beneficial to have taken the unit HG1M 45 *Social Anthropology: Understanding Our Place in the World* at SCQF level 5. They will engage with books, films and articles produced by social anthropologists about the methods they use to find out about the people with whom they have worked, and there will be an opportunity for learners to try out some of the participatory methods themselves, both in the classroom, and out in the local community. Knowledge and skills gained will be tested in an open-book situation, and learners will be encouraged to keep diaries and/or e-blogs about their experiences as they learn.

The unit also asks learners to think about how knowledge gained by the study of social anthropology might contribute to alleviating contemporary global concerns, such as threats to the environment, large numbers of displaced people, and the implications of advances in genetic engineering. This part of the unit may well equip you for future work in international enterprise, in sustainable development and in local citizenship.