

**-SQA-SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY**

**Hanover House  
24 Douglas Street  
GLASGOW G2 7NQ**

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**NATIONAL CERTIFICATE MODULE DESCRIPTOR**

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**-Module Number- 7350610 -Session- 1990-91**  
**-Superclass- HB**

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**-Title- AN INTRODUCTION TO CONTEMPORARY STUDIES**

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**-DESCRIPTION-**

Purpose This module is designed to develop personal and social skills along with an awareness of current issues which affect society.

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Preferred Entry Level No formal entry requirements.

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Outcomes The student should:

1. identify major contemporary issues;
2. contribute to undertaking an investigation into a selected contemporary issue;
3. use interpersonal skills in the investigation of a contemporary issue.

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Assessment Procedures Acceptable performance in the module will be satisfactory achievement of all the Performance Criteria specified for each Outcome.

The following abbreviations are used below:

PC Performance Criteria  
IA Instrument of Assessment

**Note:** The Outcomes and PCs are mandatory and cannot be altered. The IA may be altered by arrangement with SQA. (Where a range of performance is indicated, this should be regarded as an extension of the PCs and is therefore mandatory.)

**OUTCOME 1 IDENTIFY MAJOR CONTEMPORARY ISSUES**

- PCs
- (a) Identification of an environmental issue is accurate.
  - (b) Identification of a health issue is accurate.
  - (c) Identification of an employment issue is accurate.
  - (d) Identification of a political issue is accurate.
  - (e) Identification of an educational issue is accurate.

IA Logbook

The student will compile a logbook in which the above Performance Criteria are clearly identifiable.

Satisfactory performance will be achievement of all the Performance Criteria.

**OUTCOME 2 CONTRIBUTE TO UNDERTAKING AN INVESTIGATION INTO A SELECTED CONTEMPORARY ISSUE**

- PCs
- (a) Identification of appropriate sources of information is accurate.
  - (b) Use of information sources is accurate.
  - (c) Information is collated and reviewed along with other students' contributions.

IA Practical Exercise and Personal Interview

The student will undertake a practical exercise in contributing to an investigation into a selected contemporary issue.

Satisfactory performance will be achievement of all the Performance Criteria.

**OUTCOME 3 USE INTERPERSONAL SKILLS IN THE INVESTIGATION OF A CONTEMPORARY ISSUE**

- PCs
- (a) Interpersonal skills are effective to contributing to the planning of the investigation.
  - (b) Interpersonal skills are effective to obtaining relevant information.
  - (c) Advice and help are sought when required.
  - (d) Demonstration of working in conjunction with others is evident.

IA Personal Interview

The student will participate in a personal interview which focuses on the above Performance Criteria.

Satisfactory performance will be achievement of all the Performance Criteria.

**The following sections of the descriptor are offered as guidance.  
They are not mandatory.**

### CONTENT/CONTEXT

Corresponding to Outcomes 1-3:

Any appropriate Regional Authority regulations should be taken into account with regard to supervision of students when outside the boundaries of the centre. In this module, an investigation into a contemporary issue provides a framework within which task management and interpersonal skills related to a contemporary issue are developed.

A selection from the following will be considered, but is not exhaustive and can be determined by current issues:

1. Environmental: oil pollution, air pollution, factory waste, litter, depletion of the ozone layer, destruction of the rain forests etc.  
Health: stress, AIDS/HIV, smoking, illegal drug abuse, food hygiene, alcohol abuse etc.  
Employment: Equal opportunities, Y.T.S./E.T.; unemployment, career choices, pay rates etc.  
Political: Eastern Europe, E.E.C. membership, N.H.S., local politics etc.  
Education: National Curriculum, career choices, school boards, multi-cultural education etc.

2. The choice should be based on information collated and ideas discussed in Outcome 1.

The format of the project should be discussed with the students.

3. Interpersonal skills such as communicating, listening, observing, co-operating should be taught throughout the module using role-play, small group work, simulation and practical exercises.

The co-operation of others eg. teaching staff, parents, professional agencies, voluntary groups could be sought. The use of film, video, photographs and tape recordings should be employed where appropriate. Visits outwith school/college/centre could be arranged.

SUGGESTED LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES

The learning and teaching approaches adopted and the time required will be determined by the individual needs of the student. They could include discussions, talks from visiting speakers, role play situations, audio visual presentations, case study materials, simulated exercises and group visits to agencies where possible.

Initially, the tutor could take responsibility for directing discussion. The student should be encouraged to take the initiative, contribute ideas and make decisions independently. Tutor direction should be reduced as the student's confidence and competence increases. Material appropriate to the needs of the student should be available eg. films, videos, speakers, slides, leaflets. It may be necessary to provide individual counselling for some students.

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11/02/98