



SCQF level 5 Unit Specification

Psychology: Social Behaviour

SCQF: level 5 (6 SCQF credit points)

Unit code: J2D3 75

Unit outline

The general aim of this Unit is to explain how interaction with others shapes social behaviour. Learners will investigate social psychological topics, and use relevant concepts and research evidence to explain how the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of individuals are developed through interaction with others and within the social environment. Learners will use psychological knowledge and understanding to explain examples of everyday behaviour.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

- 1 Explain topics relating to human social behaviour

This Unit is available as a free-standing Unit. The Unit Specification should be read in conjunction with the *Unit Support Notes*, which provide advice and guidance on delivery, assessment approaches and development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work. Exemplification of the standards in this Unit is given in *Unit Assessment Support*.

Recommended entry

Entry to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by one or more of the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ National 4 People and Society Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ National 4 Biology Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ Social studies or social sciences Courses at SCQF level 4 or relevant component Units

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. For further information, please refer to the *Unit Support Notes*.

Standards

Outcomes and assessment standards

Outcome 1

The learner will:

1 Explain topics relating to human social behaviour by:

- 1.1 Describing a topic in social psychology
- 1.2 Explaining relevant concepts and psychological research evidence that contributes to understanding of the topic
- 1.3 Using psychological knowledge to explain examples of everyday behaviour

Evidence Requirements for the Unit

Assessors should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, and understanding of their learners, to determine the most appropriate ways to generate evidence and the conditions and contexts in which they are used.

Exemplification of assessment is provided in *Unit Assessment Support*. Advice and guidance on possible approaches to assessment is provided in the *Unit Support Notes*.

Assessment standard thresholds

If a candidate successfully meets the requirements of the specified number of Assessment Standards they will be judged to have passed the Unit overall and no further re-assessment will be required.

The specific requirements for this Unit is as follows:

- ◆ the number of concepts is specified for assessment standard 1.3 and only one example of everyday social behaviour is required

It should be noted that there will still be the requirement for candidates to be given the opportunity to meet all Assessment Standards. The above threshold has been put in place to reduce the volume of re-assessment where that is required.

Development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

It is expected that learners will develop broad, generic skills through this Unit. The skills that learners will be expected to improve on and develop through the Unit are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and are drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These must be built into the Unit where there are appropriate opportunities.

1 Literacy

1.2 Writing

3 Health and wellbeing

3.1 Personal Learning

5 Thinking skills

5.3 Applying

5.4 Analysing and evaluating

Amplification of these is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills should be at the same SCQF level as the Unit and be consistent with the SCQF level descriptor. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work is given in the *Unit Support Notes*.

Appendix: Unit support notes

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing this Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- ◆ the *Unit Specification*
- ◆ the *Unit Assessment Support packs*

Developing skills, knowledge and understanding

Teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

Approaches to learning and teaching

This Unit is designed to provide flexibility and choice for both the learner and delivering centre. Approaches to learning and teaching should enhance opportunities for all learners to achieve their full potential, whether working in a whole-class, small group or supported self-study situation.

It is good practice to use a variety of learning and teaching methods so that learners' interest and motivation are maintained and individual preferences for different learning styles are promoted. Throughout learning and teaching activities, account should be taken of the prior knowledge that learners may have.

Tasks should be open to allow for personalisation and choice as well as enabling learners to work at a suitable pace with appropriate support. Discussion groups or personal investigation and research are excellent ways of promoting some independence in learning. Learners have the opportunity to study social behaviour topics in this Unit, with scope for personalisation in the choice of topics.

At this level, secondary sources such as textbooks will be more suitable than original research articles. Many learners will be new to the terminology used in psychology, and should be guided towards suitable sources of information; they may not be aware that general-interest articles and websites are often biased, inaccurate or incomplete. As a general guideline, it should be possible to obtain a full research citation from the sources used. Learners should be encouraged to contribute to their own learning and to present their work using a range of sources of evidence. There are many possible sources that can be referred to, including: textbooks, published articles and research-based web articles.

Topics:

When choosing a topic relevant to social behaviour, teachers/lecturers should check the topic can meet the requirements of the Unit. Does the topic?

- ◆ provide scope for the learner to explain concepts and/or theories associated with the topic
- ◆ have sufficient accessible psychological research evidence that contributes to understanding human behaviour for the topic
- ◆ have real-world applications relevant to everyday behaviour

Optional topic suggestions:

- ◆ conformity
- ◆ altruism
- ◆ aggression
- ◆ propaganda and persuasion
- ◆ non-verbal behaviour
- ◆ prejudice
- ◆ interpersonal attraction
- ◆ or another suitable topic selected by the centre

For the topic of *conformity* learners could explore:

- ◆ explanations of conformity, including informational and normative social influence, compliance and internalisation
- ◆ individual, situational and cultural factors in conformity
- ◆ minority and majority influence
- ◆ research studies on conformity including Mori, K, and Arai, M (2010), *No need to fake it: Reproduction of the Asch experiment without confederates*. *International Journal of Psychology*, 45 (5), 390-397

For the topic of *altruism* learners could explore:

- ◆ theories of altruism (empathy-altruism hypothesis, negative state relief model)
- ◆ characteristics of a person in need
- ◆ characteristics of a helpful person
- ◆ bystander behaviour
- ◆ Latane and Darley's cognitive model
- ◆ individualistic and collectivistic societies

For the topic of *aggression*, learners could explore:

- ◆ theories of aggression (psychoanalytic approach, ethological approach, frustration-aggression hypothesis, social learning theory)
- ◆ Sheehan, M.J., Watson, M.W. (2008). Reciprocal influences between maternal discipline techniques and aggression in children and adolescents. *Aggressive Behavior*, 34(3), 245-255
- ◆ aggression and the media
- ◆ research studies into the effects of media violence
- ◆ video games and aggression (Goodson and Pearson, 2011)
- ◆ personal and situational factors

For the topic of *non-verbal behaviour* learners could explore:

- ◆ types of non-verbal behaviour (paralinguistics, facial expressions, eye gaze, gestures, postures, proxemics, haptics, clothing and body decoration)
- ◆ functions of non-verbal behaviour (express emotions, express interpersonal attitudes, accompany speech in managing the cues of interaction between speakers and listeners, self-presentation of personality, rituals)
- ◆ cross-cultural differences in non-verbal behaviour
- ◆ gender differences in non-verbal behaviour
- ◆ the role of nature and nurture in non-verbal behaviour
- ◆ research studies on non-verbal behaviour

For the topic of *prejudice* learners could explore:

- ◆ stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination
- ◆ racism, sexism, nationalism, classism
- ◆ theories of prejudice (the authoritarian personality, social identity theory)
- ◆ research studies on prejudice
- ◆ reduction of prejudice (education, increasing contact)
- ◆ institutional racism

For the topic of *interpersonal attraction* learners could explore:

- ◆ causes of interpersonal attraction (physical attractiveness, propinquity, familiarity, similarity, complementarity, reciprocal liking)
- ◆ matching hypothesis
- ◆ social exchange theory
- ◆ evolutionary theories
- ◆ research studies on interpersonal attraction

For the topic of *propaganda* learners could explore:

- ◆ definition of propaganda
- ◆ types of propaganda techniques (assertion, bandwagon, card stacking)
- ◆ media for transmitting propaganda messages (news reports, government reports, historical revision, junk science, books, leaflets, films, radio, television, posters)
- ◆ theories (fundamental attribution error, communication theory)
- ◆ war propaganda, public health propaganda, advertising propaganda

Centres may use a thematic approach to link two topics:

Theme	Mandatory topic	Selected topic
Advertising	Conformity	Propaganda
Riots	Conformity	Prejudice
Peer pressure	Conformity	Interpersonal Attraction
Gender differences	Conformity	Non-verbal behaviour

The *Research* Unit may be delivered and assessed alongside this Unit to add relevance and avoid duplication. Learners will apply the knowledge and understanding from the *Research* Unit to evaluate the research evidence in the topic areas.

Examples of possible learning and teaching approaches for topics are outlined below.

Mind mapping of prior knowledge topics.

Group work or teacher led questioning may be appropriate to stimulate discussion.

Ask learners to make an observational checklist to record the number of aggressive acts in a video recording. This highlights the difficulties in defining aggression and in recording it.

Individual and group presentations on topics.

An online discussion on a topic that is moderated by the teacher/lecturer.

Collecting notes from video programmes or class exercises with the intention of putting the information into an essay or report.

Discussion of current news issues relevant to topics.

Being involved in role-play activities where learners play the role of a major theorist from a topic.

Individual or group presentations, eg prezi, role play.

Create a leaflet or poster on the main points and explanations of a topic.

Approaches to assessment

There are a number of ways in which evidence for Unit assessment could be generated. **This Unit has one Outcome with a set of coherent Assessment Standards designed to promote holistic assessment.**

Evidence may be gathered in a variety of forms that best suit the needs of the learner and individual centres. Ideas for generating assessment evidence are recorded/oral responses; academic posters, individual or group presentations, information leaflets; traditional question papers or a portfolio of evidence.

All learners must have evidence that they have individually met the Assessment Standards to gain this Unit.

Assessment: Vignette, image, video clip, audio recording, drama

One way of assessing this Unit may be to provide the learners with an example of behaviour in a real-life situation, eg a young person being influenced by the media and peers to behave in a particular way. This straightforward scenario could be a centre-devised vignette, an image or an adapted article with associated questions.

Alternative assessment approaches include:

- ◆ open-book tests, eg providing a stimulus piece with associated questions

Evidence could be able to be generated and held in a variety of formats that best suits the needs of the learner and centre. Assessors must choose an assessment format which takes into account the needs of all learners and implement the assessment at an appropriate stage in the Unit.

Combining assessment within Units

Assessment could be combined in this Unit by holistically assessing all the Outcomes of the Unit in a single assessment. When assessment within the Unit is holistic, teachers and lecturers should take particular care to track the evidence for each individual Outcome.

Authenticity

When the teacher/lecturer does not have this *direct evidence*, they will need to take steps to confirm that the learner's evidence was genuinely produced by them.

There are a number of techniques and strategies for ensuring that learners present work which is their own. For more guidance, please refer to SQA's [Guide to Assessment](#).

Guidance on assessment and re-assessment is also available in SQA's Guide to Assessment available on SQA's website.

Administrative information

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Superclass: PK

History of changes to National Unit Specification

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
1.1	Unit Support Notes added. Assessment standard threshold added.	Qualifications Manager	September 2018
2.0	Unit code updated	Qualifications Manager	July 2019

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