
Sociology: Culture and Identity

SCQF: level 6 (6 SCQF credit points)

Unit code: J2DF 76

Unit outline

The general aim of this Unit is to enable learners to develop their ability to use sociological concepts, theories and research to analyse features of culture and identity in a changing social world. Learners will consider their own and others' cultural experiences to develop an understanding of cultural identity and diversity.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

- 1 Analyse culture and identity in a changing social world

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 Sociology Course 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 culture and identity in a changing social world by:**
 - 1.1 Explaining the impact of socialisation on the formation of identity
 - 1.2 Explaining the concepts of culture and/or sub-culture in terms of power and status
 - 1.3 Applying sociological theory to explain a selected aspect of culture and identity
 - 1.4 Explaining sociological research for the selected aspect of culture and identity
 - 1.5 Drawing conclusions about culture and identity in a changing social world

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 the 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:

- ◆ Candidates do not need to be re-assessed for Assessment Standard 1.5 if they do not meet the requirements.

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

- 1.1 Reading
- 1.2 Writing
- 1.3 Listening and talking

4 Employability enterprise and citizenship

- 4.6 Citizenship

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, teaching and assessment

Overarching guidance

There are a wide variety of learning and teaching approaches which can be used to deliver this Unit. The *Unit Support Notes* provide advice and guidance and some examples of approaches that could be used.

At all times, teachers/lecturers should provide opportunities for personalisation and choice to ensure that learning is relevant and motivating. Learning should build on, and be sensitive towards, learners' life experiences. Approaches to learning and teaching should provide varied opportunities for learners to reflect on and at times question some of their commonly held beliefs. This could be challenging and rewarding for learners as well as teachers/lecturers. This level of reflection will support the development of skills in evaluation and critical analysis that will be required for successful completion of this Unit.

The Outcome and Assessment Standards for this Unit state minimum requirements. However, it is expected that teaching will normally cover a wider range than the minimum required to pass the Unit assessment.

Sequencing and timing

The single Outcome in this Unit can be taught and assessed in a variety of ways to promote personalisation and choice. The sequencing and timing of the mandatory content is less significant than the actual knowledge and understanding of the sociological concepts and theories as well as the investigative, analytical and communication skills that the learner will develop.

A holistic approach to learning and teaching across the Unit would therefore be very appropriate. Opportunities to motivate learners to understand complex or sensitive social issues linked to culture and identity, and to subsequently apply sociological theory to explain them may be more readily accomplished by learners if topics or themes of contemporary relevance are identified and investigated by learners themselves. Consequently it may be advisable to establish at the beginning of Unit delivery which specific issues or themes related to culture and identity that learners have a particular interest in. The teaching and learning related to sociological concepts, theories and specific research studies could then be more focused on topics of specific interest to the learner or learner group.

Possible approaches to learning and teaching

A stimulating and supportive learning environment should be provided to enable learners to achieve the best they can. A range of varied materials, resources and activities could be used to stimulate discussion; teachers/lecturers should subsequently encourage interpretation and analysis of any materials sourced using sociological understanding.

The following are suggestions for stimulating discussion:

- ◆ using sociological understanding to stimulate discussion around the way in which socialisation processes impact on the formation of identity
- ◆ encouraging learners to reflect on their own socialisation and cultural experiences and to explain them using sociological understanding
- ◆ using sociological understanding to stimulate discussion of the relationship between mainstream culture and sub-cultures in terms of power and status
- ◆ using sociological discussion to consider ways in which our social world has and continues to change and the impact this has on our understanding of culture and identity
- ◆ using these discussions to stimulate learners' interest in investigating a range of sociological research studies on aspects culture and identity
- ◆ deciding on a specific aspect of culture and identity (or a range of aspects within a class group) which learners want to explore further
- ◆ encouraging learners to apply sociological theory to analyse and explain the aspect of culture and identity that they have selected
- ◆ supporting learners to select a particular aspect of culture and identity which they can explore more fully in terms of sourcing relevant research
- ◆ developing skills and strategies relating to planning, researching, collating and communicating information on their selected aspect
- ◆ offering opportunities for independent learning but also for supportive and collaborative learning in the investigation of sociological research into aspects of culture and identity in a changing world
- ◆ using technology as appropriate to prepare a summarised sociological analysis of an investigation of culture and identity in a changing social world

Examples of learning and teaching contexts and opportunities

1. Analyse culture and identity in a changing social world

Possible discussion and activities:

Discussion of learner's socialisation experiences (norms, values, customs); sense of own identity; social identities linked to gender, age, disability, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality and social class; links to wider aspects of culture — popular culture, youth culture, high culture; widening cultural awareness and discussion through a range of stimulus material. Encouraging consideration and critique of common sense views, beliefs and attitudes by introducing more objective, sociological ways of interpreting and explaining the changing social world we live in. Reflecting on changes in norms, attitudes, values in our own families and culture within two/ three generations. Emerging ideas of diverse multiple identities could also be discussed. Use of learners' newly acquired sociological understanding and concepts to re-evaluate and explain how socialisation processes impact on who we are and how this can change over time.

Discussion and activities based on exploring ideas of culture in terms of mainstream culture and sub-cultures could be based on a range of stimulating resources. The opportunity to study aspects of culture and sub-cultures and the power differentials within and between different cultural groups may provide

learners with options to consider when having to select a specific aspect of culture and identity to investigate further.

A range of different aspects of culture and identity could be discussed in class in a general way with learners being encouraged to select and investigate a particular topic of interest to them. Different sociological theories could be discussed and evaluated in relation to how effectively they explain or contribute towards an understanding of the selected topic. Teachers/lecturers could offer guidance and support in sourcing appropriate research into the selected topic.

All of these discussions, activities, investigation and 'thinking' will contribute towards learners' understanding of culture and identity in a changing social world and could be used as contributory materials and/or evidence for their sociological analysis.

Through learning in this Unit, learners develop their understanding of the processes of primary and secondary socialisation and start to examine how aspects of the socialisation process impact on how a person forms their identity. Learners will begin to think about ways in which our social world is rapidly changing and the impact this has on the range of diverse identities that may be available to us. This will provide good opportunities to explore the concepts of culture and identity from contrasting sociological perspectives, eg are we shaped by the social world in which we live or do we actually shape our own social worlds?

Learners could examine and explain the relationship between mainstream culture and sub-cultures. This will provide a focus for the development of skills in sociological analysis as learners will be given the opportunity to analyse ways in which power and status is manifested when exploring issues around culture, sub-culture and identity formation.

Learners can select particular aspects of culture and identity which they wish to investigate further. Although it is expected that learners will be given the opportunity gain knowledge relating to a range of aspects related to culture and identity as well as a range of contrasting sociological theories, learners will be expected to apply a minimum of one sociological theory in their sociological analysis of one selected aspect of culture and identity.

Learners could be encouraged to develop skills in synthesis and evaluation when considering sociological research related to their investigation of culture and identity in a changing social world.

Learners could present their summarised sociological analysis in a format of their choice, which may include an academic poster, an essay, a slideshow presentation or a short video. This could provide learners with a range of opportunities to develop a range of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work in the areas of ICT, team working and graphic communication. Although acquiring these skills will not be essential to pass the Unit, there would be opportunities to contextualise a range of essential skills within this Unit.

Possible approaches to assessment and generating evidence of progress

Assessment of this Unit will focus on the learner analysing culture and identity in a changing social world

Evidence may be gathered using different assessments and more than one context or it may be gathered for the Unit as a whole through one assessment and a single context.

If a centre has delivered the learning and teaching of the Unit in a holistic, integrated fashion, then the assessment approach could also be holistic. If there has been a significant level of personalisation encouraged throughout the Unit, then Unit assessment could also be based on this principle.

A holistic, integrated method of Unit assessment could focus on the final assessment standard by preparing a sociological analysis of the investigation of culture and identity in a changing social world with teachers/lecturers ensuring that learners are given guidance on generating evidence which satisfies all assessment Standards in the analysis.

As previously noted, when learners give their summarised sociological analysis it could be presented in different ways to suit the learners' strengths, interests or skills. This could include presenting the analysis in the form of an essay, an academic poster, a PowerPoint slideshow, a short video, a presentation on display boards placed in a prominent position in the learner's school or college or even a series of podcasts summarising different elements of the investigation. Learners could be encouraged to have collated evidence of their research, thinking and planning in a portfolio which can be submitted as evidence.

Learners could be encouraged to retain information regarding the sources of their evidence and could also develop skills in appropriate academic referencing. The evidence for Unit assessment could be collated over a period of time with final submission or presentation of the summarised sociological analysis being scheduled for an agreed date towards the end of the delivery schedule of the Unit.

Although a holistic, personalised approach to assessment will enrich the learner experience, centres will be expected to manage the assessment process in a way that makes it clear how the evidence covers each Assessment Standard within the Unit.

Administrative information

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Superclass: EE

History of changes to National Unit Specification

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
2.0	Page 3 — Assessment Standard 1.2: 'culture and sub-culture' changed to 'culture and/or sub-culture'.	Qualifications Development Manager	April 2014
3.0	Page 3 — Assessment Standard 1.5 changed from 'Giving a summarised sociological analysis of an investigation of culture and identity in a changing social world' to 'Drawing conclusions about culture and identity in a changing social world'. Re-worded for clarification purposes only, no changes made to how this Assessment Standard is achieved.	Qualifications Manager	April 2016
4.0	Level changed from Higher to SCQF level 6. Unit support notes added. Assessment standard threshold added.	Qualifications Manager	September 2018
5.0	Unit code updated	Qualifications Manager	July 2019

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