

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Sociology for Social Care Practice

Unit code: DH3N 34

Unit purpose: To enable candidates to understand the social influences on behaviour, experiences and life chances in order to work effectively with individuals receiving care. It enables them to use sociological theories and perspectives to explain the impact of society and culture on individuals.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- ◆ Understand the influence of the family on people's behaviour, experience and life chances
- ◆ Understand the causes of discrimination and analyse its effect on people's behaviour, experiences and life chances
- ◆ Describe the causes of poverty and inequality and analyse their effect on people's behaviour, experiences and life chances.

Credit value: 1 HN Credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Candidates should have good communication skills, both written and oral. These can be evidenced either by the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications for example Higher English or a qualification equivalent to SCQF Level 5 or by the completion of a pre-course interview part of which could take the form of a written assignment. The skills to undertake this Unit could also be demonstrated through an employer's reference or the process of application and interview.

In addition to proven communication skills candidates should have preferably undertaken some real work experience, paid or voluntary, in a care setting.

Core skills: There may be opportunities to gather evidence towards core skills in this Unit, although there is no certification of core skills or core skill components.

General information for centres (cont)

Candidates will have the opportunity to develop the following core skills:

- ◆ **Communication** (all outcomes):
Convey complex ideas in well-structured and coherent form.
Use a range of forms of communication effectively in both familiar and new contexts.
- ◆ **Information Technology** (all outcomes):
Use standard applications to process and obtain a variety of information and data.
- ◆ **Working with Others** (outcomes 2 and 3):
Take account of own and others' responsibilities in carrying out and evaluating tasks.
- ◆ **Problem Solving** (all outcomes)
Critical thinking that encourages candidates to apply an understanding of theories in practice.

Context for delivery:

If this Unit is delivered as part of a group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes – HNC Social Care.

Assessment: This Unit is assessed by three instruments of assessment. Outcome 1 is assessed through a case study, Outcome 2 through a report and Outcome 3 through a written assignment.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and evidence requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Understand the influence of the family on people's behaviour, experience and life chances.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Diverse family structures and roles and how these change over time
- ◆ Role of family structures in society
- ◆ Role of family structures in the socialisation process
- ◆ Sociological perspectives that can be used to understand the influence of family structures on behaviour, experiences and life chances. These include functionalist, conflict, feminist and interpretative approaches.

Evidence requirements

Candidates will need to evidence that they can use these knowledge and skills to understand the behaviour of individuals with whom they work. The evidence generated should show that the candidate is able to:

- ◆ Identify the range of family structures and roles in society, and understand that there is no 'normal' family structure
- ◆ Use a range of sociological perspectives to explain how family structures can affect behaviour, experiences and life chances
- ◆ Evaluate the usefulness of one of these approaches as a tool for understanding the impact of the family on individuals

Assessment Guidelines

The assessment should take the form of a case study of an individual taken from the candidate's work setting. Normally the case study should be derived from the candidate's own work experience. However in some cases a centre devised case study based on a real work situation and focussing on the client group with whom the candidate primarily works, could be used.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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If a centre devised case study is used, then this should be changed each time the outcome is assessed.

Where candidates are asked to evaluate the usefulness of one sociological approach, a different approach should be evaluated each time the unit is assessed. Evidence should be generated through a series of questions based upon this case study (1,000 words maximum).

Outcome 2

Understand the causes of discrimination and its effects on people's behaviour, experiences and life chances.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Concepts of prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination, and the relationship between these
- ◆ The nature and extent of individual and institutional discrimination
- ◆ Sociological theories that can be used to explain discrimination in society
- ◆ The effects of individual and institutional discrimination in terms of their impact on behaviour, experiences and life chances
- ◆ Research data which examines the nature, extent and impact of discrimination

Evidence requirements

Candidates will need to evidence that they can use these knowledge and skills to understand discrimination experienced by individuals receiving care. The evidence generated should show that the candidate is able to:

- ◆ Understand the nature and causes of discrimination
- ◆ Understand and use a range of sociological concepts which could include stereotyping, labelling, prejudice, discrimination, marginalisation, institutionalisation, stigma
- ◆ Use this understanding to examine the experiences of marginalised groups in society
- ◆ Examine the effects of discrimination on one group in relation to behaviour, experiences and life chances

Assessment guidelines

Evidence should be generated through the submission of an oral presentation in class. An individual or group can give the oral presentation. This presentation should be supported by a written summary and portfolio of evidence. In the case of a group presentation the tutor must authenticate each individual candidate's contribution. In the report, the candidate must cover the evidence requirements identified above. The candidate should relate their discussion to the individuals with whom they work and use any examples of relevant data to support their discussion.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 3

Describe the causes of poverty and inequality and their effect on people's behaviour, experiences and life chances, using sociological theories

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Types of inequality and poverty
- ◆ Extent of inequality and poverty
- ◆ Sociological theories that can be used to understand the causes of poverty and inequality in society
- ◆ The impact of poverty and inequality on behaviour, experiences and life chances of individuals receiving care

Evidence requirements

Candidates will need to evidence that they can use these knowledge and skills to understand the behaviour of individuals. The evidence generated should show that the candidate is able to:

- ◆ Examine at least two types of inequality, for example wealth, power, status, class, gender
- ◆ Distinguish between absolute and relative poverty
- ◆ Use sociological theory to examine possible causes of poverty and inequality.
- ◆ Use evidence to examine the impact of poverty and inequality on one group in relation to behaviour, experiences and life chances

Assessment guidelines

Evidence should be generated through a written assignment covering the above. A maximum of 1000 words is appropriate for this outcome.

Administrative Information

Unit code:	DH3N 34
Unit title:	Sociology for Social Care Practice
Superclass category:	EE
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History of changes:

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Narrative relating to assessment guidance transferred from Evidence Requirements section to Assessment Guidelines section.	08/05/07

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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

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This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This unit is intended to enable candidates to understand the behaviour and experiences of individuals with whom they work, therefore the emphasis should always be on the application of sociological theories and concepts to social care practice and in using them to understand behaviour and experiences. Candidates should be encouraged throughout the teaching and learning process to apply their knowledge and understanding to make sense of the individuals' life experiences and behaviour. Wherever possible illustrations and applications should be taken from the candidate's own experience.

Outcome 1 looks at the impact of the family on behaviour, experiences and life chances. In looking at the range of family structures that exist in modern society candidates will be able to challenge the view that 'the family' can be equated with the 'nuclear family' and recognise the diversity of family experiences. The range of family structures could include nuclear, different forms of extended, single parent families, step families and other family forms which will enable candidates to understand that individuals usually experience a range of family structures during their life cycle. In discussing family diversity candidates could also examine the extent of geographical, cultural and sub cultural difference. Changes in marriage patterns and in the roles of individual family members could also be explored. Useful sources of recent trends are: www.gro-scotland.gov.uk (General Register Office for Scotland); www.statistics.gov.uk Social Trends (National Statistics United Kingdom HMSO published annually).

Sociologists examine the role of the family in society and recognise it as a key social institution. However, candidates need to understand that there are different sociological approaches to the family, which lead to different conclusions of its potential influence on behaviour, experiences and life chances. For example in examining the functionalist view they can look at the ways in which families have developed to meet the needs of society, playing a positive role in maintaining society. They can also look at how this approach looks at the positive functions of the family and the benefits that it brings to individuals. In looking at conflict approaches they can examine, for example, Marxist approaches which look at how the family maintains social inequality and exploitation of some groups. Feminist approaches could be used to analyse the impact of the family in terms of power relationships and the influence of these on behaviour, experiences and life chances, particularly of women. It is also important to look at the influence of the family on the development of identity, self concept and self esteem. Candidates should be encouraged to look at this through using concepts drawn from an interpretative approach. This approach focuses on the meanings which individuals give to social actions and could include the work of Symbolic

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Interactionists such as George Herbert Mead (Mind Self and Society). For example the idea of a 'looking glass self'.

Each of these approaches can be used to understand the potential influence of the family through the socialisation process. An examination of the influence of gender socialisation processes could be part of this. Candidates can use sociological theories to explore how families can have a potentially positive and/or negative influence.

Outcome 2 looks at the impact of discrimination on individuals and groups within society. Candidates should look at different examples of structural discrimination including race, gender, disability, and age. The causes of discrimination should be explained using a range of sociological theories. For example, looking at conflict explanations that emphasise the role of power in maintaining discrimination and at how discrimination meets the needs of powerful groups in society. Marxist views that examine how discrimination and racism meet the needs of capitalism and functionalist views, such as the host / immigrant theory of racism could also be examined together with conflict views that examine how racist ideology is used to justify exploitation of certain groups in society. Challenging behaviour could also be looked at in this outcome within a structural context.

In examining effects, candidates could examine the impact of labelling, marginalisation and social exclusion that result from discrimination. Candidates could look at effects in relation to access to education, health, employment and community facilities and other life chances and refer to recent research evidence that documents these effects. Effects could also include the impact on self-esteem, self-concept, feelings of victimisation and injustice and the subsequent effects on behaviour. Again, challenging behaviour could be examined here in terms of labelling and its effects.

Again, candidates should be encouraged to use this knowledge to understand the experiences of individuals receiving care.

Outcome 3 looks at the impact of inequality and poverty on people's behaviour, experience and life chances. The key dimensions of inequality in modern society and the inter-relationships between them should be examined. For example, the inter-relationship between race, gender and poverty or between class, income and wealth. Candidates should be encouraged to examine recent research and statistics that can be used to analyse the extent of inequality in the UK, and particularly Scotland today. Websites such as the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (www.jrf.org.uk) and The Conference on Poverty (www.poverty.org), for example are useful sources of such statistical data and research findings. In examining the causes of poverty and inequality candidates can be encouraged to study and evaluate the insights that different theories bring. For example, looking at theories that blame the poor themselves, such as 'culture and poverty' explanations (Oscar Lewis: La Vida 1968); 'underclass theories' (Charles Murray 'The Emerging British Underclass' 1990) and contrasting these with structural explanations of poverty. Structural theories could include explanations that analyse the structures of society and the role they play in causing and

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perpetuating poverty. Here candidates could look at the work of Peter Townsend for example (P Townsend Poverty in the United Kingdom 1979). Most sociology textbooks contain relevant and useful information on explanations and the extent of poverty in the UK today.

In examining the effects of poverty and inequality on behaviour, experiences and life chances candidates should again be encouraged to refer to current research and evidence. Life chances could include, income and wealth, health, employment, education - a range should be investigated. Where possible candidates should look at the experiences of and effect on the group of individuals they are working with, remembering that not only are they, 'older adults' or 'adults with disabilities' but that they may also be effected by other inequalities relating to gender and ethnicity for example.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This unit is likely to form part of a group award that is primarily designed to provide candidates with professional knowledge, values and skills related to a specific occupational area. The unit should be delivered in a way that enables the candidates to appreciate its relevance to the occupational area concerned. Throughout the unit, the candidates should be encouraged to apply what they are learning to the behaviour, experiences and life chances of the individuals with whom they work. Wherever possible materials should be used that enable the candidate to make these links. Ideally candidates should be currently working, or undertaking a placement in a social care setting

The unit will be assessed by three instruments of assessment. Outcome one will be assessed through a case study. Outcome 2 will be assessed by a report and Outcome 3 by a written assignment.

Open learning

This unit could be delivered by open learning. However it would require planning by the centre to ensure the sufficiency and authenticity of candidate evidence.

For information on normal open learning arrangements, please refer to the SQA guide *Assessment and Quality Assurance of Open and Distance Learning* (SQA, 2000).

Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (www.sqa.org.uk).

General information for candidates

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This unit is designed to enable you to understand the behaviour and experiences of the individuals you work with. You are encouraged to apply your understanding of sociological theories and concepts in your work setting and to reflect on the insights this gives you. Through doing this you will be able to work more effectively with individuals receiving care. The knowledge and understanding you gain should also inform your work in other units of the group award. For example, it should enable you to assess the needs of individuals more effectively and to work in a way that promotes equality and diversity, based on an understanding of discrimination and inequality and the effects that these have on individuals receiving care.

The unit is made up of three outcomes, which enable you to examine individuals within the context of society. You will examine and apply a range of sociological perspectives, theories and concepts. You will look at three main areas: family structures and experiences; discrimination and inequality and poverty and use current research and evidence to assess the impact of these on individuals' lives.

You will complete three assessments: a case study, a report and a written assignment