**NATIONAL CERTIFICATE MODULE DESCRIPTOR**

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| **-Module Number-** | **0091485** | **-Session-1989-90** |
| **-Superclass-** | **ED** | |

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| **-Title-** | **AN INTRODUCTION TO PEOPLE AND SOCIETY** |

**-DESCRIPTION-**

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| Purpose | This module has been designed as part of a series of modules which accredit competence in the Social Sciences. The series was designed to facilitate entry to Higher Education through a series of outcomes at different levels of demand. However, the modules in the series may be used in their own right with senior school pupils, adult returners and those whose employment requires them to develop a broad social perspective. Social science modules may also be useful in adding breadth and ensuring balance in modular programmes. |
| | A student completing this module will have been introduced to the sociological perspective and will be in a position to undertake further modules in this area. |
| Preferred Entry Level | No formal entry requirements |
| Learning Outcomes | The student should: |

1.  explain the key characteristics of the sociological perspective;

2.  explain the role of the main agents of socialisation;

3.  outline key sociological concepts;

4.  apply a sociological perspective to a current social issue.

Content/
Context

Corresponding to Learning Outcomes 1-4:

1.  In this module the student should be introduced to the sociological perspective of society and human behaviour. The key concept of socialisation should be introduced at an early stage, showing that human behaviour is conditioned by membership of social groups and by the pressures of social structures.  It should also be emphasised that as social structures vary, so do behavioural norms, cross cultural, sub-cultural, anthropological and historical examples can be used to illustrate this. This sociological perspective should then be contrasted with 'common sense' views of society which construct explanations of human behaviour in terms of naturalistic and individualistic assumptions. Common sense assumptions should, furthermore, be shown to rest largely upon varieties of personal opinion.  In contrast, sociological knowledge is based upon evidence, the techniques for gathering this evidence, which are methodical if not always 'scientific' should be discussed.

2.  The concept of socialisation should be developed by looking at five key agencies of socialisation:

    -    the workplace
    -    the family
    -    the mass media
    -    educational institutions
    -    religious institutions

    When looking at how these influence behaviour, the concept of roles could be usefully deployed and a biographical approach which relates these to the student's life experience, could be used. In order to avoid too much emphasis on uncritical structuralism it might be important to mention:

    -    negotiation of roles
    -    social diversity
    -    conflict in society

3.  Apart from socialisation two further key concepts should be introduced, for example, deviance and stratification.  Deviance will allow use of cross cultural comparisons, further illustrating the idea of socialisation.  It also serves to sketch the limit of socialisation raising issues of how and by whom social norms are defined, how social control is recommended and how roles are negotiated. Forms       of deviance which might be cited range from varieties of criminal behaviour eg. drug (abuse) to football hooliganism, to forms of sexuality.

(b)    Stratification as distinct from social differentiation is concerned with hierarchical ordering of society, stable groups enjoying differing levels of prestige and power.  Different systems of stratification may be looked at eg. feudalism, caste but especially class.  Mention could also be made of ethnicity and gender.

4.    A range of current issues should be examined from a sociological perspective.  Issues could be selected by the tutor or by students in the group.  This outcome will build on the analysis framework provided by the previous learning outcomes.  Issues selected may be drawn from the media (as news or as feature material), local communities, personal experience on sociological issues.

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| Suggested Learning and Teaching Approaches | The following approaches are recommended:- discussion, case study, teacher exposition etc. These would involve an examination of a wide range of materials, including TV documentaries media artefacts, articles, journals, census materials and social statistics.  Students should be encouraged to reflect sociologically on their own experiences. Negotiation of issues should be a central feature of this module. |

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| Assessment Procedures | Acceptable performance in the module will be satisfactory achievement of all the performance criteria specified for each Learning Outcome. |

The following abbreviations are used below:

LO    Learning Outcome
PC    Performance Criteria
IA    Instrument of Assessment

LO1          EXPLAIN THE KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

PC          (a)    In the explanation, the definition of the socialisation process is valid and accepted.
          (b)    Recognition is given to the relative nature of behavioural norms by use of contrasts with different cultures.
          (c)    A distinction between sociological and common sense views of social behaviour is clearly drawn.
          (d)    A contrast between sociological research methods and personal opinion is clearly drawn.

IA     Restricted Response

The student will be tested on his/her understanding of the key characteristics of the sociological perspective.  There will be one Restricted Response question set on each of performance criterion (a), (b) and (d).  There will be two questions set on Performance Criterion (c).

Satisfactory performance will be that the student achieves all the Performance Criteria correctly.

LO2     EXPLAIN THE ROLE OF THE MAIN AGENTS OF SOCIALISATION

PC     (a)     In the explanation, the definitions of the main agents of socialisation are given in terms of the socialisation process.
(b)     The explanation of the function of the main agents of the socialisation process is fully given.
(c)     The explanation of the relationship between two main agents of the socialisation process is clear.

IA     Restricted Response

The student will be tested on his/her understanding of the role of the 5 main agents of socialisation.  There will be one Restricted Response question set on each Performance Criterion.

Satisfactory performance will be that the student achieves all the Performance Criteria correctly for each of the 5 agencies and that appropriate terminology is used in each case.

LO3     OUTLINE KEY SOCIOLOGICAL CONCEPTS

PC     (a)     The identification of key sociological concepts is correct.
(b)     The explanation as to how each concept operates is clear.
(c)     An illustration of the relativity of each concept is clearly given.

IA     Structured Question

The student will be tested on his/her knowledge of key sociological concepts.  There will be one structured question set on each Performance Criterion.

Satisfactory performance will be that the student covers a minimum of 2 key concepts for each Performance Criterion and that all Performance Criteria are achieved correctly.

LO4                 APPLY A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE TO A
                    CURRENT SOCIAL ISSUE

PC                  (a)   The outlining of the nature of a social issue is
                          correct.
                    (b)   The statement of the relationship of a social issue to
                          sociological concepts is clear;
                    (c)   The methods of sociological investigation selected
                          for the issue are appropriate.

                    IA   Assignment

                    The student will be tested on his/her ability to apply a
                    sociological perspective to a current social issue.

                    Satisfactory performance will be that the student achieves
                    all the Performance Criteria correctly.