

-SQA-SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

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NATIONAL CERTIFICATE MODULE DESCRIPTOR

-Module Number- 7351701
-Superclass- HB

-Session-1991-92

-Title- INVESTIGATING FOREIGN CULTURE 1

-DESCRIPTION-

Purpose This module has been designed to supplement a range of vocational programmes where candidates anticipate working with people from other cultures in their future career. It may also be used to extend more general programmes and by candidates who wish to make contact with people from other cultures.

Preferred Entry Level No formal entry requirements.

Outcomes The candidate should:

1. contribute to the planning of an investigation into a foreign culture;
2. undertake an investigation into a foreign culture under supervision;
3. state the findings of the investigation into a foreign culture.

Assessment Procedures Acceptable performance in this 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.)

OUTCOMES 1-3 Practical Exercises and Personal Interview

The practical exercises will be determined in part by the nature of the investigation. The method of recording in each case should be appropriate to the activity and the needs and ability of the candidate.

The Personal Interview will be conducted by the tutor/trainer with individuals or groups as appropriate and will probably be best conducted on an on-going basis throughout the module.

The interview should focus on the Performance Criteria for the Outcome and should draw on relevant evidence from the candidate's folder or other similar evidence.

OUTCOME 1 **CONTRIBUTE TO THE PLANNING OF AN INVESTIGATION INTO A FOREIGN CULTURE**

- PCs
- (a) The purpose and aims of the investigation are identified clearly and realistically.
 - (b) The selection of a culture is justified in terms of the purpose of the investigation.
 - (c) Key aspects of the culture are selected in relation to the aims of the investigation.
 - (d) A brief outline is prepared which provides a feasible structure for carrying out the investigation and meeting the aims.

IA Practical Exercises

Assessment of success in these exercises should focus on the relationship between the outline of the investigation and the aims. The aims themselves should relate to a clear purpose and be of demonstrable value to the candidate. The outline should be practicable and pertinent. The investigation should take account of at least three aspects of the foreign culture. Tutor/trainer support is acceptable in this module in, for example, providing the information upon which candidates can make selections.

Satisfactory performance will be the achievement of all Performance Criteria.

OUTCOME 2 UNDERTAKE AN INVESTIGATION INTO A FOREIGN CULTURE UNDER SUPERVISION

- PCs
- (a) The resources selected for use are appropriate to the aims of the investigation.
 - (b) The selected resources are accessed successfully.
 - (c) Information relevant to the aims of the investigation is extracted from the selected resources.
 - (d) The information is recorded in a format which allows easy access and retrieval.
 - (e) The information recorded is accurate.

IA Practical Exercises

Assessment of success in these exercises should focus on the Performance Criteria, with emphasis on the practical value to the investigation of the tasks undertaken. The information should supply all of the findings required by the candidate to meet his/her aims and be in a form which the candidate finds usable. At least three types of resources should be accessed.

Satisfactory performance will be the achievement of all Performance Criteria.

OUTCOME 3 STATE THE FINDINGS OF THE INVESTIGATION INTO A FOREIGN CULTURE

- PCs
- (a) The key findings are accurate.
 - (b) The key findings are stated in a way which relates them to the aims of the investigation.
 - (c) The key findings are related to possible future action arising out of the aims.

IA Personal Interview

The interview should focus on the above Performance Criteria, drawing on evidence from the investigation outline and the record of findings. At least three findings for each of the aspects of the culture studied should be presented.

Satisfactory performance will be the achievement of all Performance Criteria.

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

CONTENT/CONTEXT

This module combines aspects of modules in the Social Sciences, Languages and Personal and Social Development areas of the Catalogue, but is intended to offer distinctive outcomes.

The candidate's purpose in taking the module might be:

- (i) to provide a basic background for working abroad;
- (ii) to prepare the candidate to work in this country with visitors from abroad;
- (iii) to prepare the candidate to work in this country with people from a foreign culture wishing to live here;
- (iv) to provide knowledge of the home culture of an overseas-based company for which the candidate plans to work;
- (v) to provide a basic background for a leisure trip abroad.

From the overall purpose a number of specific aims will emerge. These will be related to the particular work-related and/or social circumstances in which the candidate anticipates having to operate - eg. working with others, dealing with line relationships, dealing with clients, social interactions in leisure time, etc.

The module might also be used for general interest by a candidate learning a foreign language or by a candidate who wished to find out more about a foreign culture but did not wish to be restricted to a single social subject discipline.

At stage 1, the candidate is offered a free choice of cultures and of aspects of culture to investigate. (The nature of these aspects is discussed below). However, the assessment procedures do insist that a range of aspects is covered.

The emphasis in the module is upon the results of investigations undertaken and reported by individual candidates, but a measure of group work which does not interfere with the assessment procedures is acceptable.

Corresponding to Outcomes 1-3

1. With support from the tutor/trainer, individuals or groups should first identify the purpose of the investigation and then identify the aims and the culture. The culture may be that of an area of the world, a country or a part of a country, as appropriate to the candidate's purpose and aims.

This process should then be taken further, by identifying aspects of the chosen culture for investigation. These might be selected from topics such as:

- common business and work expectations
- buying, selling, quality and measurement
- job and career structures
- common language purposes and features
- social structures and expectations
- legal requirements and everyday law
- media culture (tv, newspapers, magazines, etc)

- social culture (leisure pursuits, food and drink, travel, etc.)
- political/economic features
- geographical/environmental features
- historical/heritage features
- religious practices and beliefs
- artistic culture (music, art, drama)
- family patterns and expectations
- education and training
- common stereotypes of the culture (the origins and the reality of these).

A degree of overlap between aspects should be accepted if the choice of aspects matches the candidate's aims.

A brief outline of the investigation, linking aspects to aims should then be prepared.

2. Candidates will undertake a range of tasks associated with the investigation. These should be limited in extent and clearly defined and explained to the candidates.

Investigation tasks will relate to preparing to use, accessing and using a range of resources. These may include the use of written texts, video and audio materials, photographs, maps, charts and other illustrative materials. Questioning others with knowledge of the culture (including subject specialists, more advanced students, and individuals with personal experience) and the use of artefacts will also be valuable, as may visits to appropriate institutions, exhibitions, displays, etc. No restriction is placed upon sources, but a variety should be used and candidates should be guided as to the best sources for their aims and as to the best approach to each source.

The record of findings can be kept in any form which can be easily accessed by the candidate and the assessor. The value of the record will lie in its contribution to easing the candidate's progress from investigation to report. There are no absolute standards of completeness here: the findings and the record must be judged in terms of the candidate's stated aims.

3. The interview will be based upon the outline of the investigation and the record of findings. These may be redrafted in the form of a report if this is helpful to the candidate. The purpose of the interview will be to ensure that the candidate can present the findings in relation to the aims of the investigation and can show how the findings should affect his/her behaviour in circumstances related to the aims - eg. things to say/not to say; important differences in work practices; different social expectations; sensitivities related to religious or other beliefs; the dangers presented by common stereotypes.

SUGGESTED LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES

Involving candidates in decisions which affect them is valuable for personal development and is a powerful motivating factor. In this module, areas for negotiation include:

- identification of the aims of the investigation
- selection of the culture to be investigated
- selection of key aspects of the culture
- selection of resources
- identification of significant findings
- selection of methods of recording and presenting findings.

The following learning and teaching approaches are suggested but should be modified to take account of the decision-making processes as outlined above and the different activities outlined in Content/Context.

- (a) Induction to the module should include an explanation of its key features and the establishment of working relationships. An important role of the tutor/trainer is to provide the appropriate framework and climate within which candidates can begin to take responsibility for decision-making, planning, organisation and problem solving. This may involve an open method of classroom management and a facilitating role for the tutor/trainer rather than a teaching role. Structure will remain very important.

Appropriate tutor/trainer input will take the form of a high degree of support for candidates who have little previous experience of methods of planning, monitoring progress, gathering information, assembling and presenting results.

A variety of approaches might be appropriate, including short talks by other candidates who have appropriate experience, a study of examples of documentation from previous investigations, discussions leading to individuals or the group drawing up notes for guidance.

- (b) Individual or group exercises to enable candidates to identify the requirements for successful investigations should be undertaken and tutors/trainers should attempt to ensure, as far as possible, problems relating to investigation techniques and methods are anticipated before tasks are undertaken. Learning from experience in relation to planning and task management is a method of developing skills, but this will not meet the performance criteria set out in the module's outcomes. These require summative assessment of successful performance.

Although the format and style of the outline referred to in Outcome 1 is open to choice, the completion and review of planning sheets at the outset of the activity, discussion of the feasibility of methods of investigation, possible resources and contacts in relation to topic choice etc. can feature usefully in completing the module.

- (c) Individuals or groups, with support from the tutor/trainer, should identify a topic for investigation relating to an aspect of a foreign culture. Topic choice and possible content should be agreed between individual candidates and the tutor/trainer.

It is important that tutors/trainers give support in relation to topic choice which enables candidates to follow their interests and exploit the range of resources available. Advice may be required relating to the complexity of particular issues.

- (d) Establishing a base of knowledge appropriate to the aspects chosen can be achieved through a variety of methods e.g. visiting speakers, case studies, TV documentaries, radio, library work, tutor/trainer exposition etc.
- (e) Teaching designed to assist candidates with preparation for learning through investigation activities will be important. Practice of learning skills will be necessary if the investigation is to be effective. These may involve fieldwork activities, library visits, interviews, planning skills, enquiry skills, information retrieval, interviewing skills, groupwork, time-management, record-keeping and presentation of findings.
- (f) Each individual or group will plan and undertake the investigation, and maintain accurate records of findings in relation to the aims of the investigation. During this phase the tutor's/trainer's role is to provide support where required. Candidates should be encouraged to take the initiative and should demonstrate the ability to monitor his/her own investigation activities. The tutor/trainer will have to make judgements about the appropriate time and method of intervention if problems arise.
- (g) Where possible, the identification of the key findings of each investigation in relation to the aims of the investigation should be considered and discussed by the group as a whole. The sharing of knowledge and experience gained is valuable and the presence of an 'audience' for the findings increases the sense of purpose.
- (h) The tutor/trainer conducts a short interview with each individual or group and discusses the record of findings in relation to the aims of the investigation.