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## Psychology: Social Behaviour

**SCQF:** level 6 (6 SCQF credit points)

**Unit code:** H262 76

### Unit outline

The general aim of this Unit is to enable learners to analyse how interaction with others shapes social behaviour. Learners will investigate psychological explanations for social behaviour and will use research evidence to analyse how the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of individuals are influenced by their social environment. Learners will apply psychological knowledge and understanding to explain examples of everyday social behaviour.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

- 1 Analyse 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 5 Psychology Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ National 5 Biology Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ Social studies or social sciences Courses at SCQF level 5 or relevant 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 Analyse topics relating to human social behaviour by:**

- 1.1 Explaining concepts and/or theories associated with a topic in social psychology
- 1.2 Evaluating psychological research evidence relating to the topic
- 1.3 Applying understanding of social psychology to 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*.

# 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.

Teaching approaches should support Curriculum for Excellence's four capacities to enable each learner to develop as a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor.

## **Knowledge and understanding for the Social Behaviour Unit:**

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

Topic suggestions:

- ◆ conformity and obedience
- ◆ aggression
- ◆ love and attraction
- ◆ leadership and decision-making
- ◆ prejudice
- ◆ propaganda
- ◆ or another suitable topic that matches the interests of learners

For the topic of *conformity and obedience*, learners could explore:

- ◆ provide different explanations of conformity including informational and normative social influence, compliance and internalisation
- ◆ provide different explanations for obedience including situational and individual factors
- ◆ evaluate and use relevant research evidence including Mori, K, and Arai, M (2010) and Milgram, S (1963)

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
- ◆ control and reduction of aggression

For the topic of *love and attraction*, learners could explore:

- ◆ theories of attraction (social exchange theories, reinforcement, evolutionary theories, matching hypothesis)
- ◆ factors affecting attraction (physical attractiveness, reciprocity, proximity, similarity, need complementarity)
- ◆ parasocial relationships
- ◆ research studies of love and attraction
- ◆ maintaining and ending relationships
- ◆ liking vs loving (Zick Rubin)
- ◆ compassionate and passionate love (Elaine Hatfield)

For the topic of *leadership and decision-making*, learners could explore:

- ◆ theories of leadership (great man theories, trait theories, situational theories, behavioural theories)
- ◆ leadership styles (authoritarian, delegative, participative) and decision-making
- ◆ Bruckmüller, S. and Branscombe, N. (2010). The glass cliff: When and why women are selected as leaders in crisis contexts. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 49 (3), 433-451
- ◆ group decision making
- ◆ jury decision making

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)
- ◆ Cook, J., Calcagno, J., Arrow, H., and Malle, B. (2011). Friendship trumps ethnicity (but not sexual orientation): Comfort and discomfort in inter-group interactions. *British Journal of Social Psychology*
- ◆ reduction of prejudice (education, increasing contact)
- ◆ institutional racism

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

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

Mind mapping of prior knowledge topics.

The recording of work completed within collaborative learning exercises, for example an academic poster, a mind map, an essay, answers to short questions, a short video or an electronic presentation.

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

Discussion of current news issues relevant to topics.

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

Individual and group presentations on topics.

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



## 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.

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.

### Authenticity

When the teacher/lecturer does not have this *direct evidence*, he/she 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 [Guide to Assessment](#).

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

## **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.

## Administrative information

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**Superclass:** PK

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### History of changes to National Unit Specification

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
2.0	Page 3 — Assessment Standard 1.1: 'concepts or theories' changed to 'concepts and/or theories'.  Page 3 — Assessment Standard 1.2: 'that contributes to understanding human behaviour for the topic' changed to 'relating to the topic'.	Qualifications Development Manager	April 2014
3.0	Level changed from Higher to SCQF level 6. Unit support notes added. Assessment standard threshold added.	Qualifications Manager	September 2018

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Note: readers are advised to check SQA's website: [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk) to ensure they are using the most up-to-date version of the Unit Specification.

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