



National 5
Course
Specification



National 5 Sociology Course Specification (C768 75)

Valid from August 2013

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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this Course Specification for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

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Course outline

Course title: National 5 Sociology

SCQF: level 5 (24 SCQF credit points)

Course code: C768 75

Mandatory Units

This Course comprises three mandatory Units and a Course Assessment.

H26J 75 Sociology: Human Society (National 5) 6 SCQF credit points
and

H26K 75 Sociology: Culture and Identity (National 5) 6 SCQF credit points

And either

H26L 75 Sociology: Social Issues (National 5) 6 SCQF credit points

Or

**H6N1 75 Sociology: Social Issues with a
Scottish Context (National 5)* 6 SCQF credit points**

and

Course assessment 6 SCQF credit points

This Course includes six SCQF credit points to allow additional time for preparation for Course assessment. The Course assessment covers the added value of the Course. Further information on the Course assessment is provided in the Assessment section.

*Scottish Studies Award contributing Unit: This Course Specification should be read in conjunction with the relevant Scottish Studies Unit Specification on the [Scottish Studies Award web page](#).

Recommended entry

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

- ◆ National 4 People and Society Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ National 4 Modern Studies Course or relevant component Units

Progression

This Course or its Units may provide progression to:

- ◆ Higher Sociology Course
- ◆ other qualifications in related areas
- ◆ further study, employment and/or training

An understanding of sociology can also be useful to learners who are pursuing a career in social work, politics, economics, health studies, law and the voluntary sector.

Further details are provided in the Rationale section.

Equality and inclusion

This Course 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 *Course Support Notes*.

Rationale

All new and revised National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

In this Course, and its component Units, there will be an emphasis on skills development and the application of those skills. Assessment approaches will be proportionate, fit for purpose and will promote best practice, enabling learners to achieve the highest standards they can.

This Course provides learners with opportunities to continue to acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities as well as skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

All Courses provide opportunities for learners to develop breadth, challenge and application, but the focus and balance of the assessment will be appropriate for the subject area.

Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles

This Course builds on experiences and outcomes from the health and wellbeing curriculum area and the social studies curriculum area.

The study of sociology offers learners the opportunity to develop an understanding of society that goes beyond personal experience and common-sense explanations. Learners are challenged to think about human society, social issues and culture and identity from different points of view. They are introduced to the key role played by evidence in supporting explanations for human social behaviour.

The Course will help to develop successful learners by encouraging imaginative thought and by prompting questions about the world we live in.

Learners will become more confident individuals by developing the ability to communicate their own and others' experiences of social life and views of the world.

Learners will become more effective contributors and will gain increased awareness of themselves and others by interacting in different contexts to share and develop their understanding of human social experience.

Research, investigation and analytical skills will be used to explore aspects of social, cultural, political and economic life. This will encourage learners to respect others and begin to develop informed views of social issues. These skills make an important contribution to the capacity of responsible citizenship.¹

Purpose and aims of the Course

This Course develops learners' sense of themselves as part of society. It uses the sociological approach, which encourages learners to ask questions about the social world in which we live and to use evidence to support explanations for human social behaviour. The Course will therefore enable learners to become familiar with research methods and the use of evidence in sociology.

The Course equips learners with knowledge and understanding of the sociological perspectives, theories and concepts used to investigate and explain aspects of the social world. The sociological understanding that develops from learning in this Course is used to question commonly-held assumptions about society and to consider sociological explanations.

The broad aims of the Course are to:

- ◆ develop an understanding of society through gaining knowledge and understanding of basic sociological perspectives, theories and concepts
- ◆ develop an understanding that sociology challenges 'common sense' explanations about human social behaviour
- ◆ raise awareness of cultural and social diversity and the significance of relationships amongst individuals, groups and institutions
- ◆ raise awareness of the role of sources of information, research evidence and research methods used in sociology
- ◆ develop basic investigation skills to select, organise and interpret information
- ◆ develop thinking and communication skills used in sociology

Information about typical learners who might do the Course

The Course is suitable for all learners who are interested in finding out more about the world we live in by investigating the relationship between society and the individuals who live in it. Learners will probably have little or no prior experience of studying sociology, but their general education and life experience will provide a good foundation for them to progress to this qualification.

Learners should be interested in developing a deeper understanding of the social world in which we live. The Course provides opportunities for individuals to develop confidence in investigating and using evidence to explain social experiences and social issues.

The Course will equip learners with skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work by developing their ability to communicate their own and others' experiences of social life and views of the world.

¹ Building the Curriculum 3

www.ltscotland.org.uk/buildingyourcurriculum/policycontext/btc/btc3.asp

Course structure and conditions of award

Course structure

This Course sits within a hierarchical structure, progressing from the National 5 Sociology Course to Higher Sociology.

The central theme of the Course is to introduce learners to the sociological approach to understanding and explaining the social world. Learners will also develop knowledge of the society in which we live and will investigate contemporary social issues.

Units are statements of standards for assessment and not programmes of learning and teaching. They can be delivered in a number of ways.

The Course consists of three mandatory Units:

Sociology: Human Society (National 5)

The general aim of this Unit is to develop learners' understanding of the sociological approach to studying human societies. Learners will investigate the research methods used in sociology and will describe relationships that exist amongst individuals, groups and institutions from different sociological perspectives.

Sociology: Culture and Identity (National 5)

The general aim of this Unit is to equip learners with a basic knowledge and understanding of how to use sociological concepts to explain culture and identity. Learners will investigate and explain the relationship between culture and identity and develop skills in collecting, using and communicating information from a range of sources. Learning in this Unit will raise awareness of diversity.

Sociology: Social Issues (National 5)

The general aim of this Unit is to develop learners' sociological understanding of contemporary social issues. Learners will develop knowledge of sociological theories and the terminology used to explain social issues. They will also develop skills in using a range of sources, including research evidence, to justify points of view.

Options within the Units offer personalisation and choice from areas of sociological study.

Conditions of award

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all the Units as well as the Course assessment. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

Skills, knowledge and understanding

Further information on the assessment of the skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course is given in the *Course Assessment Specification*. A broad overview of the mandatory subject skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed in the Course is given in this section. This covers:

- ◆ identifying and describing basic differences between sociological and common-sense explanations of human social behaviour
- ◆ understanding society by describing sociological perspectives, theories and concepts
- ◆ describing the sociological significance of relationships amongst individuals, groups and institutions
- ◆ using investigation skills to find appropriate sources of information
- ◆ organising and interpreting information in sociology
- ◆ describing the main research methods used in sociology
- ◆ using sociological explanations for human social behaviour
- ◆ using knowledge and understanding of research and evidence to support explanations
- ◆ communicating sociologically- informed views

Skills, knowledge and understanding to be included in the Course will be appropriate to the SCQF level of the Course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level (www.sqa.org.uk/scqf).

Assessment

Information about assessment for the Course is included in the *Course Assessment Specification*, which provides full details including advice on how a learner's overall attainment for the Course will be determined.

Unit assessment

All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in the *Unit Specification*.

They can be assessed on an individual Unit basis or by using other approaches which combine the assessment for more than one Unit.

They will be assessed on a pass/fail basis within centres. SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgments are consistent and meet national standards.

The assessment of the Units in this Course will be as follows:

Sociology: Human Society (National 5)

The learner will be required to explain the sociological approach to understanding society and to explain the sociological significance of relationships amongst individuals, groups and institutions. This will involve distinguishing between common-sense and sociological explanations of social behaviour, describing features of research methods and explaining features of structural and action perspectives.

Sociology: Culture and Identity (National 5)

The learner will be required to present an explanation of culture and identity, using basic sociological concepts. This will involve describing relevant concepts; explaining the process of socialisation; using evidence to explain the relationship between socialisation and identity; and showing awareness of diversity.

Sociology: Social Issues (National 5)

The learner will be required to explain social issues and the role of research evidence in gaining a sociological understanding of social issues. This will involve describing a contemporary social issue, using information from different sources and sociological theories to explain the issue and interpreting and using information from research evidence to support explanations.

Course assessment

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of [added value](#)². At National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, the added value will be assessed in the Course assessment. The added value for the Course must address the key purposes and aims of the Course as defined in the Course Rationale. It will do this by addressing one or more of breadth, challenge or application.

² Jargon Buster can be found here: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/58409.html

In the National 5 Sociology Course, added value will focus on:

- ◆ breadth
- ◆ application

The learner will be assessed through a [question paper](#)³ and an [assignment](#)⁴.

The question paper will sample learners' sociological knowledge and understanding from Course Units, and their ability to apply knowledge and understanding to explain social behaviour.

The assignment will require learners to use sociological skills to investigate a topic in sociology.

³ Jargon Buster can be found here: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/58409.html

⁴ See link above for definition.

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

It is expected that learners will develop broad, generic skills through this Course. The skills that learners will be expected to improve on and develop through the Course 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 Course where there are appropriate opportunities.

1 Literacy

1.3 Listening and talking

3 Health and wellbeing

3.1 Personal learning

4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship

4.6 Citizenship

5 Thinking skills

5.3 Applying

5.4 Analysing and evaluating

Amplification of these skills is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Course. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work for the Course is given in the *Course Support Notes*.

Administrative information

Published: September 2014 (version 1.2)

History of changes to National Course Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
	1.1	Course structure information amended for clarification.	Qualifications Development Manager	June 2013
	1.2	Scottish Studies Award Unit contributing information added. No other changes made to document content.	Qualifications Manager	September 2014

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