Next Generation Higher National Educator Guide

Higher National Certificate in Social Sciences

Group award code GT65 47

Valid from session 2024 to 2025

Prototype educator guide for use in pilot delivery only (version 0.2) December 2024

This guide provides detailed information about the group award to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year.

This guide is for assessors and lecturers and contains all the mandatory information you need to deliver and assess the group award.

This edition: December 2024 (version 0.2)

Contents

Group award overview

Introduction

This guide:

- assists centres to implement, deliver and manage the group award
- provides a guide for new staff involved in offering the group award
- informs course managers, teaching staff, assessors, learners, employers and higher education institutions of the aims and purpose of the group award
- provides details about the range of learners that the group award is suitable for and the progression opportunities

Purpose of the group award

HNC Social Sciences develops learners' knowledge and understanding to increase their skills for both academic and workplace environments in the 21st century. The named social science subject disciplines within HNC Social Sciences encourage self-reflective, independent learning within a structure that supports the ongoing development of
meta-skills, higher-order transferable skills and academic skills valued by higher education institutions.

The title HNC Social Sciences reflects the competences of the qualification, as well as progression and articulation pathways in higher education. The mandatory units, named social sciences units and optional units of the HNC provide learners with knowledge and understanding of research methodology and social science-related topics and research. Learners develop the skills of a social scientist. The units also support learners' development of meta-skills, academic skills and knowledge on sustainability and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are important for future employment or further study.

Structure

Higher National Certificates (HNCs) are designed at SCQF level 7 and consist of 120 SCQF credit points. HNCs must incorporate at least 80 credit points (10 SQA credits) at SCQF
level 7.

HNC Social Sciences contains 15 SQA credits (120 SCQF credit points), all of which are at SCQF level 7. The 15 SQA credits can be used flexibly to increase opportunities for learners returning to education. Refer to the 'Meta-skills' section of this guide for more information.

HNCs contain a project unit of at least 3 SQA credits. For HNC Social Sciences, this is the mandatory unit, Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems at SCQF level 7 (3 SQA credits). We call this the 'common core unit' as all learners study this unit to achieve the qualification. This common core project unit contains a meta-skills outcome. Learners gather evidence of their meta-skills development against this outcome. Evidence from the development of meta-skills contributes to the grading of the HNC.

Framework

HNC Social Sciences is made up of the following mandatory unit, plus between 9 and 12 credits of named social sciences units, and 0 to 3 credits of the following optional units.

Mandatory unit

Unit code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J6EM 47	Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems	3	24	7

Named social sciences units

Choose between 9 and 12 credits. Learners must achieve at least 2 x A+B combinations in the same subject.

Unit code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J72H 47	Criminology A: Introducing Theories and Concepts	1	8	7
J72J 47	Criminology B: Applied Criminology	2	16	7
J72L 47	Economics A: The Nature of Economic Study	1	8	7
J72M 47	Economics B: Economic Systems, Markets and Objectives	2	16	7
J72N 47	Geography A: Examining Inequality	1	8	7
J72R 47	Geography B: Urban Change and Its Impact	2	16	7

Unit code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J6EN 47	History A: Exploring an Historical Period	1	8	7
J6EP 47	History B: Historical Debates	2	16	7
J72S 47	Philosophy A: Knowledge and Truth	1	8	7
J72T 47	Philosophy B: Engaging Arguments	2	16	7
J6ER 47	Politics A: Political Ideas	1	8	7
J6ES 47	Politics B: Governance of Scotland and the United Kingdom	2	16	7
J6ET 47	Psychology A: The Shaping of Modern Psychology	1	8	7
J6EV 47	Psychology B: Applied Psychology	2	16	7
J73S 47	Social Anthropology A: Anthropological Approaches to Understanding Society	1	8	7
J73T 47	Social Anthropology B: The Body	2	16	7
J6EW 47	Sociology A: The Sociological Imagination	1	8	7
J6EX 47	Sociology B: Applied Sociology	2	16	7

Optional units

Choose between 0 and 3 credits.

Unit code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J74C 47	An Investigation in the Social Sciences	1	8	7
J68W 47	Big Data	1	8	7
J75E 47	Communication: Practical Skills	1	8	7
J76D 47	Literature: Close Reading Skills	1	8	7
J75D 47	Skilled Helper Model of Counselling: Stage 1	1	8	7
J7N3 47	Work-based Learning	3	24	7

Aims of the group award

HNC Social Sciences aims to develop learners' knowledge and understanding of a range of social science subjects. Learners acquire the skills of a social scientist and develop
higher-order transferable meta-skills, including academic skills for progression and employment.

General aims

1. Develop the ability to be adaptable and flexible, both as an individual and collaboratively with others, to respond to the needs of a constantly changing employment environment.
2. Support lifelong learning and multiple career options.
3. Integrate essential 21st century skills or meta-skills.
4. Develop transferable skills such as study and research skills, communication skills, presentation techniques, personal effectiveness, problem solving, time management, and resource management.
5. Develop academic skills, such as referencing, citation and bibliography skills, as well as independent learning.
6. Allow progression to employment or further study, including articulation to higher education.
7. Develop digital literacy through opportunities to make use of a variety of digital tools and technologies to communicate and achieve learning goals.

Specific aims

1. Develop an understanding of the contribution of different social science disciplines to the study of human behaviour and societal issues.
2. Reflect critically on the nature of social change and inequality using a global minority and majority perspective.
3. Improve learners' professional practice and behaviours in social sciences.
4. Develop critical and evaluative thinking skills, and the ability to manage and absorb large amounts of information.
5. Develop a questioning and evidence-based approach to social science subjects and topics, defining and framing questions about issues.
6. Gain knowledge of competing perspectives, theories, viewpoints and evidence within and between different social science disciplines.
7. Develop investigation and research skills, gaining knowledge and understanding of research methodology and methods of research.
8. Develop informed, critical decision-making skills in relation to selecting sources of information, evidence and research, and the ability to describe, analyse and evaluate arguments of others.
9. Collect and interpret statistical data.

Group award structure

HNC Social Sciences contains 15 SQA credits (120 SCQF credit points), all of which are at SCQF level 7.

All learners study the mandatory common core unit, Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems at SCQF level 7. This is the 3-credit project unit

Each learner must study between 9 and 12 SQA credits from the named social sciences units. If they study fewer than 12 SQA credits from these, they can choose up to 3 SQA credits from the optional units to complete the programme.

You should ensure that learners take two sets of A+B units in the same subject area from the named social sciences section. For example, a learner could meet this requirement by taking Politics A and Politics B, and Sociology A and Sociology B.

The remaining credits could be made up of:

- two more A + B combinations
- three B units
- a combination of A and B units from different subjects
- a combination of named social sciences units and up to 3 SQA credits of optional units

It is important you ensure learners make choices that fit with local articulation arrangements.

Grading requires 12 out of the 15 SQA credits:

- the mandatory unit, Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems at SCQF level 7 (3 SQA credits)
- one A+B subject combination (3 SQA credits)
- 6 SQA credits of other named social sciences units (6 SQA credits)

Who is this group award for?

This qualification is suitable for learners who want to gain a holistic understanding of complex issues that relate to various levels of everyday individual, social and cultural life. School leavers, adult returners and learners progressing from lower-level qualifications gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between the individual and society through subject knowledge and social sciences skills. They also develop a range of transferable meta-skills, including academic skills.

Part-time learners can study HNC Social Sciences. The qualification contributes to the lifelong learning and social inclusion agendas. Examples of part-time provision include:

- learners building up unit credits over years in an individualised programme, working towards the group award
- a discrete part-time course run over two years

Recommended entry	**Progression**
Entry to this group award is at the discretion of your centre. Learners would benefit from having attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by one or more of the following, or equivalent qualifications and/or experience: • good communication and literacy skills • previous study of social science subjects, for example National Qualifications at SCQF levels 5 or 6 • other knowledge, skills and experience relevant to the unit Learners do not need to have previously studied a specific discipline, although it could be useful.	• Other qualifications in social sciences or related areas, such as HND Social Sciences (with all 15 credits from the HNC group award). • Different articulation pathways to undergraduate degree programmes in universities across the UK. Learners can progress to further study, often directly to second year of degree programmes, in subjects such as: ○ Social Sciences or Applied Social Sciences ○ specific social science subjects, including Psychology, Sociology and Politics ○ humanities subjects, including History and Philosophy ○ Behavioural Sciences ○ Criminology or Criminal Justice ○ Social Anthropology

Recommended entry	Progression
	• Further study, employment or training in a wide range of occupational areas. Learners develop flexible, transferable meta-skills designed to enable them to excel in employment. Diverse employment areas are possible, such as: ○ teaching ○ research ○ public services and administration ○ politics ○ strategic planning ○ partnership and multi-agency projects and initiatives ○ culture industries ○ journalism and broadcasting ○ tourism and heritage ○ police ○ probation services ○ social work ○ psychology ○ counselling ○ publicity and marketing ○ housing ○ voluntary and charitable organisations ○ management ○ human resources ○ recruitment Some of these areas require additional postgraduate study or training.

Recognising prior learning

SQA recognises that learners gain knowledge and skills through formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts.

It is unlikely that a learner would have the appropriate prior learning and experience to meet all the requirements of a full group award.

You can find more information and guidance about the recognition of prior learning on SQA's website.

Articulation and/or progression

Most universities recognise the value of HNC Social Sciences (with 15 SQA credits) for articulation into the second year of degree programmes in Social Sciences or the named social sciences subject units.

HNC Social Sciences also articulates into HND Social Sciences, which is a self-standing one-year qualification.

Credit transfer arrangements

Centres can make decisions about transferring credits. They can transfer credits if the subject-related content of the units is broadly equivalent. Centres should consider the currency of a learner's achievement before transferring credit.

It is possible that a learner who has studied individual HNC Social Sciences units part-time from a previous version of the qualification (that is, not NextGen: HN) will have gained similar knowledge and skills at SCQF level 7.

Any credit transfer of individual units should be supplemented with information on what meta-skills learners developed in the previous units.

Current unit (SCQF level 7)	New unit (SCQF level 7)	Comment	Possible credit transfer
J037 34 Social Science: Research and Methodology	J6EM 47 Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems	The previous unit is only one credit. The new unit covers some of the same knowledge and skills, but includes much more, for example, the meta-skills outcome.	No

Current unit (SCQF level 7)	New unit (SCQF level 7)	Comment	Possible credit transfer
J00G 34 Criminology: The Accused's Journey	J72H 47 Criminology A: Introducing Theories and Concepts	No match.	No
No previous B unit	J72J 47 Criminology B: Applied Criminology	No similar previous unit.	No
FJ34 34 Economics A: Introduction to Economics	J72L 47 Economics A: The Nature of Economic Study	Similar economics content.	You could consider credit transfer. This is dependent on the topics or themes covered in the unit and the meta-skills (transferable and academic skills) development opportunities the learner took.
J02V 34 Economics B: Economic Theory and Application	J72M 47 Economics B: Economic Systems, Markets and Objectives	Similar economics content.	You could consider credit transfer. This is dependent on the topics or themes covered in the unit and the meta-skills (transferable and academic skills) development opportunities the learner took.

Current unit (SCQF level 7)	New unit (SCQF level 7)	Comment	Possible credit transfer
FJ39 34 Geography A: The Geography of Inequality	J72N 47 Geography A: Examining Inequality	Similar geography content.	You could consider credit transfer. This is dependent on the topics or themes covered in the unit and the meta-skills (transferable and academic skills) development opportunities the learner took.
J0ND 34 Geography B: Urban Geography	J72R 47 Geography B: Urban Change and Its Impact	Similar geography content.	You could consider credit transfer. This is dependent on the topics or themes covered in the unit and the meta-skills (transferable and academic skills) development opportunities the learner took.
FK7V 34 History A: Introducing Topics within a Historical Period	J6EN 47 History A: Exploring an Historical Period	Similar history content.	You could consider credit transfer. This is dependent on the topics or themes covered in the unit and the meta-skills (transferable and academic skills) development opportunities the learner took.

Current unit (SCQF level 7)	New unit (SCQF level 7)	Comment	Possible credit transfer
J02X 34 History B: Analysing Topics within a Historical Period	J6EP 47 History B: Historical Debates	Similar history content.	You could consider credit transfer. This is dependent on the topics or themes covered in the unit and the meta-skills (transferable and academic skills) development opportunities the learner took.
FK81 34 Philosophy A: An Introduction to Philosophical Debate	J72S 47 Philosophy A: Knowledge and Truth	Similar philosophy content.	You could consider credit transfer. This is dependent on the topics or themes covered in the unit and the meta-skills (transferable and academic skills) development opportunities the learner took.
J02Y 34 Philosophy B: Classic Texts in Philosophy	J72T 47 Philosophy B: Engaging Arguments	Similar philosophy content.	You could consider credit transfer. This is dependent on the topics or themes covered in the unit and the meta-skills (transferable and academic skills) development opportunities the learner took.
J032 34 Politics A: An Introduction to Political Theories of the State	J6ER 47 Politics A: Political Ideas	Content is different. The new unit focuses on political ideologies rather than theories of the state.	No

Current unit (SCQF level 7)	New unit (SCQF level 7)	Comment	Possible credit transfer
J0H0 34 Politics B: The United Kingdom and Scotland	J6ES 47 Politics B: Governance of Scotland and the United Kingdom	Similar politics content.	You could consider credit transfer. This is dependent on the topics or themes covered in the unit and the meta-skills (transferable and academic skills) development opportunities the learner took.
FK8D 34 Psychology A: History and Development of Psychology	J6ET 47 Psychology A: The Shaping of Modern Psychology	Similar psychology content.	You could consider credit transfer. This is dependent on the topics or themes covered in the unit and the meta-skills (transferable and academic skills) development opportunities the learner took.
J030 34 Psychology B: Explanation and Research of Psychological Topics	J6EV 47 Psychology B: Applied Psychology	Similar psychology content.	You could consider credit transfer. This is dependent on the topics or themes covered in the unit and the meta-skills (transferable and academic skills) development opportunities the learner took.
No previous A unit	J73S 47 Social Anthropology A: Anthropological Approaches to Understanding Society	No similar previous unit.	No

Current unit (SCQF level 7)	New unit (SCQF level 7)	Comment	Possible credit transfer
H2JV 34 Social Anthropology: The Body and Its Life Course	J73T 47 Social Anthropology B: The Body	Although similar content, the previous version of the unit is only one credit.	No
FK8R 34 Sociology A: Introduction to Sociology	J6EW 47 Sociology A: The Sociological Imagination	Similar sociology content.	You could consider credit transfer. This is dependent on the topics or themes covered in the unit and the meta-skills (transferable and academic skills) development opportunities the learner took.
J031 34 Sociology B: Applying Sociological Theories and Studies to Sociological Topics	J6EX 47 Sociology B: Applied Sociology	Similar sociology content.	You could consider credit transfer. This is dependent on the topics or themes covered in the unit and the meta-skills (transferable and academic skills) development opportunities the learner took.

Core Skills entry profile

The Core Skills entry profile provides a summary of the assessment activities that demonstrate the SCQF level of this group award. This information can help identify learners that need additional support or those who should take an alternative level or learning programme.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	SCQF level 6	Learners: complete formative and summative essays, summarising, analysing and evaluating give responses to structured questions produce academic posters, timelines, blogs, journals or podcasts give presentations, presenting arguments participate in discussions and respond to others
Numeracy	SCQF level 5	Learners: calculate central tendencies and other descriptive statistics calculate statistical significance from inferential statistics in the psychology research activity
Information and communications technology (ICT)	SCQF level 5	Learners: carry out research online, including using internet sources and online library resources produce formative and summative essays; responses to structured questions; academic posters, timelines, blogs and journals; and presentations, all using digital tools use a virtual learning environment (VLE)

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Problem solving	SCQF level 5	Learners: design and carry out investigations develop solutions to any issues that arise
Working with others	SCQF level 5	Learners: work with peers in a range of activities, formative research tasks, debates and presentations

Meta-skills

Meta-skills are higher-order skills that support the development of other skills and promote success in any context. They enable learners to respond to professional challenges and opportunities by reflecting on, developing, applying and adapting industry skills and sector knowledge.

Our new Higher National Qualifications are developed with meta-skills at their core. Meta-skills complement the industry and sector-specific content of the qualifications. They provide a framework for learners to complete personal development aligned to professional practices.

Throughout the qualifications, learners develop meta-skills while studying industry and sector-specific content. You can integrate meta-skills into contextualised teaching activities and include them in integrated and holistic assessment approaches.

The 21st century skills and meta-skills learning, teaching and assessment model focuses on how we can use skills to respond to societal, economic and industry drivers and change.
Meta-skills frameworks vary, but they share an approach that emphasises individualistic, context-based skills development with reflective practice and localised definitions.

Skills Development Scotland developed a model of meta-skills in response to the concept of Industry 4.0 (or the ‘fourth industrial revolution’). In this model, they identify 12 meta-skills that help learners adapt to changes to industry, job roles and society expected as a result of technological advances and global trends. Developing these meta-skills supports learners as they prepare for a constantly evolving future.

The 12 meta-skills are grouped into three categories: self-management, social intelligence and innovation.

Self-management	Social intelligence	Innovation
Focusing	Communicating	Curiosity
Integrity	Feeling	Creativity
Adapting	Collaborating	Sense-making
Initiative	Leading	Critical thinking

Adapted from: Skills 4.0: a skills model to drive Scotland’s future, Centre for Work-based Learning in Scotland, (2018).

You should:

make learners aware that meta-skills are generic and transferable across many different contexts

support learners to focus on the meta-skills that they find most relevant by encouraging an individualised, active learning approach that relates to the industry and sector contexts of the qualification

help learners to understand key meta-skills for their industry or sector and any other personally important meta-skills, and set development goals for these

encourage learners to focus on reflective practice

None of the meta-skills are mandatory.

Learning and teaching

You can introduce meta-skills to learners as tools they can use in response to real-world challenges and opportunities. At SCQF level 7, you should use terminology from the Skills 4.0 model, but it is important that you develop a shared understanding with learners about
meta-skills and what they mean to them, both individually and in the context of coursework, projects and sectors.

You should embed meta-skills in learning and project tasks as a context for planning, practice and reflection. You should encourage learners to be self-aware, set active goals and monitor their progress.

The process of developing meta-skills is not linear and you should make learners active participants in their learning. At the start of the process, you should introduce meta-skills to learners and explore the concept of self-assessment with them. You should set goals and make development and evaluation plans together. The process should become cyclical, with reflective practice informing new self-awareness, goal setting and review.

Many traditional learning and teaching activities used to develop industry or sector-specific skills, knowledge and understanding also support the development of meta-skills. You can map these in course materials and resources and during learning.

Self-management

Focusing: any activity in the social sciences that requires learners to read and discuss theories or research supports the development of this meta-skill. For example, in psychology, learners sort information into a cohesive narrative to understand the relationship between the psychological schools of thought. You should ensure there are suitable reading materials and sources available to encourage learners to read and think about theories and research evidence. Sources help them to make decisions about what is valuable information and what is misinformation.

Integrity: in politics, learners can take part in discussions on the importance of integrity in parliament. In the common core unit, you can encourage learners to act in

an ethical way when they produce responses to assessments and carry out project work. You could create a learning activity on the academic skill of citations and referencing for assessments to support the development of this meta-skill.

Adapting: learners develop new knowledge and skills in each unit, as well as using different technologies and digital means of communicating or carrying out assessments. Working through a VLE can support development here. You can ask learners to reflect on their performance, in particular, meta-skills in the common core unit, to help improve their approach to their meta-skills development in all units.

Initiative: in the common core unit, ask learners to get started on things as early as possible, as that supports the development of decision making and motivation. Learners can read and think about theories, research evidence or sources to help them make decisions about what is valuable information and what is misinformation. You should make sure they know how to use your centre's library facilities. Have regular check-ins for coursework to ensure they stick to tasks and make sufficient progress. Getting them to set their own deadlines as they carry out the project tasks works well here.

Social intelligence

Communicating: any discussion or debate can support development of this meta-skill. For example, in politics, you can ask learners to listen to information on political systems, research and sources. Learners can then explain the roles and functions of political parties, pressure groups and electoral systems to each other. This helps them to produce suitable and understandable assessment responses.

Collaborating: in psychology, you can organise the research investigation for the laboratory report to allow a small group of learners to choose to collaborate on certain elements of the research process. The research presented must be substantively their own (which ties in well with the meta-skill of integrity).

Feeling: in psychology, learners need to show empathy when carrying out research with human participants. You should give information that prepares learners to brief and debrief participants, and understand and anticipate factors that may unintentionally cause them distress. In other social sciences subjects, you can support the development of feeling by giving learners time to discuss theories and express opinions to help them to understand other perspectives. You should ask learners to respect each other's viewpoints in discussions.

Leading: you can give responsibility to learners in a formative task, encouraging them to take account of others and share information in a useful way. You can use the jigsaw technique, where each learner leads on a small aspect of knowledge and brings this to the group to form a cohesive understanding.

Innovation

Curiosity: you can encourage learners to gather information independently. You can facilitate this by demonstrating online research tools and allowing for library research time. You can organise class discussion and debates to encourage learners to question assumptions, ideas, information and research evidence.

Creativity: you can ask learners to produce visual illustrations to enhance explanations and analysis points in an oral presentation. They can show creativity in producing materials for the project in the common core unit.

Sense-making: in the common core unit, you can encourage discussion to help learners understand why people behave as they do. You should ask learners to evaluate the range of ideas. You could get them to give a presentation to peers on a topic.

Critical thinking: in history, you could ask learners to use sources of information in a discussion on different interpretations about a historical issue or event and draw overall conclusions. You could do this as a debate. Learners should use sources to form appropriate arguments.

Assignments and projects

Meta-skills are central to successfully engaging with and completing assignments and projects. You should encourage learners to plan how they will use and develop meta-skills in their coursework and to reflect on their success and future goals.

You should emphasise the importance of planning as this increases learners' success in completing activities and assessments on time. You can model good planning for your learners by having a clear lesson plan available, noting time allocated to different activities, and sharing this with your class Creating a schedule for assessment across the whole course can support learners' planning skills. You could have a discussion on the best ways to make time for studying, reading theories or carrying out internet searches, as this helps learners focus on the specific activities required for success. You can encourage learners to build in 'thinking time' to their activities. Learners often underestimate what is needed to complete tasks well. The meta-skills of focusing, adapting and initiative are particularly key to planning in activities or assessment. Many higher education institutions give advice on their websites on how to create a useful study plan, with some also providing templates.

Learners' knowledge and skills in two of the units in this qualification are assessed using a project. The main project is in Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems at SCQF level 7. This is the mandatory common core unit. It is a 3-credit unit, with a large project assessing outcomes 1 to 7. You can advise learners of suggested timings for this project and encourage them to plan when and how they complete each section. Learners could devise their own timescales and deadlines for this project (within the overall deadline for completing the project). This would support the development of initiative.

Learners can demonstrate the meta-skills of adapting, self-learning and critical thinking by reviewing the available literature on theories and studies related to their chosen topic. They develop the meta-skill of curiosity in questioning and recognising the nature of a social problem and use sense-making in a literature review to formulate a research question or hypothesis.

Learners discuss how to operationalise the research question or hypothesis, developing their social intelligence meta-skills of communicating, feeling and collaborating. They decide on their choice of research method, definition of concepts measurement and sampling. Learners can plan a research investigation with others and apply a research method activity as their pilot research investigation.

For the summative assessment, learners should provide an individual proposal for specific research, showing a plan with a basic research process, identifying specific steps to be taken, and providing reasons for the choices that are made.

Learners further develop the meta-skill of critical thinking, using judgement and logical thinking by applying data-handling techniques, and interpreting and analysing key findings and information in the pilot study.
Planning is important in outcome 8 of the mandatory common core unit, Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems at SCQF level 7. You should introduce an action plan to encourage learners to plan their meta-skills development across the qualification early in the course. The action plan should be completed after an initial review, which helps them to identify the gaps in their knowledge and how they use meta-skills. You could do this review in week 3 or 4. Learners need only plan for the development of one meta-skill for each heading of self-management, social intelligence and innovation.

There is also a project in the unit Psychology B: Applied Psychology at SCQF level 7, which is used to assess both outcomes. Again, you can ask learners to create a plan for timing, deciding on a suitable topic and specific research, carrying out a literature review, any collaboration meetings, preparing materials, collecting data, and analysing and interpreting results. This helps the learners to complete the work on time. You can decide to use a project to meet the evidence requirements for other units. Planning is the key to success here too.

Reflective practice

The role of the coach, mentor or facilitator is key to help learners understand, develop and reflect on their own meta-skills and those central to course activities, assessment projects and their target industry or sector. You and any employer partners or guest speakers could guide learners by taking on a coaching and mentoring role.

In this role, you should introduce learners to the fundamentals of reflective practice. You could use several models of reflective practice. You do not need to use a theoretical perspective. Any reference to these models should support learners' understanding of the nature and value of reflective practice in self-understanding and making change.

Introducing reflective practice can support your learners' personal development and goal setting. Frequent formative peer-to-peer, assessor, client (if appropriate) and group reflection activity can support learners through reflective practice.

Learners can focus on any meta-skills appropriate to them and their context. However, learning and teaching should also facilitate individual development. Learners have individual strengths and areas for development and they do not have to reach a particular level in relation to meta-skills. Coursework and projects provide the context for development appropriate to the SCQF level. Within these contexts, the process of development is important. You should create a clear learning plan with each learner to provide evidence of their development.

You can create descriptions of abilities and skills that relate to meta-skills with your learners. These can come from self-profiling, exploring the industry and sector, and discussion with peers and employers. You should consider the meta-skills needed to complete coursework and meet personal goals to set a context for reflection.

Exploring learning and working styles, personality traits and preferences, personal profiling and self-assessment tools can help learners to develop an understanding of their strengths and areas for development.

You can use case studies and scenario-based activities to demonstrate the value of meta-skills and how they can be applied. You can provide opportunities for peer reflection. A group of learners could share experiences and reflections about how to apply meta-skills in the context of their coursework. You could adopt the role of facilitator to draw learners' attention to situations where meta-skills were or could have been applied.

Reflective discussions can focus on how and where meta-skills are being developed. Your discussions with learners could include positive recognition and guidance on future development based on previous performance. As learners progress, you could introduce industry content that requires skills like problem recognition and problem solving, both of which combine multiple meta-skills.

You can deliver the knowledge and skills for practical aspects of projects in sequence. However, learners benefit from learning and teaching that integrates meta-skills with project planning and development. This approach supports learners to engage in reflective practice throughout the project and develops their self-awareness and an appreciation for continuous learning. It also maximises your opportunities to support, coach and mentor learners through their projects.

Assessing meta-skills

Learners should not be assessed on their 'competence' in any one meta-skill. There are no SCQF levelled competence descriptions for individual meta-skills and the development process is individual to each learner, contextualised within the vocational or academic area (social sciences).

Learners are assessed on evidence that they have undertaken meta-skills development through a process of self-assessment, goal and action planning, implementing planned strategies, or activities and reflective practice in relation to their progress.

There are plenty of opportunities to produce evidence naturally as part of the development process and there should be no need for assessment or re-assessment events. There are no controlled conditions required on time, volume or access to resources, and evidence can take any suitable form.

Evidence must include:

A self-assessment of the learner's own meta-skills baseline. Learners should self-assess all 12 meta-skills and provide some justification for their opinions based on the work they have done to understand themselves. They do not need to justify their

development of all 12 meta-skills. Learners may have more experience of some meta-skills than others in the three categories of self-management, social intelligence and innovation. They can focus more on the meta-skills that are most relevant to them.

A personal plan for the learner's own meta-skills development. The personal plan should include goals and intended actions or strategies to develop meta-skills.

A record of activities to develop and demonstrate meta-skills. This can be, for example, a straightforward checklist of coursework, learning experiences, workshop activities, research or discussion, as appropriate to this course.

Examples of reflective practice to monitor and assess meta-skills being developed. These must include mid-point and end-point reflections. They can also include a review of their personal plan.

Reflection on at least one skill from each of the three headings of self-management, social intelligence and innovation.

You could encourage learners who might find it difficult to reflect once time has lapsed to keep an ongoing portfolio of reflection. You could plan in time and activities that focus specifically on reflection for the mid-point and end-point of the course. These could be combined with academic or guidance tutorials, feedback on other assessments, or project reviews. You could structure these reflective pause points around repeating the self-assessment exercises and justifications, and reconsidering goals, actions and strategies. At SCQF level 7, learners' reflections should provide more than simple or singular reasons and opinion. Learners should reflect their understanding of the ways in which meta-skills, learning experiences or course activities combine and inform one another as part of the development process. As with the initial self-assessment, learners do not need to pay equal attention to commenting on all 12 meta-skills, and they can range broadly over the three categories of self-management, social intelligence and innovation, focusing on the meta-skills that are most relevant to them. Evidence can take any suitable form or medium.

In the appendix of this document, you can find an example of a portfolio that learners could use to capture their development of meta-skills and other important transferable skills, including academic skills. You should encourage learners to note what meta-skills they are developing in learning and teaching sessions so that they can summarise this in a format that can be assessed for outcome 8 of Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems at SCQF level 7.

They can choose to record their development of meta-skills using any method that captures their information, such as in podcast format or a blog. Learners do not need to record every activity they do in every class, but should reflect on a range of opportunities to develop
meta-skills across the course. You should encourage learners to use digital means to record their development.

You could encourage learners to use a learning journal for meta-skills self-reflection. You can share the following notes, which are addressed to learners, with them.

What is a learning journal?

A learning journal is a personal record of your thoughts and feelings during a period of learning. Often used in academic settings, it allows you to make a note of particular things that happened at specific times. You could reflect on:

the classes you are taking
the subject content
assignments or assessments
class discussions
presentations

It allows you to express how you are feeling at a point in time related to any aspect of your learning. It is personal to you, with space to reflect on your learning experiences. You can analyse your actions in terms of how they contribute to your development, look at outcomes of your behaviour and reflect on areas for improvement and growth.

You can use a learning journal to record your development of meta-skills during your HNC qualification.

Why would it be helpful to use a learning journal for meta-skills?

Meta-skills development is an essential part of your NextGen: HN qualification.

Reflecting on your development of meta-skills and other transferable skills, such as academic skills, can lead to an increased self-awareness and a deeper understanding of what you need to do to develop your skills further.

You can reflect on areas you are good at. Sometimes we do not spend any time thinking about how much we have developed, dwelling more on what we got wrong. You can use the learning journal as a resource to remind yourself of where you started and how far you have come.

You can reflect on strategies that you have used, working out if these have been helpful and if you could use them elsewhere.

You can reflect on areas that you are not so good at or confident in. From this reflection, you can develop your action plan to focus on areas that you could usefully develop your skills in.

You can apply the meta-skills you develop to other situations. Meta-skills are transferable, particularly when you go on to higher education or employment. Having strong transferable skills can give you confidence and increase your adaptability in new situations. Having a learning journal allows you to look back and remind yourself of the meta-skills and academic skills that you develop, so you can use the information to fill in your UCAS form or apply for jobs.

Your engagement in self-reflection on your meta-skills development contributes towards your grading for the whole award, alongside your assessment responses from the units in the qualification.

What is self-reflection?

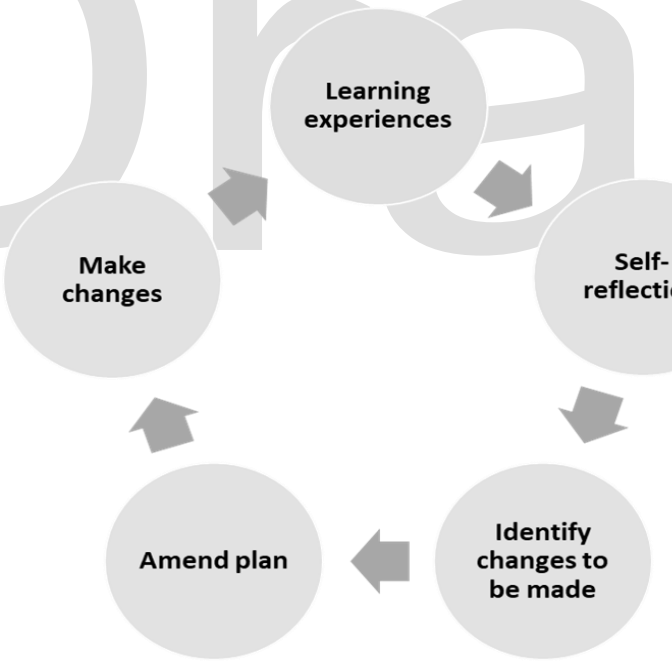
Self-reflection is a deliberate practice where you examine how you are performing the tasks and activities that are part of your HNC, recording your thoughts and feelings on your performance. There are many ways to record these thoughts and feelings.

You should use a method that you can share with your lecturer, as self-reflection contributes to the assessment response for the outcome in the common core project unit.

The learning journal can be written or orally recorded. Choose a method that you are comfortable with. For example, you could use:

a digital or word-processed document
a blog
an audio or video journal on your phone
a podcast
a journal app

Your experience of learning during your studies forms the basis of your self-reflection. The process of self-reflection helps you to identify changes that you could make to improve your engagement and performance. You can then amend your plan to incorporate changes. The changes you make feed into your next learning experiences, and form the basis of further self-reflection. You might find the diagram below helpful in visualising this process.



How should I structure my learning journal and what should I record in it?

Choose the method that you are comfortable with or take advice from your lecturer on a good method for the learning journal.

Decide how often to record your reflections. You must have a mid-point and an end-point reflection as a minimum to achieve the outcome in the common core project unit. However, it would be useful to reflect more often to be able to show your

ongoing meta-skills development. You could decide to reflect monthly at a specific time, or weekly if that helps you to remember what you have done.

Decide on a structure. You can use units or topics as headings, or you can choose specific meta-skills or sub-skills. Whatever you decide, having a pre-planned structure helps you to be organised and clear in your reflections.

Look back at previous posts so you can see your development. This allows you to reflect on your progress. If there is little progress in a skill, then ask yourself why — reflect on the barriers to progress for that skill, as that helps to shape your next steps. Write freely, providing specific examples and personal insights. You must be honest with yourself. However, it is not just about what you need to improve. Reflecting on what has gone well and what skills you showed in a particular situation, such as a class activity, is important to help you transfer your skills to other situations.

You can reflect on resources that have been helpful in creating your learning journal or other coursework, such as textbooks, articles on self-reflection, online tools and free software.

Prompts to help you reflect

Reflective prompts can help to direct you to reflect on specific areas, such as specific meta-skills. These prompts can be used early on in your reflections as you get used to the process of self-reflection.

Self-management

How have you managed your time over the last period (week, month, etc)? What barriers have been difficult for you? What could you do to improve this?

What strategies have you used to prioritise tasks? How have they worked out? What changes should you make?

Any particularly challenging situations in this period? What happened? How did you react? What could you have done differently to adapt?

What changes have you made or what have you done differently during this period?

Reflect on an instance when you showed initiative. How successful was it? How do you feel about it?

Social intelligence

Reflect on an occasion when you used communication effectively to collaborate with others.

Comment on a situation when you had a disagreement with a peer. How did you manage the situation? How did it make you feel? What steps can you take to reduce disagreements to maintain positive relationships?

Comment on a time when you gave positive feedback to a peer. How did that make you feel? Was it supportive to your peer?

Reflect on a collaborative task. How did you demonstrate active listening? Did you show that you are able to deal with different perspectives? What were the challenges of working with others?

Have you had an opportunity to take a lead in any activity? What did you do? How successful was it? How can you do more of this meta-skill?

Innovation

Reflect on a problem that you encountered in this period. How did you resolve it? Did you use creative thinking or a tried and tested solution in a new circumstance? Was it successful at resolving the problem?

Reflect on a situation where you have challenged assumptions or used critical thinking to gain deeper insights.

Has there been a learning experience that you have been asked to be creative in? How did that make you feel? Was it successful? If not, why not?

How do you combine information to make a reasoned argument? Does it work to make your argument flow well?

What steps have you taken to make sense of the information you are getting? Do you follow up references? Do you re-read notes? Or do you not engage as well as you could? What steps can you take going forward to improve this skill?

Overall

Which point of reflection do I want to follow up?

What should I do differently in the next period?

What do I need to do to make a positive difference to my meta-skills development?

What changes should I make in my action plan?

Useful resources for learning journals

Open University, Skills for OU Study. (2023) 'Reflective Learning: Strategic study techniques'. Available from: https://help.open.ac.uk/be-aware-of-your-habits [accessed 3 May 2024].

SQA Academy NextGen: HN — Meta-skills for learners modules. Available from: https://www.sqaacademy.org.uk/course/view.php?id=1012 [accessed 3 May 2024].

STUDYLIB. (2013–2023) 'What is a learning journal?' Available from: https://studylib.net/doc/8404916/what-is-a-learning-journal%3F-a-learning-journal-is-a-colle [accessed 3 May 2024].

UCD Teaching & Learning Resources. 'Learning Journals and Logs'. Available from: https://www.ucd.ie/teaching/t4media/learning_journals_logs.pdf [accessed 3 May 2024].

Learners can focus their meta-skills development on academic skills, as higher education institutions want learners to recognise these skills and be able to apply them in a degree programme. You can shape delivery and assessment to support learners to develop skills such as time management, multi-tasking ability, digital skills, essay-writing skills and questioning ability. You can design activities and assessments that encourage learners to practise skills that they need to progress to the next level of study. Encourage your learners to reflect on their academic skills too.

Learning for Sustainability

Context

The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the UK in 2015, has shaped the development of internal and national sustainability policy. It sets out the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are central to the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework. Learning for Sustainability (LfS) is a commitment to embedding the SDGs in Scottish education.

In line with this, SQA is committed to incorporating the skills, knowledge, understanding and values of LfS within all new and revised qualifications.

LfS combines:

education for sustainable development (ESD)
global citizenship
outdoor learning

ESD is the internationally used term for sustainability education. LfS has a broader remit; however, the terms are largely interchangeable. ESD tends to be used by colleges and universities, while LfS is usually used in schools. Both focus on a broad range of social, economic and environmental themes and approaches across all levels of education. SQA uses LfS as an umbrella term.

LfS is designed to nurture a generation of learners who know the value of the natural world and are committed to the principles of social justice, human rights, global citizenship, democratic participation and living within the ecological limits of the planet. It aims to respond to global challenges by developing learners' skills, knowledge, understanding and values relating to sustainability so they can interact with the world in a socially responsible way.

LfS is more than the sum of its parts; it is about building learners' capacity to deal with the unpredictable challenges facing our rapidly changing world. It encourages transformational change through learning, by which learners are able to critically analyse, communicate and collaborate on complex social, environmental and economic challenges. This gives learners increased confidence, opportunities to develop a range of meta-skills, and enhanced motivation and readiness to learn.

Learning for Sustainability in Next Generation Higher National Qualifications

Next Generation Higher National (NextGen: HN) qualifications have been developed with sustainability as a core component.

All NextGen: HN learners should exit their qualification with:

a general understanding of sustainability and the SDGs
an understanding of subject-specific sustainability issues, how these relate to the SDGs, and potential improvements
the confidence to apply their knowledge and skills in the next stage of their lives

Central to these aims is a need for familiarity with both the SDGs and the concept of sustainability (which is the need to ensure a balance between economic growth, environmental stewardship and social well-being). Knowledge and understanding of current industry practices and behaviours, and consideration of how these could be made more sustainable and contribute towards the SDGs, are integral in developing young people to be responsible and empowered citizens who are able to contribute to building a socially just, sustainable and equitable society.

With this in mind, sustainability is embedded in the learning and teaching for all named social sciences units.

By completing this outcome, learners develop skills, including the abilities to:

assess their own knowledge and understanding of sustainability and the SDGs
review unit content against the SDGs to identify a sustainability-related issue
apply knowledge and understanding of sustainability and the SDGs to propose improvements

Any of the SDGs can be covered; there are none that are mandatory.

You can relate the UN Sustainable Development Goals to social sustainability, economic sustainability or environmental sustainability within different social sciences.

Social

1 No poverty
3 Good health and well-being
4 Quality education
5 Gender equality
11 Sustainable cities and communities
16 Peace, justice and strong institutions

Economic

8 Decent work and economic growth

9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure

10 Reduced inequalities

17 Partnerships for the goals

Environmental

2 Zero hunger

7 Affordable and clean energy

12 Responsible consumption and production

13 Climate action

15 Life on land

Resources to support Learning for Sustainability teaching

College Development Network has an online course on sustainability — 'Introducing Action for Sustainability'. Available at: https://professionallearning.collegedevelopmentnetwork.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=253 [accessed 3 May 2024].

EAUC Scotland. Available at: https://www.eauc.org.uk/what_we_do [accessed 3 May 2024].

Education Scotland information and resources. Available at: https://education.gov.scot/resources/a-summary-of-learning-for-sustainability-resources/ [accessed 3 May 2024].

The General Teaching Council Scotland (GTCS) has a Learning for Sustainability Hub, designed to help teachers and lecturers explore LfS and how it relates to the Professional Standards for Scotland's Teachers. Available at: https://www.gtcs.org.uk/registrant-resources/learning-for-sustainability [accessed 3 May 2024].

GTCS Hub materials include a series of self-directed Professional Learning modules to explore LfS. They introduce LfS and help you to understand the nature of and context for it in Scotland and globally. Three GTCS modules are available at: https://www.gtcs.org.uk/resource/making-learning-for-sustainability-part-of-my-teaching [accessed on 3 May 2024].

Exploring Learning for Sustainability in the Professional Standards for Teachers
Learning for Sustainability in the Professional Standards: Taking a Deeper Dive
Leading on Learning for Sustainability

Learning for Sustainability Scotland. Scotland's United Nations University recognised Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development. Available at: https://learningforsustainabilityscotland.org/ [accessed 3 May 2024).

Nations United: Urgent Solutions for Urgent Times. Helps give context to the UN sustainability goals section of the meta-skills. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVWHuJOmaEk [accessed 3 May 2024].

Reporting Hub for the SDGs in Scotland and in the UK. Available at: https://globalgoals.scot/report-hub/ [accessed 3 May 2024].

Scottish Government's 'Learning for sustainability: action plan'. Available at: https://www.gov.scot/publications/learning-for-sustainability-vision-2030-action-plan/ [accessed 3 May 2024].

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Click on a goal for further information on each one. Available at: https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/ [accessed 3 May 2024].

Scottish colleges came together to establish and commit collaboratively to delivering on 10 key actions. Available at: Scottish-Colleges-Climate-Emergency-Commitment.pdf (cdn.ac.uk) [accessed 3 May 2024].

You could ask learners to work in groups to summarise the information from each resource and present to their peers. This would support development of several meta-skills, such as communicating, collaborating and sense-making.

Learning for Sustainability — HNC Social Sciences reflective framework

You should refer to the SDGs in the units as many are relevant to the social science subjects. It is useful for learners to make a note of the SDGs they come across. Identifying relevant activities in each unit can be helpful when you are planning learning and teaching to ensure you highlight connections to the development goals when they arise. You could use the following table to focus ideas for activities.

Goal group	Description	UN Sustainable Development Goals	Relevant meta-skills and academic skills	Relevant class activities
Health and well-being	In this goal group there are opportunities to learn about food security, healthy life choices, mental health, clean water and sanitation, decent housing, and the challenges faced by many in accessing these.	**2 — Zero hunger:** End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture. **3 — Good health and well-being:** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all, at all ages. **6 — Clean water and sanitation:** Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.	Identify which meta-skills or other skills are relevant to the activities in the next column. Choose from: **Self-management:** focusing, integrity, adapting, initiative **Social intelligence:** communicating, collaborating, feeling, leading **Innovation:** curiosity, creativity, sense-making, critical thinking **Academic skills:** time management, digital skills, essay-writing skills, referencing, citation skills	Include only the goals that are relevant to the unit being studied. Consider how you could integrate this aspect into this subject context. What activities should you include in a learning and teaching plan that would highlight this development goal? Repeat this for each goal group.

Goal group	Description	UN Sustainable Development Goals	Relevant meta-skills and academic skills	Relevant class activities
Biosphere	In this goal group there are opportunities to learn about the interdependence of life in the biosphere, the impact of human activities, and the implications of these for the future of the planet.	**13 — Climate action:** Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts by regulating emissions and promoting developments in renewable energy. **14 — Life below water:** Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. **15 — Life on land:** Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems; sustainably manage forests; combat desertification; halt and reverse land degradation; and halt biodiversity loss.	Identify which meta-skills or other skills are relevant to the activities in the next column. Choose from: **Self-management:** focusing, integrity, adapting, initiative **Social intelligence:** communicating, collaborating, feeling, leading **Innovation:** curiosity, creativity, sense-making, critical thinking **Academic skills:** time management, digital skills, essay-writing skills, referencing, citation skills	Include only the goals that are relevant to the unit under study. Consider how this aspect could be integrated into this subject context. What activities should you include in a learning and teaching plan that would highlight this development goal?

Goal group	Description	UN Sustainable Development Goals	Relevant meta-skills and academic skills	Relevant class activities
Equality	In this goal group there are opportunities to learn about the challenges of eradicating poverty, reducing inequalities and providing lifelong learning opportunities for all.	**1 — No poverty:** End poverty in all its forms. **4 — Quality education:** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. **5 — Gender equality:** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. **10 — Reduced inequalities:** Reduce income inequality within and among countries.	Identify which meta-skills or other skills are relevant to the activities in the next column. Choose from: **Self-management:** focusing, integrity, adapting, initiative **Social intelligence:** communicating, collaborating, feeling, leading **Innovation:** curiosity, creativity, sense-making, critical thinking **Academic skills:** time management, digital skills, essay-writing skills, referencing, citation skills	Include only the goals that are relevant to the unit under study. Consider how you could integrate this aspect into this subject context. What activities should you include in a learning and teaching plan that would highlight this development goal?

Goal group	Description	UN Sustainable Development Goals	Relevant meta-skills and academic skills	Relevant class activities
Society	In this goal group there are opportunities to learn about the challenge of developing an inclusive, sustainable, safe and just society, committed to upholding human rights.	**8 — Decent work and economic growth:** Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. **9 — Industry, innovation and infrastructure:** Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, and foster innovation. **16 — Peace, justice and strong institutions:** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.	Identify which meta-skills or other skills are relevant to the activities in the next column. Choose from: **Self-management:** focusing, integrity, adapting, initiative **Social intelligence:** communicating, collaborating, feeling, leading **Innovation:** curiosity, creativity, sense-making, critical thinking **Academic skills:** time management, digital skills, essay-writing skills, referencing, citation skills	Include only the goals that are relevant to the unit under study. Consider how you could integrate this aspect into this subject context. What activities should you include in a learning and teaching plan that would highlight this development goal?

Goal group	Description	UN Sustainable Development Goals	Relevant meta-skills and academic skills	Relevant class activities
Resource stewardship	In this goal group there are opportunities to learn about responsible resource consumption and production, access to affordable and clean energy, and building an inclusive, sustainable and innovative circular economy.	**7 — Affordable and clean energy:** Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. **11 — Sustainable cities and communities:** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. **12 — Responsible consumption and production:** Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.	Identify which meta-skills or other skills are relevant to the activity in the next column. Choose from: **Self-management:** focusing, integrity, adapting, initiative **Social intelligence:** communicating, collaborating, feeling, leading **Innovation:** curiosity, creativity, sense-making, critical thinking **Academic skills:** time management, digital skills, essay-writing skills, referencing, citation skills	Include only the goals that are relevant to the unit under study. Consider how you could integrate this aspect into this subject context. What activities should you include in a learning and teaching plan that would highlight this development goal?

Goal group	Description	UN Sustainable Development Goals	Relevant meta-skills and academic skills	Relevant class activities
Partnerships	In this goal group there are opportunities to learn about the potential of co-operation and collaboration for securing change.	**17 — Partnerships for the goals:** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.	Identify which meta-skills or other skills are relevant to the activities in the next column. Choose from: **Self-management:** focusing, integrity, adapting, initiative **Social intelligence:** communicating, collaborating, feeling, leading **Innovation:** curiosity, creativity, sense-making, critical thinking **Academic skills:** time management, digital skills, essay-writing skills, referencing, citation skills	Include only the goals that are relevant to the unit under study. Consider how you could integrate this aspect into this subject context. What activities should you include in a learning and teaching plan that would highlight this development goal?

Example of reflective framework filled in for Politics B: Governance of Scotland and the United Kingdom

Goal group	Description	UN Sustainable Development Goals	Relevant meta-skills and academic skills	Relevant class activities
Society	In this goal group there are opportunities to learn about the challenge of developing an inclusive, sustainable, safe and just society, committed to upholding human rights.	**16 — Peace, justice and strong institutions:** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.	**Self-management:** focusing, integrity, adapting **Social intelligence:** communicating, collaborating, feeling **Innovation:** curiosity, sense-making, critical thinking **Academic skills:** time management, digital skills, essay-writing skills, referencing, citation skills	Group activity to use internet sources to explain the roles and functions of a specific political party. Each group gets a different party to focus on. Oral presentation to the class on the chosen party. Class discussion on the importance of integrity in parliament. Examples drawn from recent issues, for example the Partygate allegations or Sue Gray Report on breaches in 10 Downing Street. A formative debate on the various electoral systems. Each group to identify the benefits for their systems against the drawbacks for other systems. Learners in each group are chosen or volunteer to debate their system against others.

Goal group	Description	UN Sustainable Development Goals	Relevant meta-skills and academic skills	Relevant class activities
				Learners prepare a poster or an essay showing how the functions of the executive and parliament, including the committee system, work in Scotland, with similarities and differences to the United Kingdom. You should give clear information on referencing, so learners reference as part of the exercise. Learners explain the roles and functions of pressure groups to each other in a peer exercise. Using the recent pandemic as an example, have a class discussion on how both the Scottish Government and UK Government shaped the pandemic response. Link this to human rights and the rule of law.

Grading

Please see the Grading Pack for this qualification for more information on grading.

Learners who pass NextGen: HN qualifications receive one of the following grade outcomes for the qualification as a whole:

Achieved with Distinction

Achieved with Merit

Achieved

You assess and judge each learner's performance across the key aspects of the group award to determine their whole qualification grade. You must align judgements with the whole qualification grade descriptors, which are:

Achieved with Distinction

This candidate consistently demonstrates outstanding knowledge, understanding and application of skills. Thinking and working independently to an exceptional standard, they apply excellent judgement and creative problem-solving skills. They achieve or exceed agreed aims by confidently applying an extensive range of meta-skills and working very effectively with colleagues and peers.

Achieved with Merit

This candidate demonstrates an excellent level of knowledge, understanding and application of skills. Thinking and working independently to a high standard, they demonstrate good judgement and effective problem-solving skills. They achieve agreed aims by applying a broad range of meta-skills and working effectively with colleagues and peers.

Achieved

This candidate demonstrates thorough knowledge, understanding and application of skills. They think and work independently and use their judgement to find solutions to problems. They achieve agreed aims by applying a range of meta-skills and working well with colleagues and peers.

Successful learners receive their grade, along with the grade descriptor text, on their commemorative certificate.

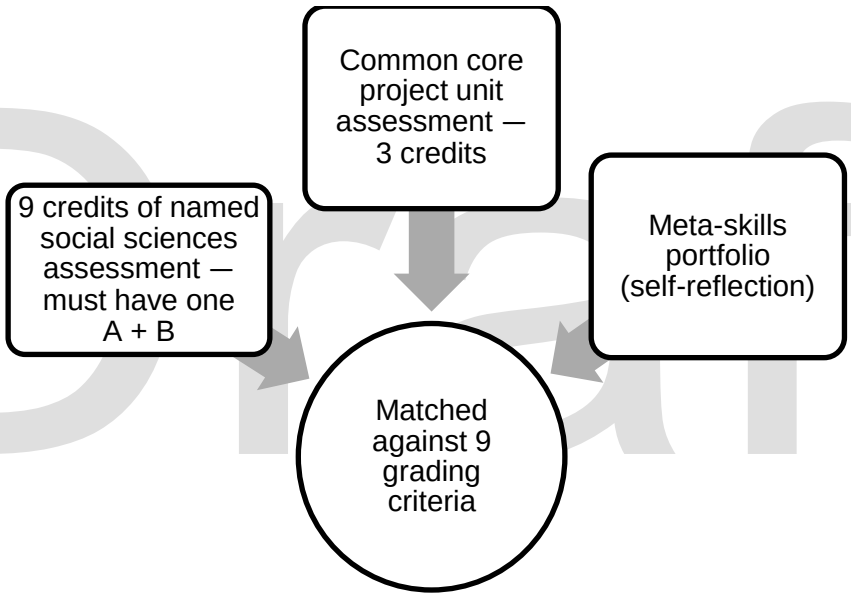
In addition, you assess individual units on a pass or fail basis. Each unit has evidence requirements that learners must achieve before you can consider them for whole qualification grading.

You make judgements about learners' quality of assessment evidence using a grading matrix based on important criteria in the qualification.

In HNC Social Sciences, all 15 SQA credits count towards the overall grade for the qualification, with no weighting. Learners must pass all unit assessments to be awarded a grade.

Course teams make judgements about the quality of learners' assessment evidence using a grading matrix based on important criteria in the qualification. In HNC Social Sciences, there are nine criteria that learners are judged against.

Grades are based on the performance across the three credits of the common core project unit Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems, plus nine credits of the named social science subjects within the award. There must be at least one A+B unit combination in the nine credits contributing to the decisions on grading, for example History A + History B. You can share the grading matrix from the Next Generation Higher National Grading Pack with your learners to support their awareness of how grading works in this qualification.



Grading and meta-skills

Meta-skills are a key part of the NextGen: HN qualifications and learners develop them throughout the group award. Competence in individual meta-skills is not assessed or graded. For example, the qualification does not judge the quality of learners' feeling or creativity, or their specific progress in any given meta-skill. Rather, it is the process of development the learner goes through that contributes to the whole qualification judgement. This means learners should provide evidence of planning, developing and reflecting on their meta-skills. The grading matrix includes criteria on meta-skills, which you should use to support this judgement. See the NextGen: HN Meta-skills, Outcome and Assessment Guidance document for support with assessing meta-skills.

How the group award meets employer needs

This group award is designed in collaboration with employers to meet the sector need. The following tables show how the group award can benefit employers by producing learners with the necessary skill set.

The first table shows how units map to the aims of the group award. The second table shows the significant opportunities that the group award provides for learners to develop more generic skills and meta-skills. The third table shows the assessment strategy for the group award.

Mapping group award aims to units

Key: Aim is relevant to unit (X) Aim is not as relevant to unit (N/A)

Mandatory unit — General aims

Unit code	Unit title	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4	Aim 5	Aim 6	Aim 7
J6EM 47	Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Named social sciences units — General aims

Unit code	Unit title	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4	Aim 5	Aim 6	Aim 7
J72H 47	Criminology A: Introducing Theories and Concepts	X	X	X	X	X	X	N/A
J72J 47	Criminology B: Applied Criminology	X	X	X	X	X	X	N/A
J72L 47	Economics A: The Nature of Economic Study	X	X	X	X	X	X	N/A
J72M 47	Economics B: Economic Systems, Markets and Objectives	X	X	X	X	X	X	N/A
J72N 47	Geography A: Examining Inequality	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J72R 47	Geography B: Urban Change and Its Impact	X	X	X	X	X	X	N/A
J6EN 47	History A: Exploring an Historical Period	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J6EP 47	History B: Historical Debates	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J72S 47	Philosophy A: Knowledge and Truth	X	X	X	X	X	X	N/A
J72T 47	Philosophy B: Engaging Arguments	X	X	X	X	X	X	N/A

Unit code	Unit title	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4	Aim 5	Aim 6	Aim 7
J6ER 47	Politics A: Political Ideas	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J6ES 47	Politics B: Governance of Scotland and the United Kingdom	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J6ET 47	Psychology A: The Shaping of Modern Psychology	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J6EV 47	Psychology B: Applied Psychology	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J6EW 47	Sociology A: The Sociological Imagination	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J6EX 47	Sociology B: Applied Sociology	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J73S 47	Social Anthropology A: Anthropological Approaches to Understanding Society	X	X	X	X	X	X	N/A
J73T 47	Social Anthropology B: The Body	X	X	X	X	X	X	N/A

Optional units — General aims

Unit code	Unit title	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4	Aim 5	Aim 6	Aim 7
J74C 47	An Investigation in the Social Sciences	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J68W 47	Big Data	X	X	X	X	N/A	X	X
J75E 47	Communication: Practical Skills	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J76D 47	Literature: Close Reading Skills	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J75D 47	Skilled Helper Model of Counselling: Stage 1	X	X	X	X	X	X	N/A
J7N3 47	Work-based Learning	X	X	X	X	N/A	X	N/A

Mandatory unit — Specific aims

Unit code	Unit title	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4	Aim 5	Aim 6	Aim 7	Aim 8	Aim 9
J6EM 47	Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Named social sciences units — Specific aims

Unit code	Unit title	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4	Aim 5	Aim 6	Aim 7	Aim 8	Aim 9
J72H 47	Criminology A: Introducing Theories and Concepts	X	N/A	X	X	X	X	N/A	N/A	N/A
J72J 47	Criminology B: Applied Criminology	X	N/A	X	X	X	X	N/A	N/A	N/A
J72L 47	Economics A: The Nature of Economic Study	X	N/A	X	X	X	X	N/A	N/A	N/A
J72M 47	Economics B: Economic Systems, Markets and Objectives	X	N/A	X	X	X	X	N/A	N/A	N/A
J72N 47	Geography A: Examining Inequality	X	X	X	X	X	X	N/A	X	N/A
J72R 47	Geography B: Urban Change and its Impact	X	X	X	X	X	X	N/A	X	X
J6EN 47	History A: Exploring and Historical Period	X	N/A	X	X	X	X	N/A	X	N/A
J6EP 47	History B: Historical Debates	X	N/A	X	X	X	X	N/A	X	N/A
J72S 47	Philosophy A: Knowledge and Truth	X	N/A	X	X	X	X	N/A	X	N/A
J72T 47	Philosophy B: Engaging Arguments	X	N/A	X	X	X	X	N/A	X	N/A
J6ER 47	Politics A: Political Ideas	X	N/A	X	X	X	X	N/A	N/A	N/A

Unit code	Unit title	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4	Aim 5	Aim 6	Aim 7	Aim 8	Aim 9
J6ES 47	Politics B: Governance of Scotland and the United Kingdom	X	N/A	X	X	X	X	N/A	N/A	N/A
J6ET 47	Psychology A: The Shaping of Modern Psychology	X	N/A	X	X	X	X	N/A	N/A	N/A
J6EV 47	Psychology B: Applied Psychology	X	N/A	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J6EW 47	Sociology A: The Sociological Imagination	X	X	X	X	X	X	N/A	N/A	N/A
J6EX 47	Sociology B: Applied Sociology	X	X	X	X	X	X	N/A	X	N/A
J73S 47	Social Anthropology A: Anthropological Approaches to Understanding Society	X	N/A	X	X	X	X	N/A	N/A	N/A
J73T 47	Social Anthropology B: The Body	X	N/A	X	X	X	X	N/A	N/A	N/A

Optional units — Specific aims

Unit code	Unit title	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4	Aim 5	Aim 6	Aim 7	Aim 8	Aim 9
J74C 47	An Investigation in the Social Sciences	X	X	X	N/A	X	X	X	X	X
J68W 47	Big Data	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	N/A
J75E 47	Communication: Practical Skills	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	N/A
J76D 47	Literature: Close Reading Skills	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	N/A
J75D 47	Skilled Helper Model of Counselling: Stage 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	N/A
J7N3 47	Work-based Learning	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Mapping opportunities to develop meta-skills across the group award

Self-management

Unit code	Unit title	Meta-skills
J6EM 47	Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative
J72H 47	Criminology A: Introducing Theories and Concepts	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative
J72J 47	Criminology B: Applied Criminology	Integrity Adapting Initiative
J72L 47	Economics A: The Nature of Economic Study	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative
J72M 47	Economics B: Economic Systems, Markets and Objectives	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative
J72N 47	Geography A: Examining Inequality	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative
J72R 47	Geography B: Urban Change and Its Impact	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative
J6EN 47	History A: Exploring an Historical Period	Focusing Integrity Initiative
J6EP 47	History B: Historical Debates	Adapting Initiative

Unit code	Unit title	Meta-skills
J72S 47	Philosophy A: Knowledge and Truth	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative
J72T 47	Philosophy B: Engaging Arguments	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative
J6ER 47	Politics A: Political Ideas	Focusing Adapting
J6ES 47	Politics B: Governance of Scotland and the United Kingdom	Focusing Integrity Adapting
J6ET 47	Psychology A: The Shaping of Modern Psychology	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative
J6EV 47	Psychology B: Applied Psychology	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative
J73S 47	Social Anthropology A: Anthropological Approaches to Understanding Society	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative
J73T 47	Social Anthropology B: The Body	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative
J6EW 47	Sociology A: The Sociological Imagination	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative
J6EX 47	Sociology B: Applied Sociology	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative

Social intelligence

Unit code	Unit title	Meta-skills
J6EM 47	Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems	Communicating Feeling Collaborating Leading
J72H 47	Criminology A: Introducing Theories and Concepts	Communicating Feeling Collaborating
J72J 47	Criminology B: Applied Criminology	Communicating Feeling Collaborating Leading
J72L 47	Economics A: The Nature of Economic Study	Communicating Feeling Collaborating
J72M 47	Economics B: Economic Systems, Markets and Objectives	Communicating Feeling Collaborating
J72N 47	Geography A: Examining Inequality	Communicating Feeling Collaborating Leading
J72R 47	Geography B: Urban Change and Its Impact	Communicating Feeling Collaborating Leading
J6EN 47	History A: Exploring an Historical Period	Communicating
J6EP 47	History B: Historical Debates	Communicating Collaborating
J72S 47	Philosophy A: Knowledge and Truth	Communicating Feeling Leading
J72T 47	Philosophy B: Engaging Arguments	Communicating Feeling

Unit code	Unit title	Meta-skills
J6ER 47	Politics A: Political Ideas	Communicating Feeling Collaborating
J6ES 47	Politics B: Governance of Scotland and the United Kingdom	Communicating Feeling Collaborating
J6ET 47	Psychology A: The Shaping of Modern Psychology	Communicating Feeling Collaborating Leading
J6EV 47	Psychology B: Applied Psychology	Communicating Feeling Collaborating
J73S 47	Social Anthropology A: Anthropological Approaches to Understanding Society	Communicating Feeling Collaborating Leading
J73T 47	Social Anthropology B: The Body	Communicating Feeling Collaborating Leading
J6EW 47	Sociology A: The Sociological Imagination	Communicating Feeling Collaborating
J6EX 47	Sociology B: Applied Sociology	Communicating Feeling Collaborating Leading

Innovation

Unit code	Unit title	Meta-skills
J6EM 47	Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems	Curiosity Creativity Sense-making Critical thinking
J72H 47	Criminology A: Introducing Theories and Concepts	Curiosity Creativity Sense-making Critical thinking
J72J 47	Criminology B: Applied Criminology	Curiosity Creativity Sense-making Critical thinking
J72L 47	Economics A: The Nature of Economic Study	Curiosity Sense-making Critical thinking
J72M 47	Economics B: Economic Systems, Markets and Objectives	Curiosity Sense-making Critical thinking
J72N 47	Geography A: Examining Inequality	Curiosity Creativity Sense-making Critical thinking
J72R 47	Geography B: Urban Change and Its Impact	Curiosity Creativity Sense-making Critical thinking
J6EN 47	History A: Exploring an Historical Period	Curiosity Sense-making Critical thinking
J6EP 47	History B: Historical Debates	Curiosity Sense-making Critical thinking
J72S 47	Philosophy A: Knowledge and Truth	Curiosity Creativity Sense-making Critical thinking

Unit code	Unit title	Meta-skills
J72T 27	Philosophy B: Engaging Arguments	Curiosity Sense-making Critical thinking
J6ER 47	Politics A: Political Ideas	Curiosity Sense-making Critical thinking
J6ES 47	Politics B: Governance of Scotland and the United Kingdom	Curiosity Sense-making Critical thinking
J6ET 47	Psychology A: The Shaping of Modern Psychology	Curiosity Creativity Sense-making Critical thinking
J6EV 47	Psychology B: Applied Psychology	Curiosity Creativity Sense-making Critical thinking
J73S 47	Social Anthropology A: Anthropological Approaches to Understanding Society	Curiosity Creativity Sense-making Critical thinking
J73T 47	Social Anthropology B: The Body	Curiosity Creativity Sense-making Critical thinking
J6EW 47	Sociology A: The Sociological Imagination	Curiosity Sense-making Critical thinking
J6EX 47	Sociology B: Applied Sociology	Curiosity Sense-making Critical thinking

Assessment strategy for the group award

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method
J6EM 47	Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems	Two open-book assessments. One assessment covers outcomes 1 to 7 and one covers outcome 8. Learners provide written or oral evidence for both assessments. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them. Outcomes 1 to 7 are assessed by a research investigation project. Learners must produce a written response of between 2,000 and 2,500 words, or an oral response that is 12 to 18 minutes in duration. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them. Outcome 8 is assessed using any appropriate method. Learners can provide evidence through, for example, a written portfolio, a blog, a podcast or a recorded oral presentation. They must include an action plan for their meta-skills development.
J72H 47	Criminology A: Introducing Theories and Concepts	An open-book assessment providing written or oral evidence covering all outcomes. You should give learners the assessment task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners must produce a written response of approximately 1,500 words, or an oral response of 10 to 12 minutes. Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment, including individual biographies, image essays, blogs, oral presentations, poster exhibitions or any other method that is appropriate to meet the evidence requirements. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method
J72J 47	Criminology B: Applied Criminology	An open-book assessment providing written or oral evidence covering all outcomes. You should give learners the assessment task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners must produce a written response of approximately 2,000 words, or an oral response of 12 to 15 minutes. You must assess only one of the three topics studied. Learners must provide evidence of three contrasting criminological theories and three related criminological pieces of evidence applied to one topic. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.
J72L 47	Economics A: The Nature of Economic Study	An open-book assessment providing written or oral evidence covering all unit outcomes. You should give learners the task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners must produce a written response of approximately 1,500 words, or an oral response of 10 to 12 minutes. Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment, including an essay, structured questions, an individual oral presentation or poster exhibition, an individual blog or website, or any other method that is appropriate to meet the evidence requirements. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method
J72M 47	Economics B: Economic Systems, Markets and Objectives	An open-book assessment providing written or oral evidence covering all unit outcomes. You should give learners the assessment task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners must produce a written response of approximately 2,500 words or an oral response of 15 to 18 minutes. Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment, including structured questions with stimulus material or an individual oral presentation. It is possible to use more than one assessment method across the evidence requirements. However, the total length of the response should not exceed the limits cited above for a single method approach. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.
J72N 47	Geography A: Examining Inequality	An open-book assessment providing written or oral evidence covering all unit outcomes. You should give learners the assessment task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners must produce a written response of approximately 1,250 words or an oral response of 9 to 11 minutes. Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment, including an open-book essay, structured questions, an individual oral presentation or poster exhibition, an individual blog or creating a website, or any other method that is appropriate to meet the evidence requirements. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method
J72R 47	Geography B: Urban Change and Its Impact	An open-book assessment providing written or oral evidence covering all unit outcomes. You should give learners the task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners must produce a written response of approximately 1,500 to 2,000 words, or an oral response of 12 to 15 minutes. Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment, including an open-book essay, structured questions, an individual oral presentation or poster exhibition, an individual blog, creating a website, or any other method that is appropriate to meet the evidence requirements. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.
J6EN 47	History A: Exploring an Historical Period	An open-book assessment covering all unit outcomes. You should give learners the assessment task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners must produce a written response of approximately 1,500 words, or an oral response of 10 to 12 minutes. This assessment could take the form of an open-book essay, structured questions, an individual oral presentation, a poster exhibition, an individual blog, creating a website or any other method that is appropriate to meet the evidence requirements. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method
J6EP 47	History B: Historical Debates	An open-book assessment covering both unit outcomes, providing written or oral evidence. You should give learners the assessment task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners can produce their response for these outcomes over an extended period if required. Learners must produce a written response of approximately 2,000 words, or an oral response of 12 to 15 minutes. This assessment could take the form of an open-book source or historical analysis, an essay, a portfolio, structured questions, an individual oral presentation, a poster exhibition, online methods such as an individual blog or creating a website, or any other method that is appropriate to meet the evidence requirements. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.
J72S 47	Philosophy A: Knowledge and Truth	An open-book assessment providing written or oral evidence covering all outcomes. You should give learners the task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners must produce a written response of approximately 1,250 words, or an oral response of 9 to 11 minutes. Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment, including an open-book essay, structured questions, an individual oral presentation or poster exhibition, an individual blog, creating a website, or any other method that is appropriate to meet the evidence requirements. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method
J72T 47	Philosophy B: Engaging Arguments	An open-book assessment providing written or oral evidence covering all outcomes. You should give learners the task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners must produce a written response of approximately 2,000 words, or an oral response of 12 to 15 minutes. Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment, including an open-book essay or structured questions, an individual oral presentation or poster exhibition, an individual blog or creating a website, or any other method that is appropriate to meet the evidence requirements. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.
J6ER 47	Politics A: Political Ideas	An open-book assessment providing written or oral evidence across all outcomes. You should give learners the assessment task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners must produce a written response of approximately 1,500 words, or an oral response of 10 to 12 minutes. Learners must cover one political ideology and two political concepts. Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only and there may be other methods that would be more suitable for learners: a written essay, an oral presentation, a visual presentation using the learner's choice of media format, a quiz with open text responses, an academic poster supported by an oral presentation, a storyboard, a blog, an audio-visual presentation, a podcast or debate, or any other method that is appropriate to meet the evidence requirements. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method
J6ES 47	Politics B: Governance of Scotland and the United Kingdom	An open-book assessment providing written or oral evidence covering all outcomes. You should give learners the assessment task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners must produce a written response of between 2,000 and 2,500 words, or an oral response of 12 to 18 minutes. Learners should provide evidence from two out of five key topics relating to the governance of Scotland and the United Kingdom. Options for assessment instruments could take the form of a report, an essay, a set of structured questions, an individual oral presentation or poster exhibition with oral explanation, a podcast, a blog or creating a website, or any other method that is appropriate to meet the evidence requirements. It could take the form of preparing papers for a debate or a combination of assessment approaches in one assessment. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.
J6ET 47	Psychology A: The Shaping of Modern Psychology	An open-book assessment providing written or oral evidence covering all outcomes. You should give learners the assessment task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners must produce a written response of approximately 1,500 words, or an oral response of 10 to 12 minutes. Learners must cover at least two schools of thought. They could produce an annotated timeline showing the linear development of psychology as a handwritten or digitally created double A3-sized infographic. Learners could present an illustrated summary poster, produce an essay or carry out any other method that meets the evidence requirements. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method
J6EV 47	Psychology B: Applied Psychology	An open-book assessment providing written or oral evidence covering all outcomes. You should give learners the assessment task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners should produce written or oral evidence. Learners must produce a written response of approximately 2,000 words, or an oral response of 12 to 15 minutes, conforming to the requirements of a laboratory report. The assessment could take the form of a formal written laboratory report in a standardised structured format. Alternatively, it could take the form of an oral presentation using a visual stimulus such as an academic poster or digital slide presentation. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.
J73S 47	Social Anthropology A: Anthropological Approaches to Understanding Society	An open-book assessment providing written or oral evidence covering all outcomes. You should give the learners the task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners must produce a written response of approximately 1,250 to 1,500 words, or an oral response of 9 to 12 minutes. Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment, such as an open-book essay or structured questions, or a portfolio of evidence collected during the delivery of the unit, in various formats. It could be an individual oral presentation, a poster exhibition, or an individual blog or website, or any other method that is appropriate to meet the evidence requirements. The assessment response can be produced over an extended period if required. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method
J73T 47	Social Anthropology B: The Body	An open-book assessment providing written or oral evidence covering all outcomes. You should give the learners the task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners must produce a written response of approximately 2,000 words, or an oral response of 12 to 15 minutes. Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment, including an open-book essay or structured questions, or it could take the form of a portfolio of evidence collected during the delivery of the unit, in various formats. It could be an individual oral presentation, a poster exhibition, or an individual blog or website, or any other method that is appropriate to meet the evidence requirements. The assessment for these outcomes can be produced over an extended period if required. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.
J6EW 47	Sociology A: The Sociological Imagination	An open-book assessment providing written or oral evidence covering all outcomes. You should give learners the assessment task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners must produce a written response of approximately 1,500 words, or an oral response of 10 to 12 minutes. Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment, including individual biographies, image essays, a blog, an oral presentation or poster exhibition, or any other method that is appropriate to meet the evidence requirements. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method
J6EX 47	Sociology B: Applied Sociology	An open-book assessment providing written or oral evidence covering all outcomes. You should give learners the assessment task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners must produce a written response of between 1,500 to 2,000 words, or an oral response of 12 to 15 minutes. Only one theme needs to be assessed. This could be developed in an essay, a presentation or a poster exhibition, or any other method that is appropriate to meet the evidence requirements. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.

Approaches to delivery and assessment

To achieve HNC Social Sciences, learners must complete a total of 120 SCQF points (15 SQA credits), consisting of the following:

The 3-credit unit, Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems. Alongside this unit, learners should have a portfolio showing engagement in reviewing their own meta-skills development.

Two named social sciences combinations of 24 SCQF points (3 SQA credits) in each subject (A and B units in the same subject discipline). For example, Politics A and Politics B units is one combination of 24 SCQF points (3 SQA credits). This is 48 SCQF points
(6 SQA credits) in total.

Between 24 SCQF points (3 SQA credits) and 48 SCQF points (6 SQA credits) from the named social sciences section. These can be A or B units, and do not need to be another subject discipline combination. For example, taking History A and Politics B would be acceptable for 3 of the SQA credits. Learners could choose two B units and two unrelated As, or two As and related Bs, or other combinations.

Between 0 to 24 SCQF points (0 to 3 SQA credits) from the optional unit section. Learners can choose 1, 2 or 3 credits from this section, or none at all if they prefer to take additional credits from the named social sciences section.

Examples of unit combinations

Mandatory unit: 3 SQA credits	**Named social sciences units (two sets of related A+B units): 6 SQA credits**	**Named social sciences units: between 3 and 6 SQA credits**	**Optional units: between 0 and 3 SQA credits**
Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems	Politics A and B History A and B	Psychology A and B Sociology A and B (6 SQA credits)	None
Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems	Psychology A and B Criminology A and B	Politics A and B History A and B (6 SQA credits)	None
Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems	Sociology A and B Economics A and B	Politics A and B Geography B (5 SQA credits)	Communication: Practical Skills (1 SQA credit)

Mandatory unit: 3 SQA credits	**Named social sciences units (two sets of related A+B units): 6 SQA credits**	**Named social sciences units: between 3 and 6 SQA credits**	**Optional units: between 0 and 3 SQA credits**
Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems	Sociology A and B Politics A and B	Social Anthropology B Philosophy A (3 SQA credits)	An Investigation in the Social Sciences Literature: Close Reading Skills Skilled Helper Model of Counselling: Stage 1 (3 SQA credits)

You can reflect learners' individual interests and specialisms in some of the units if you give them some choice in the study of themes or subthemes. This can help them meet the entry requirements of their chosen degree.

Learners who have studied the HNC Social Sciences units can demonstrate:

a broad knowledge of the subject or discipline in general
knowledge embedded in the main theories, concepts and principles
an awareness of the changing nature of knowledge and understanding
social scientist skills
an understanding of the difference between explanations based on evidence or research, and other forms of explanation

Learners use some of the basic and routine professional skills and techniques associated with a subject discipline. HNC Social Sciences provides an opportunity to develop a range of meta-skills and academic skills through an active learning approach and a diversity of assessment instruments focused on knowledge and skills development. In each subject area, learners develop critical and evaluative thinking skills, an ability to manage and absorb large amounts of information, and a questioning and evidence-based approach to social problems and solutions.

You can use formative assessment to check on learners' progress through the units. Using closed-book formative tests supports learners' development of time-management skills.

Sequencing or integrating units

We recommend that you schedule Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems across the whole session, as it gives scope for reviewing meta-skills

developed in other contexts or units, as well as developing a learner's knowledge of what it is to be a social scientist.
It is possible for learners to study a B unit without having studied the associated A unit, and study an A unit, without going on to study the B unit. However, many A units are useful as underpinning knowledge for those going on to study B units. You should look carefully at the combinations to make sure you do not disadvantage learners with the units that you make available in your centre.
An HN unit with a value of 1 SQA credit represents approximately 40 hours of programmed learning, teaching and assessment, with a 2-credit unit having a notional 80 hours and a
3-credit unit having a notional 120 hours. Learners are expected to give the same amount again (for example, another 40 hours for a 1-credit unit) to private study for that unit. We recommend these timings for the best chance of success in units. We recognise that timetabled hours may vary, but learners should be aware of how much time they need to give to study to understand the content and develop their skills.

We give suggestions of delivery in the following tables using a two-semester or three-block timetable. These are based on common delivery of 36 hours for 8 SCQF points (1 SQA credit). There are many other ways to schedule learning and teaching to ensure there is enough time for learners to cover the required knowledge and skills.

A suggested timetable for two semesters

Unit	Semester 1: 18 or 19 weeks	Semester 2: 18 or 19 weeks
Unit 1 — mandatory 3 credits	4 hours a week	2 hours a week
Unit 2 A — 1 credit	2 hours a week	Not applicable
Unit 3 B — 2 credits	Not applicable	4 hours a week
Unit 4 A — 1 credit	2 hours a week	Not applicable
Unit 5 B — 2 credits	Not applicable	4 hours a week
Unit 6 A — 1 credit	2 hours a week	Not applicable
Unit 7 B — 2 credits	2 hours a week	2 hours a week
Unit 8 A — 1 credit	1 hour a week	1 hour a week
Unit 9 B — 2 credits	2 hours a week	2 hours a week
Total:	15 hours a week of timetabled learning and teaching	15 hours a week of timetabled learning and teaching

A suggested timetable for three blocks

Unit	Block 1: 12 or 13 weeks	Block 2: 12 or 13 weeks	Block 3: 12 or 13 weeks
Unit 1 — mandatory 3 credits	3 hours a week	3 hours a week	3 hours a week
Unit 2 A — 1 credit	3 hours a week	Not applicable	Not applicable
Unit 3 B — 2 credits	Not applicable	3 hours a week	3 hours a week
Unit 4 A — 1 credit	3 hours a week	Not applicable	Not applicable
Unit 5 B — 2 credits	Not applicable	3 hours a week	3 hours a week
Unit 6 optional unit — 1 credit	Not applicable	Not applicable	3 hours a week
Unit 7 B — 2 credits	3 hours a week	3 hours a week	Not applicable
Unit 8 A — 1 credit and unit 9 B — 2 credits	3 hours a week taught concurrently	3 hours a week taught concurrently	3 hours a week taught concurrently
Total:	15 hours a week of timetabled learning and teaching	15 hours a week of timetabled learning and teaching	15 hours a week of timetabled learning and teaching

Additional guidance on integrated or holistic assessment

Holistic or integrated assessment focuses on assessing a number of outcomes in a unit together, or in some cases the whole unit, rather than specific outcomes. When assessing a unit of competence holistically, the assessment activities integrate a number of aspects of the competence. Holistic or integrated assessment can reduce the time spent on assessment and can promote greater equity in the assessment process.

When developing or revising a Higher National Qualification, SQA works with a development team to devise an appropriate assessment strategy that accommodates holistic or integrated assessment. However, the practice of integrating units for the purposes of learning and teaching is a centre-led activity.

Units are designed to facilitate holistic or integrated assessment approaches that prevent large, unwieldy instruments of assessment.

Sometimes more than one piece of evidence is needed for a unit. For example, if a unit is about building a wall, a learner would need to produce evidence of performance (following the correct procedures and processes when building the wall) and product (a completed wall).

Evidence requirements must do what they say: specify requirements for evidence of learner competence in the unit. The evidence must be of sufficient quality for an assessor or verifier to judge that the learner has achieved the unit.

We recommend you use holistic assessment for each unit to minimise learners' overall assessment load. However, if you prefer, and to avoid bottleneck or congestion of assessments at the end of the course, you can split the assessment tasks for a unit or units across a longer period, in a portfolio approach.

Generic feedback

You can provide generic feedback to the class group before the final submission date, allowing learners to benefit from the experiences of others. You could give an overview of the primary mistakes, instances of success, trouble spots, or anything that still requires clarification in drafts submitted.

Individual feedback

After marking assessments for an outcome or the unit as a whole, you can offer learners tailored advice based around their skills and limitations. Your advice can concentrate on areas where a learner needs to improve by providing specific information about their performance. Giving constructive criticism can motivate a learner if it also recognises achievements and hard work.

Feedback can serve as a platform for learners to ask questions and receive answers. You can clarify specific misconceptions and respond to enquiries to help learners understand what they must do to improve for future assessments or re-assessments.

Giving individual feedback can encourage learners to reflect on their meta-skills and the growth of their understanding in their social sciences subjects.
Learners must demonstrate their capacity to work independently to complete a task and achieve the criteria and evidence requirements outlined in the unit specification.

Reasonable assistance

We use the word ‘reasonable assistance’ to distinguish between giving learners guidance on how to produce the necessary evidence for assessment, and giving them too much aid, which would jeopardise the assessment’s integrity. Every step involved in teaching and learning includes reasonable help.

At every stage of an assessment — that is, in between the time the task instructions are distributed and the completion date — you should be available to offer counsel, explanation and guidance (see examples below).

As with any assessment, learners must be able to meet the evidence requirements, and the evidence must be their own original work. Learners develop skills of planning, analysing and evaluating, including working independently. Balancing giving reasonable assistance with learners working independently can be difficult. This applies whether you choose to use a holistic assessment or split the assessment into several tasks in a portfolio approach.

Although it is impossible to provide a comprehensive list of ‘reasonable assistance’ for every potential assessment scenario, the examples below illustrate the types of support that you can give that are appropriate, whatever the planned assessment schedule is.

Selecting a subject for research, or a topic or theme for assessment

Unless the unit specifies that learners must choose the activity, topic or theme on their own, it is acceptable to have your input and suggestions on the selection before they begin the assignment. Learners should operate with greater independence once they start working on the assessment.

Suggestions for sources

You can suggest alternate sources if resources for an assignment are not available or learners are struggling to find suitable resources.

Clarification on an aspect of the task or question

Learners may look for clarification if they do not fully understand what is being asked of them. You can answer questions about structure or meaning of the task or question.

Reviewing options with learners

Learners may have several options or solutions to a problem they have or to advance their work. You can discuss the pros and cons of the choices with the learner before asking them to choose a suitable course of action. This helps learners to think through the options to help them come to a suitable solution. It is not telling them which option to choose.

Asking learners to review or double-check material they have already been taught

- If learners find it challenging to produce assessment responses that analyse or evaluate appropriately, or are making errors in their thinking that are evident in their work, you can direct them to re-read relevant material or give additional reading materials, if required.

Guiding learners to elaborate or highlight ideas, without leading them directly

- This falls between providing clarity and outlining possibilities. Sometimes learners become stuck on a certain section of a task. In these situations, you could help by posing follow-up questions that prompt learners to consider the initial issue, allowing them to produce their own solutions without providing the answers.

Arranging for introductions and access

- In certain circumstances you may have to make initial connections for learners to allow them to carry out aspects of a project or assignment. Once initial contact has been established, learners should take on the control of the arrangements, if appropriate. This may include access to facilities or rooms in college, where there is a need for staff to support bookings.

You provide help in the form of prompts, questions and clarifications, without giving answers that learners could copy and use.

Holistic assessment

You can use the guidance on reasonable assistance when conducting holistic assessment. However, you would not normally mark learners' work until after the deadline for completion or hand in towards the end of the unit delivery. You would then ask the learner to remediate or, if necessary, offer a re-assessment if they failed to complete the evidence requirements correctly.

For holistic assessment, remediation or re-assessment would take place towards the end of the unit, after any completion date.

Portfolio approach

You can also apply the guidance on reasonable assistance when using a portfolio approach to assess a unit. Using the portfolio approach, you set several tasks during the unit delivery that learners complete. This allows you to spread the workload across the life of the unit. If you choose to use this approach, you mark each task set and give individual feedback at that point. Your individual feedback, given in good time, allows learners to reflect on it and use the lessons learned in any future assessment. You should store the full set of tasks together for each learner to show coverage of the evidence requirements.

Individual feedback in the portfolio approach

Giving learners insightful, personalised feedback is useful for their development. Clearly communicate expectations and criteria for success in advance. Help learners understand how their performance compares to the set standards by aligning feedback with these expectations.

Establish a friendly, approachable atmosphere where learners can freely discuss their work and ask questions. Give feedback as soon as is practicable after marking to ensure its relevance and impact. Quickly address the aspects that went well and those that can be improved.

Give precise instances of learners' strengths and areas in need of development. Avoid ambiguous statements. Don't just say they did a good job — be specific about which aspects of their work are good. Make observations about their activities and efforts, using a positive tone. Present constructive feedback in a constructive way by focusing on areas for growth rather than flaws.

Encourage learners to reflect on their own work. Ask questions that guide them to think about what they did well and how they can improve. Encourage them to identify areas where they feel confident and areas where they may need additional support.

Provide helpful criticism. Make precise, doable recommendations for improvement. Start with positive feedback, then provide constructive criticism, and end with another positive note (feedback sandwich). This approach helps balance the feedback and keeps the learner motivated.

Encourage learners to set goals for improvement of their approach. Support them in creating a plan for how they can work towards improvement.

Providing personalised feedback helps to foster a supportive and productive learning environment. By offering focused direction and chances for self-reflection and development, you support learners' overall growth and development. You should ensure that they understand that you expect them to act on any feedback given. Their response to feedback, in remediation or in future assessment, is considered when grading the awards. Grade criterion 6 in both HNC and HND is 'Quality of assessment submissions (including reflecting and acting on feedback)'.

Learners can remediate shortly after you have marked their assessment task responses, or you can wait until later in the unit delivery to schedule time for remediation or re-assessment. In this way, you can help learners complete their tasks within a smoother workload.

In summary

You can choose to use holistic assessment for a unit. If you do, learners should complete work to a target date, after which you mark the work, then give individual feedback. This would take place towards the end of the unit.

Alternatively, you can choose to use a portfolio approach, with the assessment split into set tasks throughout the unit delivery, covering all the evidence requirements. You would mark each task as learners complete it, and give individual feedback after marking each task. Remediation or re-assessment can take place immediately after the assessment and feedback are complete.

Generic feedback and reasonable assistance can be used in both models. You can give generic feedback once you have information from learner drafts or from

discussions with learners on their planned assessment responses. Individual feedback should wait until you have completed marking for the whole assessment (holistic assessment) or when learners have completed individual tasks.

Assessing project units

The unit Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems at SCQF level 7 is the main project unit for this qualification. When you deliver this unit, you should focus on what a social scientist does, demonstrating the relevance of the social sciences to the
21st century. Your input should include key developments in social science research, as well as developing an evidence-based approach to social problems through an academic investigation.

Outcomes 1 and 2 set the scene for the research investigation. You can start by explaining how using social science methods gives more reliable answers than using 'common sense'. You can go on to explore examples of areas where this is the case. You should give lots of different examples of research and approaches to social problems from several social science disciplines. You can use examples from the time of the Enlightenment through to the present day. This gives learners a foundation to build their knowledge on. The unit specification contains examples of broad developments and areas of research in the social sciences. These examples are not mandatory, but suggestions of topics that you could use to engage learners in understanding how useful social science research is.

Once you have informed learners about the research process and research methods of data collection that are used in social sciences, you should outline the importance of ethical conduct in research. Introduce learners to the use of ethical standards in research, such as The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, the principles of which are:

reliability in the quality of research

honesty in all aspects of carrying out the research, including reporting results

respect for colleagues, participants and heritage

accountability for the whole research process

You should consider setting up a small 'ethics' group to review learners' plans for research to give approval to those that fit with the principles and contain good research practice, including taking account of safeguarding and good data management.

You should outline how a research investigation is completed for the project being used to assess outcomes 1 to 7 (outcome 8 is the meta-skills outcome that is assessed using self-reflection).

You can use the following steps to support development of the project. Learners can complete the steps at various points in the unit's delivery. For example, learners can carry out a literature review when certain topics are being illustrated in teaching and learning for outcome 2.

1: Planning stage

Research planning — general plan of timing for the research, steps to be taken.

Initial literature review — to help form ideas of what information might be suitable.

Choose a topic — learners should agree a broad topic with you. It should be clear why they have chosen the topic.

Agree a format for the proposal — how learners will submit it on an agreed date.

2: Firming up project ideas

Choose a specific research method or methods that would form the heart of the proposal — this should fit with the topic being studied and be valid for the type of information the learner would require if the proposal was to be carried out.

Learners should clearly explain why they have chosen the method or methods.

3: Starting the proposal

Carry out a specific literature review — this contains existing literature, related theories and any relevant social policies that have an impact on the chosen topic.

Create a proposal for specific research, showing a plan with a basic research process, identifying specific steps to be taken, with reasons for choices made.

Learners should identify which ethical controls are in place for the pilot research.

4: Carrying out, analysing and evaluating a pilot study

Operationalise a small-scale pilot study with approximately 8 to 10 participants, using one specific research method.

Carry out research ethically.

Use data-handling techniques on any quantitative or qualitative data collected in the pilot study.

Analyse the data and interpret the results from the pilot study.

Evaluate the study in terms of its usefulness for the overall research proposal.

5: Firming up the proposal

If needed, learners can make changes to the proposal after evaluating the pilot study.

Review the proposal and make sure it is in the agreed format.

How to structure the project in the common core unit

Projects do not need to have a common structure, as it depends on whether they are written or oral, and what the content is. A project is more than a report summarising findings. Learners can discuss the format with you. The project should contain evidence from each of the steps listed above, and the proposal and pilot study should meet the evidence requirements. The following are appropriate headings that could form the basis of a structure:

Abstract or executive summary — approximately 250 words

Table of contents
Introduction — approximately 100 words
Literature review — approximately 500 to 800 words
Initial research proposal, including ethical controls — approximately 700 words
Methodology and results of pilot study — approximately 500 words
Implications of pilot study for overall research proposal — approximately 100 words
Referencing
Appendices

Other structures or headings are acceptable. You could even combine sections — for example, introduction and literature review. Another example is:

Planning
Development
Pilot study
Conclusion

If learners are doing an oral presentation, they can use similar headings for structure. They can divide time between sections in whatever way suits, as long as they keep to an overall duration of 12 to 18 minutes.

Literature review for the project unit
You should give learners opportunities to read literature reviews in research articles to help them write their own. Literature reviews give a summary of previous research or theories that help inform the research proposal. Learners do not need to cover everything that they have read, as that would be too broad. Information can come from academic articles, textbooks,
e-books, films, TV programmes or podcasts. Learners do not need to give full details on the work they have read or watched but should summarise the key aspects that are directly relevant to the research proposal they are developing. By mentioning certain theories or research, you assume that the writer has read the detail, evaluated it, and is reporting it as having relevance to the proposal. Encourage your learners to always keep accurate records as they read or watch relevant sources. They can start an electronic diary that has the details they need for referencing — author name, publication name, date, publisher and website, if relevant. They can also have a summary section that lists what each source reviewed has that could be helpful to the proposal. They can include the author's key ideas and any connections to what they already know about this topic, as that helps when they write the review for their project.

Learners should provide background to their work by giving a summary of published work on their topic. They can include historical background as well as more up-to-date work that outlines current dominant views. They can identify gaps in knowledge too. They should give an overview of the accepted and current thinking on a topic, that is the key sources that can highlight the relevant theories or research in the topic area. Learners can include information on discredited theories that were long held, if

they make it clear that these have been discredited by subsequent theories or research. They should include areas of conflict or controversy in the various schools of thought or disciplines.

We expect learners to write approximately 500 to 800 words in the literature review for the mandatory project unit assessment. The review should be selective, and use several sources (not just the core text used in class).

You can direct learners to answer a few questions when they are deciding whether to use a specific piece of information for the literature review:

1. Is this a reliable resource? Is it considered academic?
2. Do you have the detail needed to cite the information and give a suitable reference for it?
3. Is it relevant to the theme of your research proposal?
4. What are the strengths of the information — does it help you to give background or explain a particular aspect? Are you able to use it as supporting evidence?
5. What are your thoughts now that you have read several pieces of literature?
6. Can you link your research question to this work? If not, why not?

You can direct learners to work to a structure that you give them, or they can decide themselves how best to structure the review. One suggestion is to start with defining terms. They can then summarise relevant background information to allow the reader to understand what the topic for the proposal is. They can summarise information on theories and associated research chronologically or thematically, as they work through the various sources. You can suggest that learners split the word limit in a particular way. This is an example and only guidance:

definitions — 100 words

background to the topic — 150 words

three or four sources for theory and/or research with some explanation of their relevance to the research proposal — 100 to 150 words each

Opportunities for e-assessment

Assessment that is supported by information and communication technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software, may be appropriate for some assessments in this unit.

If you want to use e-assessment, you must ensure that you apply the national standard to all evidence and that conditions of assessment (as specified in the evidence requirements) are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Your plan for learning and teaching using e-assessment is likely to follow the same structure and timing as it would do using another method.

Remediation and re-assessment in Next Generation Higher National Qualifications

Remediation

Remediation allows an assessor to clarify learners' responses, either by requiring a written amendment or by oral questioning, where there is a minor shortfall or omission in evidence requirements. In either case, the assessor must formally note such instances, in writing or as a recording, and make them available to the internal and external verifier.

Remediation is not permitted for closed-book assessments.

The size and structure of the larger NextGen: HN units should mean that the assessor or lecturer is close enough to ongoing assessment activity in project-based units to identify the requirement for remediation as it occurs.

For outcome 8 of Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems, learners can add to the information given to show how they have engaged in the process of developing relevant meta-skills during the qualification. It is not the number of meta-skills developed or the level achieved that is important, but how they have engaged in the process of planning and development, and recognised where they are developing meta-skills.

In named social sciences units, learners should complete remediation for outcomes by reviewing their original work. If it is a written response, you should ask the learner to hand in a complete piece of work with amendments incorporated in the appropriate context, rather than add a large amount of text at the end. If their work does not meet evidence requirements, ask them to fully rewrite their work to a prescribed format. You should use your professional judgement about the number of words that the learner needs to add. However, if more than 10% of words is needed overall to fill gaps or provide clarification, a re-assessment would be more appropriate. You can use oral clarification for minor omissions or to clarify minor details in written work. You should note that oral clarification has been used.

In oral work, you can question learners at the end of their presentation or explanation where minor omissions occur, or where clarity is required. Again, you should note that oral clarification has been used. This helps reduce the need for re-assessment.

Re-assessment

We must give learners who fail the unit a re-assessment opportunity or, in exceptional circumstances, two re-assessment opportunities. Where we have introduced larger units to the framework, we expect instances of re-assessment to be minimal, due to the approach to assessment and remediation. Where re-assessment is required in a project-based unit, a substantially different project must be used.

You must ask the learner to tackle a different topic or question, which would count as a re-assessment. You can give a re-assessment using a different method, such as an oral presentation when the first method was a written assessment.

In oral assessment, you should use a re-assessment if there are large gaps in information, requiring more than 10% of words to be added or to meet evidence requirements. In this situation, you should give a new question or topic.

If the structure of the learner's presentation is unsuitable, but the broad content is appropriate, you can ask them to give another presentation of the same duration on the same topic or question as the original.

Resource requirements

Centres must have suitably qualified staff, and appropriate teaching and learning resources in place for each of the subjects taught before they begin delivery. See SQA's Systems and Qualification Approval: Guidance for Centres, in particular, Category 2, criteria 2.1 and 2.4.

Learners should have access to library resources to allow them to research topics and theories across the social sciences subjects. It is useful if learners can access original research articles. There are curated textbooks available that summarise studies, however, we encourage learners to engage with the language and structure of formal academic published research. They can use peer-reviewed journals where possible, using online access through a library. You should make sure that research articles you reference in teaching are accessible to learners.

Access to digital equipment, such as computers, laptops or tablets, helps support learners' digital skills development.

The HNC Social Sciences qualification is broad-based, and it is unlikely that lecturers will have experience of many subject disciplines. Delivery staff should be qualified to teach the subject or subjects that they are timetabled for, for example, by having a degree in the subject or having studied it to at least SCQF level 8. Delivery will be enhanced where staff support each other in sharing knowledge and skills, and centres should provide additional training to allow staff to be flexible.

Staff should also be encouraged to complete one of the following, as appropriate:

Lecturers and tutors
Teaching Qualification Further Education (TQFE)
GR5K 49 Teaching Practice in Scotland's Colleges

Assessors
Teaching Qualification Further Education (TQFE) plus relevant CPD
GR5K 49 Teaching Practice in Scotland's Colleges
GF8P 48 PDA Conduct the Assessment Process, SCQF level 8

Internal verifiers
GF8R 48 PDA Conduct the Internal Verification Process, SCQF level 8

Additional unit information

Below are supporting notes on various units to help you shape the focus of learning and teaching activities. The information given here supplements the additional guidance given in the unit specifications.

Academic writing and referencing

We developed learner-specific SQA Academy modules following feedback gathered in learner evaluation activities. The following modules are now live on SQA Academy, and we plan to develop additional content in the future. Please feel free to share these modules with your learners.

NextGen: HN — Academic Writing — By the end of this module, learners understand the core principles of academic writing.

NextGen: HN — Referencing — This short module covers the fundamental aspects of referencing in academic writing.

Many of the units in this qualification ask learners to analyse and evaluate theories, perspectives, or research evidence and sources. Analysis and evaluation are key skills for learners to develop and use.

What is analysis?

Analysis involves breaking down something into its constituent parts or elements to understand its nature or function. This can involve examining the components, structure and relationships between different aspects of a given subject. An example might be an analysis of a political speech, which should involve examining its various elements and components, such as its structure, language, tone and rhetorical strategies. This type of analysis would focus on describing and explaining these elements to gain a deeper understanding of the speech's intended message and purpose.

Learners are often asked to analyse specific social science theories, breaking them down into key concepts and components, and examining the ways in which they are interconnected. Analysis could also explore the theory's historical and intellectual context, including its origins and influences, and how it has evolved over time. Identifying or defining key concepts related to the theory would also help with analysis.

Analysis can also involve examining the ways in which a theory has been applied in research and practice, and evaluating its strengths and weaknesses. This could involve considering questions such as:

How well does the theory explain social phenomena?

What are its limitations and blind spots?

How has the theory been tested and refined over time?

An analysis of a theory could also involve comparing or contrasting it with other theories within the field. For example, you might examine how Weber's theory of social action compares to other theories of social structure or agency and consider the implications of these differences for understanding society.

What is evaluation?

In social sciences, evaluation of a theory involves assessing its usefulness and relevance for explaining specific events or behaviour. This may involve examining the theory's assumptions, concepts and any observable evidence to support the theory, to determine whether it provides a valid and credible explanation of the social world. An evaluation of a theory may also consider its practical implications, such as how it can inform policy or practice. Evaluation involves making judgements about the subject based on certain criteria or standards.

Evaluation may be one of the steps involved in the process of examining the subject in an analysis, as a means of developing an interpretation or understanding of the theory or event, rather than an end point. Evaluation as part of an analysis is focused on developing an interpretation or understanding of a complex subject, whereas evaluation on its own is more focused on making judgements based on certain criteria or standards.

Common core project unit

Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems

The intention of this unit is to introduce learners to the relevance of social sciences to 21st century society. Much of your input should focus on giving learners an appreciation of the value of social sciences to society. It is important for you to show the relevance of social sciences in terms of tackling social problems and its contribution as a subject to Society 4.0 (the Fourth Industrial Revolution), the new post-COVID-19 economy, and the future of work and employment.

You should deliver the unit towards the start of teaching the qualification to give learners underpinning knowledge and skills to support the subject units.

You should introduce learners to how social sciences can support understanding of social problems. You can use various topics or themes to illustrate the interconnections between social sciences and explanations of topics; for example, how sociology and politics intertwine to allow us to understand poverty. You can emphasise the importance and potential of several social sciences subjects that learners are studying, choosing appropriate examples to illustrate how they are relevant to understanding social problems.

Examples listed in the unit are illustrative. It is up to you to decide what would be useful and engaging for your learners. You should use several examples, covering several social sciences disciplines, in explanations, discussions and activities.

You should encourage your learners to engage with social science-based research. Share your understanding that social science gives more reliable and valid

explanations than ‘common sense’. Learners develop a questioning and evidence-based approach to social science subjects and topics through discussion, highlighting the differences between common sense and explanations based on social science.

You should introduce learners to social policy in terms of how governments and other bodies try to meet the needs identified in society in relation to social problems.

Make clear the idea that the world is a rapidly changing place, and social sciences has a key role in understanding social change and associated social problems, providing direction to solutions by contributing to social policy. Your aim should be to provide a context that acts as a stimulus for your learners to undertake a research investigation in a project.

You assess outcomes 1 to 7 using a research investigation project. This investigation leads to a proposal for research, with a pilot study of one research method. The results of this pilot study support or challenge the proposal. Learners amend the original proposal in light of their evaluation of the pilot study. A key part of the proposal is a literature review, which helps learners to form the research idea.

A large part of your input should be on research planning to enable learners to create a research proposal on a topic of their choice. It could be a topic covered in the learning and teaching of the unit, or another topic of interest to the learner, as long as it is relevant to one of the social sciences disciplines studied in the centre.

You should outline the stages of planning and carrying out research to ensure all aspects of the evidence requirements are covered. The following stages may be helpful:

planning

firming up project ideas

starting the proposal

carrying out, analysing and evaluating a pilot study

firming up the proposal

More detail on each stage is found in the ‘Additional guidance on integrated or holistic assessment’ section under the heading ‘Assessing project units’.

Learners must give a proposal for research, as well as carrying out a small-scale pilot study. The learner does not need to carry out the full proposal, so it can be more substantial in the plan than would be usual in a college setting. Learners can carry out the small-scale pilot study in a college setting, as the pilot study gives them practice in carrying out an element of the proposal and analysing and interpreting data collected. Carrying out a pilot study also informs their overall proposal, in terms of how likely it is that this proposal will be operationalised successfully. Learners make changes to the overall proposal as a result of their experience of carrying out the pilot study and can explain what led to the changes that they made in the research proposal.

In analysing the pilot study, learners should apply two data-handling techniques whether they collect quantitative or qualitative data.

For quantitative data, this includes:

graphs and charts — for example, pie charts, bar charts, histograms, scattergrams
table of results
measures of central tendency
measures of dispersion

For qualitative data, you can use techniques such as:

coding
memoing
content analysis
case study analysis
document analysis
member checking (accuracy checks from participants)

There are other qualitative methods of analysis that you can use, but they may be trickier for learners to apply.

In conducting research within social sciences, learners should prioritise ethical considerations and ensure that participants are able to provide informed consent. As such, we strongly recommend that learners focus their studies on individuals who are 16 years of age or older and avoid using those who are more vulnerable. This age group is typically deemed capable of understanding the nature of the research and giving informed consent. By adhering to this guideline, learners not only uphold ethical standards but also contribute to the validity and credibility of their research. Respecting the autonomy and rights of participants is essential to conduct ethical and meaningful social science research.

Learners develop meta-skills during the qualification, and this allows them to complete their review appropriately. You must make time in the delivery of this unit to give information on what meta-skills are and the appropriate language that fits with explaining meta-skills. This allows other lecturers to refer to meta-skills without having to explain the background and context. The Skills 4.0 model is available from: Skills 4.0: a skills model to drive Scotland's future, Centre for Work-based Learning in Scotland (2018). It outlines three categories — self-management, social intelligence and innovation — each with four meta-skills and a number of sub-skills.

You should not expect learners to develop or reference all meta-skills, as they are not mandatory. Your focus should be on holistic development within the social sciences context. You should encourage learners to reflect on the meta-skills they are developing both in this unit and in the other units they are studying for HNC Social Sciences. Encourage them to note what they are developing and where they have opportunities to develop. They should refer to course projects, outputs and

experiences that contribute to that development, not just in coursework but elsewhere too. It is the depth of reflection that is important, not the number of meta-skills referenced. Learners should identify meta-skills that they have developed well and others that need more work. They can also identify the academic skills they need for progression, many of which are within the meta-skills categories. Learners should reflect on at least one meta-skill under each of the three broad headings of self-management, social intelligence and innovation, and show evidence of reflection at the mid-point and towards the end of the programme.

The unit sits well with the Campaign for Social Science and the SHAPE campaign, which aim to rebrand the arts, humanities and social sciences — the 'soft sciences' — in much the same way as the STEM campaign has branded and improved the standing of certain science and technology subjects.

Suggested texts for research methodology (provided by colleagues at Edinburgh Napier University)

Bryman, A. (2016) *Research Methods,* 5th edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jupp, V. (ed.) (2006) *The SAGE Dictionary of Social Research Methods*, London: Sage (e-book available).

Matthews, B. and Ross, L. (2010) *Research Methods: A Practical Guide for the Social Sciences*, Harlow: Pearson (e-book available).

Highly recommended texts on research methodology from HEI colleagues

Atkinson, P. (2011) *SAGE Qualitative Research Methods*, London: Sage.

Bickman, L. and Rog, D.J. (2009) *The SAGE handbook of applied social research methods* 2nd edition, London: Sage (e-book available).

Blaikie, N. (2007) *Approaches to Social Enquiry: Advancing Knowledge*, 2nd edition, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Gadd, D., Karstedt, S. and Messner, S.F. (eds.) (2011) *The SAGE Handbook of Criminological Research Methods*, London: Sage.

Greasley, P. (2008) *Quantitative Data Analysis Using SPSS: An Introduction for Health and Social Science*, Berkshire, England: Open University Press.

Howitt, D. and Cramer, D. (2005) *Introduction to Statistics,* 5th edition, Harlow: Prentice Education.

Lewin, C. and Somekh, B. (eds.) (2006) *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, 2nd edition, London: Sage.

Margolis, E. and Pauwels, L. (2011) *The SAGE Handbook of Visual Research Methods*, London: Sage.

Ritchie, J. et al. (2014) *Qualitative research practice: a guide for social science students and researchers*, 2nd edition, Los Angeles; London: Sage.

Seale, C. (ed.) (2012) *Researching Society and Culture,* 3rd edition, London: Sage.

Trochim, W.M.K. (2006) *Research Methods Knowledge Base*, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY. Available at http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/ [accessed 3 May 2024].

Walliman, N.S.R. (2006) *Social Research Methods*, London: Sage (e-book available).

Wilson, S. and MacLean, R. (2011) *Research Methods and Data Analysis for Psychology*, Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.

Study guides

Arksey, H. and Harris, D. (2007) *How to succeed in your social science degree*. London: Sage.

Cottrell, S. (2013) *The Study Skills Handbook,* 4th Edition, Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Northedge, A. (2005) *The Good Study Guide*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Criminology

Criminology A: Introducing Theories and Concepts

The British Society of Criminology notes that there is a need to bring theories up to date in criminology. We should not stop our delivery of theories at the 1940s but give information on more current theories.

You should identify the legacy of 'old' thinking, for example, 'born criminal' — where do we find ideas about criminality being in your genes today? One example is research on
pre-menstrual women committing crimes, which still suggests a biological aspect to this. You could introduce Edwin Sutherland's work as it relates to more current corporate crime. It is important to bring the old theories up to date so learners do not think it is all history. Lots of the classic theories still permeate today.

You could make clear how feminist interventions have led to changes in our understanding of criminology. You can explore questions about the importance and role of gender in inequality of justice. This leads to looking at how crime impacts the victim. There are possibilities for you to make a link to the UN Sustainable Development Goal 5 of 'Gender equality'.

Criminology B: Applied Criminology

To provide flexibility in learning and teaching, you choose three from six topics to teach in this unit. Choices can reflect your individual interests or learners' interests.

An area of importance that you should aim to cover is that which takes up most of the police and courts' time — violence against women and girls. It is estimated that 75% of police time in Scotland is taken up by crimes such as abuse, violence and revenge porn. Because of its prevalence and importance, it would be useful for you to highlight this in any of the topics covered or choose a topic that allows coverage of this.

The following notes give you some ideas of what you could cover in a topic.

Victimology

This a branch of criminology that studies the relationship between a victim and an offender by exploring the causes and consequences of suffering. Victimology first emerged in the 1940s and in its early stages focused on victim–offender interactions

and emphasised the reciprocal nature of victimisation in society, stating that victims might share some degree of responsibility with the lawbreakers for their own misfortunes.

Examples may be useful to help learners understand this approach. For example, women are often said, wrongly, to bear some responsibility for ‘misunderstandings’ regarding sexual assault.

The field of victimology developed further in the 1970s to include other fields of study, such as economics, political sciences, psychology and sociology. Further research explains why the risks of violent victimisation vary dramatically from group to group, especially by age, gender, social class, race and ethnicity.

Another area of concern to victimologists is how the legal system deals with victims in their capacity as witnesses for the government. Victimologists have documented how the interests and needs of injured parties have been routinely overlooked historically but are now being addressed because the victims’ rights movement has won concessions that empower victims within the justice system.

Global crime

You could start with the following definition: a crime that might happen in one country but is committed by persons in another. Global crime raises several problems regarding the rule of law, justice and accountability for states or administrations in these countries. If nations do not work together, it may be impossible to identify, apprehend, prosecute and convict criminals.

This topic could be taught in conjunction with others, such as cyber crime, policing and criminal justice. When addressing international crime, you should consider the functions of organisations such as the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol). You may wish to consider examples of transnational crimes, such as the trafficking of illegal substances, weapons and people, money laundering, and sex tourism.

Other areas under global crime could include trafficking of public objects through museums, for example. This is an area of interest that links to state crime, as state agents often accommodated such theft. Some banks have high-value pieces that were originally ‘appropriated’ — that is, stolen.

You could also explore other challenging examples, such as terrorism. You could consider the definition of phrases like ‘terrorism’ and ‘terrorist’, as they are often used but it is not always clear what they mean. Until recently, terrorism was frequently associated with the strategies of people or groups engaging in unconventional warfare against authorities by terrorising civilians and sowing fear among the community. Since the turn of the century, the word ‘terrorist’ has frequently been employed to denote a unique identity or philosophy of a person or group. Some sources, such as Alex P. Schmid and Albert J. Jongman (*Political Terrorism*, 1988) provide definitional components of terrorism, and these can number in the hundreds. You could explore terrorist groups, and bigger philosophical questions could be

covered that challenge common sense ideas such as ‘one man’s freedom fighter is another man’s terrorist.’ You can pose critical questions, such as ‘are individuals who belong to groups like ETA (the Basque separatist organisation in Spain) terrorists, guerrillas or militants?’ And ‘are they committing crimes or waging war?’ to encourage debate.

Cyber crime

There is no universal definition of this term, which could be problematic for learners. The criminological and academic communities try to present an informed analysis of cyber crime regarding the aetiology, consequences and regulation of cyber crime, and its broader societal implications. As a result, those who do not articulate a shared understanding of the issue contribute to its problematic nature despite their shared concern about cyber crime. The term ‘cyber crime’ now encompasses a variety of practices, including identity theft (phishing), cyberterrorism, information warfare, spam, denial-of-service attacks, hacking and cracking, hacktivism, e-frauds, auction fraud, click fraud, scams, hate crimes, cyberbullying, illegal online gambling, extreme pornography, viruses, worms, and Trojan horses (see *Handbook of Crime* by Matthew L. Williams, 2010).

You could consider a cyber crime matrix to further illustrate the complexity of cyber crime. For instance, several websites emphasise the distinction between cyber crime and computer crime. Computer crime refers to criminal acts that are committed using a computer, whereas cyber crime usually involves the use of a computer and the internet, or cyberspace. Other sources emphasise the distinction between ‘pre-computer’ crimes (those that occurred before the invention of the computer), such as embezzlement, fraud, financial scams, identity theft, and stalking, and crimes that require the existence of the cyber realm. Examples include e-scams, viruses, malware (malicious code), hacking, phishing, smishing (SMS messaging and phishing), vishing (voice and phishing), pharming, spam, software piracy, information warfare and viruses. It could also be interesting for learners to think about cyber crime trends and patterns.

State crime

This is defined as ‘illegal or deviant behaviours committed by the state, or with the cooperation of state agents’. (see *State Crime, Government, Violence and Corruption* by Penny Green and Tony Ward, 2005). Nation states commit crimes for their own agenda and purpose. Genocide, war crimes, torture, supporting organised crime and terrorist organisations, assassinations, corruption, and prejudice are examples of state crimes.

According to Eugene McLaughlin (in *The Problem of Crime*, edited by John Muncie and Eugene McLaughlin, 2001), there are four types of state crimes:

security forces’ crimes, including genocide, torture, detention without charge and the disappearance of dissidents

political crimes, such as corruption or censorship

economic crimes, such as breaking the law on health and safety

social and cultural crimes, such as institutional racism

There are more recent theoretical schools that consider social harm, for example, zemiology. These go further and draw connections between state crime and natural disasters. You could ask learners to consider how geophysical events like earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes, cyclones, hurricanes and floods might be seen as crimes. The effects of natural disasters, such as the political and economic responses to those impacted, may be highlighted. Penny Green and Tony Ward (*State Crime: Governments, Violence and Corruption*, 2004) believe that the state is directly responsible for these 'complex situations' because of several unlawful and careless behaviours. Again, giving examples may help learners to explore this in greater and more critical detail. In the instance of Hurricane Katrina, structural inequality may have been a major factor in the harm that was done to weaker socio-economic groups. Resource disparities played a key role in determining who could and could not escape the hurricane's most severe effects. Social harms brought on by the state's ineffective response strategies can demonstrate power disparities, which undoubtedly played a role in selecting which groups were eligible for state support and which ones were not. This is a useful example as you could link it with policing and criminal justice.

Policing and criminal justice

You could consider the ways in which policing impacts on several different areas of academic, practitioner and public interest. In recent decades, we have re-assessed what we mean by 'policing' because of changes both within and beyond policing. For example, policing is subject to the whims of competing political agendas. Recent years have seen the government, media and academics subject the police to greater degrees of scrutiny, and this has continued to fuel our interest in the police, its role and relationship with the public and the behaviour of its officers. Rod Morgan and Tim Newburn (*The Future of Policing*,1997) see the emergence of policing as a political issue as a recent phenomenon. You could exemplify this by looking at the Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher administrations, which placed greater emphasis on police accountability for what became known as 'the crime problem'.

You could consider the role of various policing policies and Acts of Parliament. Some of the policies may even cross over into other topics. For example, the Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) Act (1984) or the USA PATRIOT Act (2001) could be used to consider the changing role and increased power of the state and policing in terms of social control and surveillance. You could examine the disproportionate arrest rates among certain populations (for example, people from some ethnic minority backgrounds), and this would help support lessons in the topic of victimology. There are also significant debates surrounding police culture that could be explored in greater detail.

Green crime

Recently, green criminology has emerged as a set of intellectual, empirical and political orientations toward offences related to the environment, different species and the planet. Also known as eco-crime or conservation criminology, the topic studies ecological, environmental harm, and related matters of speciesism, and environmental justice and injustice. There is a common interest in the bio-physical

and socio-economic consequences of different sources of threat and damage to the environment, whether biodiversity loss, climate change, pollution or resource degradation. You could focus on both macro and micro aspects of green crime, as this is a broad topic. For example, you could include issues such as:

pollution and its causes, consequences and control

corporate criminality and its impact on the environment

the involvement of organised crime and official corruption in the illegal disposal of toxic waste

the scope of criminal law to prevent environmental plundering and punish perpetrators of harm

One way to explore this unit is for you to take an intersectional perspective when explaining crime. You can support an understanding of criminality by looking through the lens of who someone is, where they live, and their gender, ethnicity, age and income. You should encourage learners to consider the person's experience of that crime.

Highly recommended text by British Society of Criminology

Newburn, T. (2017) *Criminology*, 3rd edition, Abingdon: Routledge.

This textbook provides a good introduction to criminology. It also has a companion website, including exam, review and multiple-choice questions, and social media channels.

Economics

Economics A: The Nature of Economic Study

In outcome 1, learners explain different approaches and methods used in the study of economics. Learners should understand various economic models used to explain how economies work. You can use different models for different aspects of economic activity.

Here are some examples of different economic models you could use. You do not need to cover all of these, and you can choose to use others in the learning and teaching input. However, some of these can be applied to political decisions made in recent years, so could be useful for learners to gain an understanding of more recent events.

The classical model, developed by economists such as Adam Smith and David Ricardo, emphasises the role of markets and the importance of free trade. It suggests that markets naturally reach equilibrium, and that government intervention should be limited.

The Keynesian model, developed by economist John Maynard Keynes, emphasises the role of government in stabilising the economy during economic downturns. It suggests that government spending can stimulate economic activity and that monetary policy can be used to influence economic outcomes.

The neoclassical model builds on the classical model but incorporates some Keynesian ideas. It suggests that markets are efficient and naturally reach equilibrium, but that government intervention may be needed in certain circumstances, such as when there is market failure or externalities.

The monetarist model, developed by economists such as Milton Friedman, emphasises the importance of controlling the money supply to stabilise the economy. It suggests that inflation is caused by too much money in circulation and that the government should focus on controlling the money supply to stabilise prices and promote economic growth.

The Marxist model, developed by economist Karl Marx, emphasises the role of capitalism in producing inequality and exploitation. It suggests that the means of production should be owned collectively, rather than by private individuals, to create a more just society.

The behavioural economics model incorporates insights from psychology and sociology to explain how people make economic decisions. It suggests that people may not always behave rationally or in their own best interests, and that psychological biases and social norms can influence economic behaviour.

These are just a few examples of economic models, and there are many more that you can use to study different aspects of economic activity. You should choose the ones you think would be most useful for your learners.

Geography

Geography A: Examining Inequality

You should deliver this unit in a way that provides learners with an understanding of how inequalities develop, and compares them at a geographical or spatial level.

Key ideas should include:

the uneven spread of resources

that socio-economic change can be good for some and bad for others

the differing impact of inequalities on people and geographies and places

the role of government and other agency actors in creating and reducing inequalities geographically

introduction to geographical methods and techniques (GMTs), mapping, and statistical techniques

A useful place to start would be *The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better* (2009) by Richard G. Wilkinson and Kate Pickett. It introduces and discusses the many types of inequalities that exist geographically and the impact that has within and between countries. You could also use the Human Development Index.

You should use comparative case studies, where possible, to address real life geographical contexts. Use case studies to contrast places or geographies. These could be international, that is, reflecting global minority or global majority, or national, covering centre and periphery. The case studies could include:

the demographic, socio-economic, cultural, political, built and natural characteristics that shape the geography

how shifting flows of people (such as commuters and migrants), resources (such as natural and technology), money and investment (such as EU funding and transnational corporations), and ideas (such as the knowledge economy) have helped shape and determine the extent and types of inequalities

the types of evidence of social inequalities that can be found there, such as poverty and income levels, housing, environmental quality, crime rates, and technology

a map to support the presentation and analysis of comparative data

the range of factors that influence people's social inequality, such as income, gender, age, health, personal mobility, ethnicity and education

how social inequality impacts people's daily lives in different ways

economic change or changes that have taken place and the role of agencies and players involved in driving the change

There is a growing need for the unit content to focus more specifically on the current issues and problems that humanity faces. In your delivery, you should link geography to the other social science disciplines. Learners should understand that studying the geography of inequality remains relevant since it highlights the interdisciplinary nature of the social sciences and allows learners to demonstrate the knowledge and understanding of other disciplines, such as politics and sociology, as well as geography. You could introduce Nevin M. Fenneman's *The Circumference of Geography* (1919). Fenneman highlighted that each part of the various sciences (physical to humanities) relates to geography. He gave his new conception the name 'synthesis of science'. You can use examples from the named social science units to show the intersections, such as historical geography, social geography or political geography. However, be careful not to lose the coherency of the unit by being too broad. The focus should still be geographical inequality.

You can introduce any type of inequality to be studied, from the more traditional concepts of global development issues to inequalities in topics such as levels of crime in Scotland or the UK. The unit allows for any scale in terms of areal context, from global to local and anything in between, and any topic where inequality can be found. You could include some current topical issues such as resource inequality, where issues of climate change and resource depletion could be discussed. Non-traditional topics such as environmental inequality could work well within the unit, and it is relatively easy for you to make the links with other social sciences as the human factors discussed are social, political or economic. For example, you can link the topic of resource inequality to food security. You can then discuss climate change, soil erosion, sustainability, trade, distribution issues, related political issues, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) or UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as these SDGs would work very well with learning for sustainability in the unit. Your input can be as broad or as narrow as you want to make it. You can even

include the global minority and global majority responses and management of a pandemic. That may be usefully topical.

There is a tendency when discussing the reasons for and differences between the global minority and the global majority to focus on aspects such as access to education, healthcare and human rights. However, as the global population is showing increasing interest in the damage to the planet, renewables, the green economy, and climatic change including flooding and wildfires, you could adapt the unit to include these issues within the development concept. You could easily make comparisons between developed and developing countries on topics such as sustainability, which you could link to issues including poverty and lack of access.

Approaches to assessment

You should explain how physical and human factors impact patterns of social opportunities and inequalities for people and places. One example is deindustrialisation and the rise of the service industry. Another example could be globalisation more broadly. Many learners can discuss this in terms of how it impacts their lives.

Suggested formative tasks

Social impacts of inequality — case studies of two contrasting places to illustrate:

evidence and examples of social inequality that can be found there, such as housing, environment, crime rates and the technological divide
the range of factors that impact social inequality, such as income, gender, age, health, social mobility, ethnicity and education
how social inequality impacts people's daily lives in different ways

Structural change — learners could review the role of agencies and governments in driving structural or socio-economic change using a case study of one country or region that has been impacted by structural economic change, including:

socio-economic, demographic, cultural and environmental characteristics of the place before the economic change
the economic change or changes that took place, and the role of players and agencies involved in driving the change
socio-economic, demographic, cultural and environmental impacts on people and places

Geography B: Urban Change and Its Impact

In this unit, you should tailor the geography input to outline analytical capabilities, for example, digital mapping and digital data analysis. It is a huge growth area in the study of geography, particularly in degree programmes. Your centre does not need to have these tools, but it would be helpful for you to refer to them and give examples of where in society they are being used. One example is the use of geographical information systems or geospatial analytical tools for demographic mapping used by supermarkets. Knowing the location of the store and its residents' habits supports supermarkets in making decisions on expansion, contraction or even new business. You should highlight the uses to learners in terms of leading to urban change, but they do not need to use the tools.

History

History A and B units can be taught individually as self-standing units — but if they are being taught together, you should deliver History A first because of the timeframes studied in the topics.

History A: Exploring an Historical Period

The information given here supplements the additional guidance given in the unit specification.

Any activities that involve using sources (both primary and secondary) are helpful to engage learners and show the value of different sources to inform about a specified period of history. History is not a passive subject. Historians actively seek out and analyse primary sources to tell the stories of our past. Behind those streamlined narratives are hundreds of messy sources. Allow learners to practise analysing, questioning and following up information contained in a variety of primary sources.

USA 1600–1787

This is a new context that has not appeared in previous versions of the History A unit. There are many topics within this time period that could be engaging for learners. Themes of colonisation, revolution and independence form the basis for the period. Below is a list of key events during this period. You are not restricted to this list. There may be other events or aspects that would be suitable for the specified period. All websites given below were accessed on 23 June 2023.

1607 — Jamestown

https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/jamestown/ — Library of Congress (primary sources)

https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-ushistory1os2xmaster/chapter/primary-source-reading-jamestown-charter/ — Jamestown Charter (copy of original document with transcript)

http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/active_learning/explorations/pocohontas/pocahontas_smith_letter.cfm — John Smith's letter to Queen Anne (Pocahontas)

https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-resources/spotlight-primary-source/jamestown-settler-describes-life-virginia-1622 — Settler describes life in Virginia

1619 — House of Burgesses – first English representative government

1620 — Mayflower Compact

https://themayflowersociety.org/history/the-mayflower-compact/

1765 — Quartering Act

1766 — Declaratory Act

1770 — Boston Massacre

1773 — Tea Act

1773 — Boston Tea Party

https://dp.la/primary-source-sets/the-boston-tea-party — selection of sources

1774 — Intolerable Acts / Coercive Acts

1774 — First Continental Congress

1775 — Battles of Lexington and Concord (start of American Revolution)

http://americainclass.org/sources/makingrevolution/crisis/text8/sermonsonwar.pdf — sermons on the outbreak of war

http://americainclass.org/sources/makingrevolution/crisis/text8/outbreakofwar.pdf — colonist responses to the outbreak of war

1775 — Second Continental Congress

http://americainclass.org/sources/makingrevolution/rebellion/text8/delegatesdecindep.pdf — letters by delegates to the Second Continental Congress on the Declaration of Independence

http://americainclass.org/sources/makingrevolution/crisis/text8/olivebranchpetition.pdf — Olive Branch Petition

1775 — Mecklenburg Resolves (North Carolina)

1776 — 'Common Sense' pamphlet supporting independence released

1776 — Halifax Resolves

1776 — Declaration of Independence (4 July)

The Declaration of Independence | National Archives

- 1780 — Massachusetts Constitution
- 1781 — Articles of Confederation
- 1783 — Treaty of Paris (end of Revolution)
- 1786 — Shays' Rebellion (exposed weaknesses in Articles)
- 1787 — Northwest Ordinance

Useful resources for further support

Assumption University, *E Pluribus Unum: America in the 1770s*. Available at: http://www1.assumption.edu/ahc/1770s/default.html [accessed 3 May 2024].

BBC — History — British History in depth: Was the American Revolution Inevitable?

Berkin, C. *Teaching the Revolution*, Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. Available at: https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-resources/teacher-resources/teaching-revolution [accessed 3 May 2024].

Reynolds, D. (2009) *America, Empire of Liberty*, London: Penguin Books.

Shi, D. E. and Tindall, G. B. (2016) *America: A Narrative History*, United Kingdom: W.W. Norton.

Zinn, H. (2015) *A People's History of the United States 1492 – present*, London and New York: Routledge.

Afghanistan 1919–1996

This is another new context for the History B unit. This specified period covers a range of important events in Afghanistan from when it was ruled by Britain to the rise of the Taliban. Information below gives some of the key events in this country. You can use any other aspects as a focus. Alliances, women's rights and the rise of the Islamic State of Afghanistan could be strong themes.

1919 — Amanullah Khan accedes to the throne after the Amir Habibullah Khan is murdered, followed swiftly by the Third Anglo-Afghan War. Afghanistan declares independence from Britain.

1919 — Britain is defeated in the Third Anglo-Afghan War.

1926 — Afghanistan is declared a monarchy. Amanullah declares himself King. Fighting breaks out, leading to his abdication in 1929.

1934 — United States recognises Afghanistan.

1947 — Britain withdraws from India, creating two states (India and Pakistan). Pakistan and Afghanistan share long border, with incursions.

1953 — Afghanistan looks to the Soviet Union for economic and military assistance. Over the next few years, a closer alliance is formed. Afghanistan, through social reforms, allows women a stronger public presence.

1973 — General Mohammed Daoud Khan overthrows his cousin the King, abolishes the monarchy and declares himself president.

1975–77 — a new constitution is formed that gives rights to women.

1978 — Khan is killed in a communist coup. The new government bases its policies on Islamic principles, Afghan nationalism and socio-economic justice. It is still backed by the Soviets. The Mujahadeen, a guerrilla movement, is created to battle the government.

1979 — America cuts off its assistance to Afghanistan following the murder of the American ambassador. The Soviet Union invades Afghanistan in December to support the government.

1980 — battles ensue between the Mujahadeen and Soviet troops, as well as the Afghan army.

1984 — Osama bin Laden travels to Afghanistan to support the Mujahadeen.

1986 — the Mujahadeen get arms from Britain, the United States and China to aid the fight against the Soviet Union.

1988 — Osama bin Laden forms Al-Qaida (‘the base’) to create Afghanistan as an Islamic state. The Mujahadeen continues fighting the Soviet army, while Osama bin Laden declares a Jihad (holy war) against America.

1989 — Afghan independence is assured after America, Afghanistan, the Soviet Union and Pakistan sign a peace accord in Geneva. The Soviet Union withdraw their troops.

1992 — The Mujahadeen oust Dr Mohammad Najibullah from power. Burhanuddin Rabbani is declared president. Afghanistan is declared an Islamic state.

1995 — the Taliban, an Islamic militia, is formed. The Taliban crack down on crime and the opium trade. Women’s rights are curtailed, with requirements to be fully veiled and always accompanied by a male relative, restricting education and employment. America does not recognise the Taliban’s authority.

Useful sources of information

The National Security Archive has a range of declassified materials that could be useful across History A. Available at: https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/ [accessed 3 May 2024].

Mustafa, G. and Khan, A. 'Afghanistan: A Study in Internal Conflict and National Cohesion', *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding*. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/14529753/Afghanistan_A_Study_in_Internal_Conflict_and_National_Cohesion [accessed 3 May 2024].

National Archives — Afghanistan (lots of resources in this section). Available at: https://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/afghanistan.html [accessed 3 May 2023].

Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan Digital Archive. Available at: https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/collection/76/soviet-invasion-of-afghanistan [accessed 3 May 2024].

Stewart, J. (2007) *The Savage Border: The Story of the North-West Frontier*, Sutton publishing.

Stewart, J. (2011) *On Afghanistan's Plains: The Story of Britain's Afghan Wars*, IB Tauris.

History B: Historical Debates

USA 1788–1877

This is new context for the History B unit. This specified period covers a range of important events in the life of the United States of America. Enslavement could be a strong focus in this unit. Civil War and Western Expansion could also be strong, detailed topics.

1787 — Founding Fathers — constitution brought into effect.

National Archives and Records Administration, *The Founding Fathers Online National Archives.* Available at: https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2010/winter/founders.html [accessed 3 May 2024].

The National Archives and Records Administration, *The Constitution of the United States*. Available at: https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution [accessed 3 May 2024].

The National Archives and Records Administration, *Constitution of the United States. A History.* Available at: https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution [accessed 3 May 2024].

1789 — George Washington elected first president of the United States.

George Washington — A Secondary Source Project. Available at: https://everythingaboutgeorgewashington.weebly.com/ [accessed 3 May 2024].

1791 — Bill of Rights — Individual Freedom.

Primary source — Bill of Rights Institute. Available at: https://billofrightsinstitute.org/ [accessed 3 May 2024].

1803 — Louisiana Purchase.

Louisiana Purchase (United States history), Britannica. Available at: https://www.britannica.com/event/Louisiana-Purchase [accessed 3 May 2024].

1808 — Atlantic slave trade abolished.

The Bibliography of Slavery and World Slaving. Available at: http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/bib/ [accessed 3 May 2024].

1812–15 — War of 1812 between US and Britain (British restrictions on US trade during Napoleonic Wars).

Avalon Project — British-American Diplomacy: War of 1812 and Associated Documents. Available at: https://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject_menus/brtreaty.asp [accessed 3 May 2024].

1819 — Transcontinental Treaty (addition of Florida as a state).

1823 — Monroe Doctrine. Supreme Court rule in Johnson v McIntosh that American Indians have no land rights.

Monroe Doctrine (1823), National Archives. Available at: https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/monroe-doctrine [accessed 3 May 2024].

1836 — Texas draws up declaration of independence from Mexico.

1842 — Fremont explores California.

1845 — Manifest Destiny — John O'Sullivan. Texas becomes a state.

Manifest Destiny, United States History. Available at: https://www.history.com/topics/westward-expansion/manifest-destiny [accessed 3 May 2024]. Primary source image: *American Progress*, John Gast (1875). Available at: https://picturinghistory.gc.cuny.edu/john-gast-american-progress-1872/ [accessed 3 May 2024].

Primary and secondary sources on Manifest Destiny — Early United States History through local college online resources.

Manifest Destiny, DPLA. Available at: https://dp.la/primary-source-sets/manifest-destiny [accessed 3 May 2024].

1846 — Mexican-American War begins.

1848 — Mexican-American War ends. Mexico cedes the Californian territory. Gold discovered in California.

1850 — California becomes a state.

1854 – Abolitionists set up Republican Party.

1860 — Lincoln becomes Republican President.

Lincoln — Primary sources: US Presidents — Library Guides at Christopher Newport University. Available at: https://cnu.libguides.com/primarypresidents [accessed 3 May 2024].

1861–1865 — American Civil War — 11 pro-enslavement Southern states secede from the Union and form the Confederate States of America, effectively starting the Civil War.

Foner, E. (1974) 'The Causes of the American Civil War: Recent Interpretations and New Directions', *Civil War History*, 30 (no. 3), The Kent State University Press, pp. 197–214.

Hummel, J. (2014) *Emancipating Slaves, Enslaving Free Men: A History of the American Civil War*. Chicago: Open Court.

1863 — Emancipation Proclamation — Southern slaves free.

1865 — Confederate defeat. Enslavement abolished under 13th Amendment. Lincoln assassinated.

Useful resources for further support

Aptheker, H. (1989) *Abolitionism: a revolutionary movement,* Twaynne Publishers.

Carwardine, R. (2003) *Lincoln*, London: Pearson/Longman.

Collins, B. (1981) *The Origins of America's Civil War*, New Jersey: Holmes & Meier.

Escott, P. (ed) (1999) *Major Problems in the History of the American South, Volume 1:*

The Old South: documents and essays, Boston: Cengage Learning.

Fogel, R. and Engerman, S. (2013) *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Slavery*. W. W. Norton & Company.

Foote, S. (2006) *The Civil War: A Narrative,* New York: Random House.

Genovese, E. (1976) *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made*, New York: Vintage.

Heale, M. (1977) *The Making of American Politics, 1750–1850*, Harlow: Longman Publishing Group.

Shi, D. E. and Tindall, G. B. (2016) *America: A Narrative History*, United Kingdom: W.W. Norton.

Stampp, K. M. (ed) (1992) *The Causes of the Civil War*, New York: Touchstone.

Stampp, K. M. (1967) *The Era of Reconstruction, 1865–1877*, New York: Vintage.

Harris, J.W. (1992) *Society and Culture in the Slave South*, London: Routledge.

Afghanistan 1997–Present

Another new topic covering more recent history in Afghanistan. You could focus on Britain and America's role in the recent conflict, or the role of NATO. Themes of the role of women or religion in society could be a strong focus.

1998 — Al-Qaida bombs two American embassies in Africa. America retaliates with cruise missile attacks against bin Laden's training camps in Afghanistan. The leaders of the terrorist group escape.

2000 — America requests that Osama bin Laden is extradited to stand trial for bombing the embassies. The Taliban refuses. The United Nations sanctions the Taliban with economic and trade restrictions.

2001 — the Taliban destroys Buddhist statues in Bamiyan, Afghanistan, saying they are an affront to Islam. America declares Osama bin Laden as the prime suspect after aeroplanes were hijacked and crashed on 11 September. America and Britain launch airstrikes in Afghanistan against assumed Al-Qaida training camps. Hamid Karzai, after an eight-year exile, is sworn in as the leader of the interim government in Afghanistan. America recognises the new government.

2003 — NATO takes over security in Kabul in August because of the increased violence.

2004 — a new constitution calls for women to have equality.

2005 — Afghanistan holds its first parliamentary elections in more than 30 years.

2006–09 — fighting continues across Afghanistan, with the USA, NATO peacekeeping forces and the Afghan National Security Forces against the Taliban.

2009 — America announces 17,000 more troops to support the Afghanistan war, including assistance to Pakistan in its fight against militants.

2011 — American forces kill Osama bin Laden in May.

2013 — the Afghan army takes over all military and security operations from NATO forces.

2014 — NATO ends its combat mission. American troops remain to train the Afghan army. A timetable is given for American troop withdrawal.

2018 — America and the Taliban sign a peace accord that has troops leaving by May 2021.

2021 (August) — the Taliban takes over Kabul. American and British troops withdraw in a hurried and chaotic evacuation. Women and girls were not allowed to return to education and employment, with some promise of future engagement.

2022 — from May, all women in Afghanistan were required by law to wear full-body coverings when in public, leaving only the eyes uncovered. Female TV presenters were told to wear a face veil.

Useful sources of information

The National Security Archive has a range of declassified materials that could be useful across History B. Available at: https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/ [accessed 3 May 2024].

Brivati, B. (2022) *Losing Afghanistan: The Fall of Kabul and the End of Western Intervention*, Biteback Publishing.

Haring, E. (2010) 'Mobilizing Identity in the Pashtun Tribal Belt'*, Small Wars Journal*. Available at: https://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/journal/docs-temp/393-haring.pdf [accessed 3 May 2024].

Maley, W. (2009) *The Afghanistan Wars*, 2nd edition, Palgrave MacMillan

Mustafa, G. and Khan, A. 'Afghanistan: A Study in Internal Conflict and National Cohesion', *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding*. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/14529753/Afghanistan_A_Study_in_Internal_Conflict_and_National_Cohesion [accessed 3 May 2024].

National Archives — Afghanistan (lots of resources in this section). Available at: https://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/afghanistan.html [accessed 3 May 2024].

National Security Archive (primary sources). Available at: https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/briefing-book/afghanistan/2021-08-19/afghanistan-2020-20-year-war-20-documents [accessed 3 May 2024].

Office of the Director of National Intelligence — A collection of materials taken from Osama bin Laden's compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan. All declassified materials. Available at: https://www.dni.gov/index.php/features/bin-laden-s-bookshelf?start=1 [accessed 3 May 2024].

Robson, B. et al (2002) *The Afghans: Their History and Culture,* The Center for Applied Linguistics, The Cultural Orientation Resource Centre. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/32816136/The_Afghans_Their_History_and_Culture [accessed 3 May 2024]. There are lots of other interesting articles on this website.

Age of Revolutions

Another new context for this subject. You should cover more than one revolution (two or three would give a reasonable flavour of how revolutions impact society). Although the 'Age of Revolutions' is often considered to be a period in history between 1775 and 1848, for this unit you can look at revolutions from the mid-18th century to the present day. There have been revolutions more recently that have impacted all aspects of society (political, economic and societal) and led to changes of the scale seen in earlier revolutions. You can cover any revolutions that have had an impact on society. The focus should be on how political, economic, environmental or social aspects changed as a result of the events surrounding the revolution. The suggestions below are not mandatory or exhaustive.

Revolutions could include:

Industrial Revolution (1760–1840)
American Revolution (1765–1783)
French Revolution (1789–1799)
Haitian Revolution (1791–1804)
Russian Revolution (1917)
Chinese Communist Revolution (1949)
Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966)
Digital Revolution or Fourth Industrial Revolution (21st century)
Arab Spring (2010–2012)

Useful sources of information

The Most Important World Revolutions That Shaped World History. Available at: https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/the-10-most-important-revolutions-of-all-time.html [accessed 3 May 2024].

Free books (pdf) on the Industrial Revolution. Available at: https://www.infobooks.org/free-pdf-books/history/industrial-revolution/ [accessed 3 May 2024].

American Revolution. Available at: https://www.history.com/topics/american-revolution [accessed 3 May 2024].

French Revolution. Available at: https://www.history.com/topics/france/french-revolution [accessed 3 May 2023].

The Haitian Revolution. Available at: https://www.britannica.com/topic/Haitian-Revolution [accessed 3 May 2024].

The Chinese Communist Revolution. Available at: https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/chinese-rev [accessed 3 May 2024].

The Chinese Cultural Revolution. Available at: https://www.history.com/topics/asian-history/cultural-revolution [accessed 3 May 2024].

The Causes of the Russian Revolution. Available at: https://www.thoughtco.com/causes-of-the-russian-revolution-1221800 [accessed 3 May 2024].

The Fourth Industrial Revolution: what it means, how to respond. Available at: https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/the-fourth-industrial-revolution-what-it-means-and-how-to-respond/ [accessed 3 May 2024].

Arab Spring. Available at: https://www.history.com/topics/middle-east/arab-spring [accessed 3 May 2024].

Politics

Politics A: Political Ideas supports learners to recognise how political concepts and political ideologies help us to understand the relationships between the state and individuals within it. Politics B: Governance of Scotland and the United Kingdom develops learners' understanding of the political systems we are governed by in Scotland. You could choose to deliver Politics B before Politics A if you think learners would benefit from understanding our political system before embarking on the study of political concepts and political ideologies.

Politics A: Political Ideas

Outcome 1 asks learners to explain political concepts and political ideologies. Political ideologies provide frameworks for understanding the world and offer guidance on how societies should be governed, how resources should be allocated and how social issues should be addressed. They often address questions related to the role of government, individual rights and freedoms, economic systems, social justice, and the distribution of power.

Different political ideologies vary widely in their core principles. Some common political ideologies include socialism, communism, liberalism, conservatism, socialism, fascism and nationalism. Each ideology has its own set of values, goals and preferred methods of achieving them. These ideologies can influence political parties, political movements and individual politicians, shaping their policies and decision-making processes. Individuals and societies can hold a combination of ideological beliefs or fall outside the traditional ideological spectrum.

You can broaden study to cover neo-ideologies. There are several suggested in the unit specification, such as neoliberalism or neonationalism. A neo-ideology refers to a contemporary political belief that challenges or deviates from existing ideologies. It emerges as a response to new social, economic or political conditions. A neo-ideology can also be a critique of established ideologies.

Political concepts refer to ideas and theories that help to explain or analyse political phenomena. These concepts are listed in the unit specification and include concepts such as power, authority and democracy. Outcome 2 asks learners to apply political concepts to political ideologies. You should introduce learners to a range of concepts to allow them to apply two concepts confidently in their assessment.

Politics B: Governance of Scotland and the United Kingdom

Debating is a useful skill for those interested in politics. Giving learners formative work can support their understanding of ideas. You could ask learners to produce structured notes to support a debate. You could use a debate format for learners to

compare the nature of the Scottish and United Kingdom constitutions and institutions, and the decision-making processes taking place in Westminster and Holyrood.

You could prepare papers for a debate to include prepared arguments on the nature and purpose of the different electoral systems, including some of the forces impacting modern-day Scottish and United Kingdom politics, such as pressure groups, and the effects of proportional representation on the Scottish political system and the parties operating within it. You could also prepare debate papers regarding the concepts of devolution, devolution max and separatism.

You can use group work by asking learners to collaborate to prepare debate papers, as this helps them develop the skill of working as a member of a team (meta-skill of collaborating). Check that learners can clearly demonstrate an awareness of the stated position within their debate. If this takes the form of a group debate, it should include evidence of an individual learner's participation on more than one occasion in the debate, with them making a viable contribution.

A summative assessment could take the form of preparing papers for a debate, an essay, or a set of structured questions. It could also take the form of:

a report

an individual oral presentation

a poster exhibition with oral explanation

a podcast

a combination of assessment approaches in accordance with the open-book nature of the assessment

It must be appropriate to meet the evidence requirements.

An individual summative assessment submission as a debate should provide evidence from a prepared speech framework, a note of research materials and appropriate references, and use a structure that is clear and logical. It may be that cue cards are used as evidence rather than a full speech. It would be helpful to record audio presentations or digital submissions. These should be backed up with appropriate references, and a clear and logical framework.

If the position in the debate shows evidence of one point of view, the learner should give evidence of their knowledge of the opposing viewpoint. This could be a written or oral submission to accompany the debate event, with details of what they would expect the alternative view to be.

You can use portfolio approaches here to assess the evidence requirements. You can include tasks in a portfolio assessment such as observing a documentary, a parliamentary debate or a debate between other learners, and producing:

research notes

oral or written evidence of the prepared argument
a speech framework
cue cards or briefing papers
observation feedback by peers
answers to structured questions

The items in the portfolio should provide evidence of the knowledge and skills required by the evidence requirements.

It is important that you record how evidence has been generated for each outcome. You must make these records available for external verification.

Psychology

Psychology B: Applied Psychology

The information given here supplements the additional guidance given in the unit specification.

It is important to ensure you cover three topics in outcome 1, although you only assess one topic, combining it with outcome 2 research. You should take care to cover at least one topic that could lend itself to ethical research.

Learners carry out research into one of the three topics and produce a report on the findings. This report of the research also should cover the evidence requirements for outcome 1, specifically:

a definition of the psychological topic that they are using in the research investigation
an analysis of conflicting theories, opinions and arguments relevant to the topic
an explanation of research evidence relevant to the topic

A written psychology lab report follows a standard structure, which typically includes the following sections:

Abstract: this is a brief summary of the report, typically no more than 150 words. Learners should provide an overview of the research question, a brief mention of theories used in the introduction and literature review section, the methods used, the main results, the conclusions and the implications of the study.

Introduction and literature review: learners should provide an overview of the research question, including its importance and relevance to the field of psychology. They should also include a brief review of the relevant literature, including key theories and findings related to the topic.

Methods: learners should describe the methods used to conduct the study, including the sample size, how they selected participants, and any procedures or materials they used in the study. They should provide enough detail so that the study could be replicated by someone else. Learners should ensure participants are 16 or older for informed consent in psychology research, upholding ethical standards and research integrity.

Results: learners should present the findings of the study, including any tables or graphs used to display the data. They should also state what statistical analysis has been carried out on the data, as well as giving the statistical significance of the results, as learners should use a relevant inferential test of the data.

Discussion: learners should interpret the findings of the study in the context of their research question and the relevant literature. They should also discuss the limitations of the study and potential avenues for future research.

References: learners should list all the sources cited in the report, following a specific citation format such as APA or Harvard.

Inferential statistics

Feedback from universities strongly suggests that entrants to year 2 would benefit from experience of some inferential statistical testing, such as Spearman's Rho correlation for correlation data, Mann-Whitney U for unrelated non-parametric data, Wilcoxon signed rank for related non-parametric data and chi-square for category data. Probability is not required but significance should be considered, particularly for entrants to year 2 psychology degrees. This can be achieved within the research analysis required for outcome 2.

You should use contact time to ensure that learners plan data collection that produces data that can be analysed in this way. This is part of the planning process and helps learners to operationalise their research. It is important that learners collect quantitative data.

You should plan some classroom activities around identifying types of data and research designs in different research scenarios. This would give learners an idea of what method and statistic may best suit their research. Although parametric data may be collected and analysed, at this level we are suggesting that non-parametric data analysis be used for assessment of skills. Non-parametric statistics are more robust and can be used for either parametric or non-parametric data. Learners should be able to comment on the statistical significance of their results, and class time should include how to read tables of significance and interpret how this relates to their own research.

Learners are being tested on their ability to collect, analyse and interpret data appropriately. They are not required to memorise equations nor carry them out under closed-book conditions. You should be able to authenticate a learner's work from classroom supervision. You should encourage learners to use statistical software. You can get free versions of some of the more familiar brands.

We outline four statistical tests below: Chi-square, Wilcoxon signed ranks, Mann Whitney U, and Spearman's Rho (sometimes called Spearman's rank correlation). Many textbooks on research methods give information on these statistical tests. You might already use Hugh Coolican's *Research Methods and Statistics in Psychology*. Using this and other similar texts would be helpful to support learners as they apply statistical tests.

Each learner would use just one of these tests in their analysis for their research project. You can show the whole class the various options and how they work, or just the test that fits with the type of data they are collecting. Tables of significance should be available in college libraries or online.

The following information on the statistical tests is addressed to learners.

Chi-square (X^2) quick guide

Nominal (category) data.

You compare the actual results to the results you would expect if the null hypothesis were true. You collect random data, drawn from independent variables from a large enough sample. Only use data that can fit into a category, for example colour (red or blue) or educational level (below SCQF level 4, SCQF level 4, SCQF level 5).

For this calculation you are required to work out only two different numbers:

the observed value (O): this is the result you have measured

the expected value (E): this is what you would expect the result to be if the null hypothesis is true

To calculate the expected results for a chi-squared test, you use probabilities based on the assumption that there is no real difference between the groups you are comparing.

An example could be of people preferring shopping in person to online shopping in two towns. Suppose town A has 60% preferring shopping in person and 40% online, and town B has 50% preferring shopping in person and 50% online. If there is no real difference between the towns, you would expect the proportions of shopping in person and online in each town to be similar.

To calculate the expected values, you apply these proportions to the total number of people in each town. For example, if town A has 100 people, you note that 60 of them prefer shopping in person and 40 prefer online. Similarly, if town B has 80 people, you note 40 of them prefer shopping in person and 40 prefer online.

So, in simple terms, you calculate the expected results by assuming that each group follows the same pattern of preferences based on the proportions you have observed in the entire sample.

Use the equation:

$$x^2 = \sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$$

Follow these steps:

1 Draw out a table. The top data line in this example would be for town A and the second data line would be for town B. The first data column would be for shopping in person and the second data column for shopping online. We call each part with a statistic a 'cell'.

	Shopping in person	Shopping online	
Town A	60	40	100
Town B	50	50	100
Column totals	110	90	200

2 Put your observed values into the top left corner of the cell.

3 Calculate expected values for each box: $E =$ row total x column total / total number of observations

4 Write in the expected values at the right side of the cell.

	Shopping in person		Shopping online		
Town A	60	E=55	40	E=45	100
Town B	50	E=55	50	E=45	100
Column totals	110		90		200

5 For each cell calculate $O - E$.

6 Square this number and write it in the middle.

	Shopping in person			Shopping online			
Town A	60	$(O-E)^2=25$	E=55	40	$(O-E)^2=25$	E=45	100
Town B	50	$(O-E)^2=25$	E=55	50	$(O-E)^2=25$	E=45	100
Column totals	110			90			200

For each cell, calculate:

$$\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$$

7 Now add up the figure for each cell from step 6:
0.46; 0.46; 0.56; 0.56 = 2.04. This is x^2

8 Now check for significance using the 'Table of significance'. To be of statistical significance, your value must be equal to or larger than the critical value in the table.

Degrees of freedom (df) is calculated by looking at your table. It is:

(number of rows – 1) x (number of columns – 1)

In the example given we would need to see a critical value of 3.84 or more at the $p<0.05$ level of significance. As 2.04 is less than 3.84, we can conclude no significant difference between the two towns for shopping preferences.

Wilcoxon signed ranks

Two conditions; related design (each participant does both conditions). Ordinal data.

Calculate differences between A and B, taking note of the sign (+ or –).

Rank the differences (ignoring the sign).

Separate positively scored ranks from negatively scored ranks.

Calculate Σ for each signed rank column (+ and –).

The smaller rank total is W.

Count the number of pairs, ignoring ties. This is N.

Worked example:

Participant	Score A	Score B	*d* (A – B)	Rank of difference	Sum of the ranks of positive differences +d	Sum of the rank of negative differences –d
1	3	5	–2	5	N/A	5
2	4	5	–1	2	N/A	2
3	3	2	+1	2	2	N/A
4	1	5	–4	8.5	N/A	8.5
5	5	4	+1	2	2	N/A
6	2	5	–3	7	N/A	7
7	3	5	–2	5	N/A	5
8	4	4	0	Omit tie	N/A	N/A
9	1	5	–4	8.5	N/A	8.5
10	3	5	–2	5	N/A	5
Σ (totals)	29	45	N/A	N/A	4	41
Mean	2.9	4.5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

For the table:

T is the smaller value from the sum of the ranks, so T=4 (note: sometimes T is given as W).
Nine results were counted in, as one is omitted due to zero difference between the scores, so N=9.

Look for critical value in an appropriate table of critical values of T in Wilcoxon signed ranks.

Your observed value of T must be less than the critical value to reject the Null Hypothesis. In the case above, 4 is less than the critical value for a two-tailed test for significance levels at $p<0.1$ and $p<0.05$.

Mann Whitney U

Two conditions; unrelated design (different participants in each group). Ordinal data. The smaller 'U' is, the greater the difference between groups

The following is an old version that can be carried out in less than two minutes. Longer, more complex versions are available.

Worked example: Give one set of people (group A) a list of organised words to remember while you give a second set of people (group B) a list of random words to remember. The dependent variable (DV) is number of words recalled (out of 20). Figures are given below.

Choose smallest total. ΣB is smallest, therefore, U is calculated from ΣB.

Beside each number in Group B, write the number of times it beats the scores in Group A. In the final column, award 1 point if it is greater, 0.5 points if it is equal.

Group A	Group B	No of times B beats any A	Points
16	12	1 (greater than 11 only)	1
16	11	= 11 in Group A	0.5
19	10	0	0
19	9	0	0
13	11	= 11 in Group A	0.5
11	13	1 (>11) and 2 where it is =	2
15	13	1 (>11) and 2 where it is =	2
13	9	0	0
18	9	0	0
20	15	3 and 1 where it is =	3.5
160	112		9.5

ΣA = 160 ΣB = 112

Now add up the total. Here, it is 9.5. This is U.

That's it!
Now compare this figure to the critical values to see if it is significant.
U = 9.5. Critical value = 16. p<0.01
U is less than the critical value, therefore there is a statistically significant difference.

Critical values of rs
To be a statistically significant correlation, your calculated value must be the same or more than the value in the table.

Spearman's Rho correlation
Relationship between two co-variables; participants have measures for both. Ordinal data.

Calculating Spearman's Rho correlation:

Ensure that each participant's pairs of scores are correctly written.
Rank each co-variable's scores separately.
Calculate the difference between each participant's ranked scores. The sign doesn't matter as it is the difference between their rank for one variable and their rank for the second variable that matters. (A perfect correlation means that they have the same ranked position for each, irrespective of the value of their actual scores.)
Square the differences in ranks.
Add up the squared differences in ranks.
Enter all your figures into the formula below. You do not need to memorise it, but you do need to know what information goes where.

Spearman's Rho correlation: formula and significance.

$$r_s = 1 - \frac{6\sum d^2}{N(N^2-1)}$$

$\sum$ = 'sum of'; that is, add them up.
$\sum d^2$ = the sum of the squared differences in rank.
N = the number of pairs of scores (usually the number of participants).

Calculate in stages. You can use as many stages as you feel comfortable with. Don't worry if it seems to take a while. Be confident that you are doing it right. Always double check every stage.

1 $\sum d^2$ will have been calculated. Multiply this by 6 to calculate the numerator (top row).

2 Square N, subtract 1, then multiply this number by N for the denominator (bottom row).

3 The numerator (top number) is then divided by the denominator (bottom number). This is written to three decimal places (look at the fourth decimal place — if it is 5 or more then round your third place up by one; if it is 0 to 4 then the third place stays the same).

4 The final stage is to calculate 1 minus your answer. This is your correlation. Make sure you write in the correct sign in front of the correlation.

5 Comment on what this figure means. Refer to the direction as well as the strength of the correlation. Relate this result to the aim or hypothesis of your investigation. What have you found? What does this mean?

6 How significant is this result? Compare your result to the table of significance. Identify the number of participants (pairs of scores). Find the corresponding critical value. If your value is more than or the same as this value, then you have a statistically significant correlation. If it is not statistically significant then any correlation found may be a chance relationship, or you may have tested too few participants. Perhaps the relationship is just not strong enough. Look at your raw data and your scatter graph to further explain your results.

Social Anthropology

Social Anthropology A: Anthropological Approaches to Understanding Society

You can find some useful reading for this unit in the textbooks below:

Hendry, J. (1999) *An Introduction to Social Anthropology: Other People's Worlds*, London: Red Globe Press.

Hendry, J. (2016) *An Introduction to Social Anthropology: Sharing Our Worlds*, London: Red Globe Press.

Pountney, L. and Marić, T. (2015) *Introducing Anthropology: What Makes Us Human?* Cambridge Polity Press.

There is useful reading on rites of passage and initiation into adulthood in:

Van Gennep, A. (1960) 'Chapter 6', *The Rites of Passage*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

You can find other useful reading on initiation into adulthood in:

Bloch, M. (1992) 'Chapter 2: Initiation', *Prey into Hunter*: *The Politics of Religious Experience*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 8–23.

Turner, V. (1985) 'Chapter 4: Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites of Passage', *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 93–111.

Regarding what makes kin, there are some interesting readings about the variety of ideas about conception in:

Philogene, A.H. (2019) ‘When “blood speaks”: naming the father and the mystics of kinship in Dominica, Eastern Caribbean’, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 25(1): 29–50.

Ragoné, H. (1996) ‘Chasing the Blood Tie: Surrogate Mothers, Adoptive Mothers and Fathers, *American Ethnologist*, 23 (2): 352–365.

The following two readings are wide apart in terms of time and content, but share their approach to research methods and an anthropological understanding of ethnography:

Malinowski, B. (1978) ‘Introduction: The subject, method and scope of this inquiry’, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific: An Account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1–25.

Ho, K. (2009) ‘Introduction: Anthropology Goes to Wall Street’, *Liquidated: An Ethnography of Wall Street*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1–38.

Social Anthropology B: The Body

Taken together, this unit offers the opportunity to develop in more detail some of the learning acquired in J73S 47 *Social Anthropology: Anthropological Approaches to Understanding Society*, which considers kinship, ritual and symbolism as general ways of gaining an insight into the broader workings of any society. *Social Anthropology B: The Body* focuses in on the body as a canvas to decorate and modify to place its owner in society, notably in rites of passage that complete becoming a full person in that society.

Learners who choose to focus on virtual bodies need to remember also to refer to examples from the rich variety offered in the real world.

Concepts of gender and sexuality are important, as is the notion of personhood in any society.

The following is an indicative list of useful sources and anthropological explanations of human and virtual bodies, but you can use appropriate alternative explanations, theories and source material.

For outcomes 1 and 3, we recommend the following texts:

Hendry, J. (1999) *An Introduction to Social Anthropology: Other People’s Worlds*, London: Red Globe Press.

Hendry, J. and Underdown, S. (2012) *Anthropology: Beginners Guides*, London: Oneworld Publications.

Pountney, L. and Marić, T. (2015) *Introducing Anthropology*, Cambridge Polity Press.

For outcome 2, anthropological explanations could include Turner’s ideas on ‘social skin’ or Mulvey’s on the ‘male gaze’:

What is Laura Mulvey's Male Gaze Theory? Available at: https://www.perlego.com/knowledge/study-guides/what-is-laura-mulveys-male-gaze-theory/ [accessed 3 May 2024].

Turner, T. (2012) 'The Social Skin', *Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 2(2), 486–504.

For outcome 4, learners should use ideas and frameworks from anthropology to analyse and understand how people interact with virtual representations of themselves in digital environments. Anthropological concepts that may be relevant to the study of virtual bodies include ideas related to identity, embodiment, performance and social interaction.

Virtual bodies refer to digital representations of people in virtual environments. These representations can take many forms, from simple avatars to more complex virtual reality environments. When anthropological concepts are applied to virtual bodies, they are used to explore how people experience and interact with these representations. For example, ideas related to embodiment might be used to explore how people understand and express their identities in virtual environments, while concepts related to performance might be used to analyse how people use virtual bodies to communicate with others and express their emotions.

You could use ideas related to social interaction to examine how people form relationships and communities in virtual environments, or concepts related to power and inequality to explore how these relationships are structured and maintained.

The work of Amber Case, Denise Carter or Tom Boellstorff, who conducted his research as an avatar in a virtual world, may be useful:

Boellstorff, T. (2008) *Coming of Age in Second Life: An Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Carter, D.M. (2005) 'Living in Virtual Communities: An Ethnography of Human Relationships in Cyberspace.' *Journal of Information Communication and Society*, 8(2), 148–67.

Other useful sources include:

Diah, N. M. et al, (2014) 'An Overview of the Anthropological Theories', *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 10 (1), 155–164.

Lacewing, M. (2008) *The Characteristics Associated with Personhood* [online]. Available at: https://michaellacewing.files.wordpress.com/2017/12/1-characteristicspersonhood.docx [accessed 3 May 2024].

LiPuma, E. (2000) *Encompassing Others*: *The Magic of Modernity in Melanesia*, University of Michigan Press.

Mascia-Lees, F. E. (2011) *A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, Hoboken: Blackwell Publishing.

Menkiti, I. (1984) 'Person and Community in African Traditional Thought', in R. Wright, (ed), *African Philosophy, An Introduction*, Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Ortner, S. B. (1974) ‘Is female to male as nature is to culture?’ in M. Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere (eds), *Woman, Culture, and Society*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 68–87.

Rasmussen, S. (2008) ‘Personhood, Self, Difference, and Dialogue’, *International Journal for Dialogical Science*, Volume 3(1), 31–54.

Roberts, D. (2016) ‘Using Dramaturgy to Better Understand Contemporary Western Tattoos’, *Sociology Compass*, Volume 10(9), 795–804.

Soriano, D. and Medina, V. (2009) *The Body as Language and Expression of the Indigenous Australian Cultural Identity* [online]. Available at: https://revistes.ub.edu/index.php/coolabah/article/download/15729/18845 [accessed 3 May 2024.

Yu, D.W. and Shepard, G.H. (1998) ‘Is Beauty in the Eye of the Beholder?’, *Nature*, Volume 396, 321–322.

Sociology

Sociology A: The Sociological Imagination

The information given here supplements the additional guidance given in the unit specification.

Approaches to assessment

It is essential that you help learners develop the ability to understand society from different perspectives. Inspiring learners towards higher-level reasoning means helping them to gain the intellectual skills they need to move beyond individual ‘troubles’ and see them instead as public ‘issues’ that have collective dimensions to both their causes and their solutions (Mills 1959). You should design assessments that support learners in developing this skill, as a sociological imagination is a cognitive ability. You may require differentiated assessment practice.

Learners could create individual biographies in which they consider their own experiences within social contexts. You could encourage them to explore how their biographies intersect with history and consider how these interactions take place in a particular space and time. You can draw upon interpretation from both sociological and non-sociological perspectives. This should help you to illustrate how a sociological standpoint fosters the connections between private troubles and public issues.

For example, a learner may have experience of migration, and crossed one or many borders. This learner could examine how migration impacted their life and the lives of their relatives in terms of physical, emotional and financial challenges. Then, they could use the sociological perspective to discover the structural forces that resulted in the need to migrate; for example the wider economic, political and social conditions of the country they have left, and comparing this to the country they have migrated to. A learner could review migratory policies and how they influence the migratory experience, along with the overall impact of migration. What follows should be a conversation on how our individual experiences cannot exist or be fully understood

without history and society, and vice versa. Other examples that you could apply the sociological imagination to include:

climate change
poverty
arranged marriage
tattooing and body modification
eating disorders
addiction
abortion
domestic violence and sexual assault
racism

Some topics could upset learners, so it may be beneficial to start developing the sociological imagination with less demanding topics. For example, Kari Marie Norgaard states in the journal article 'The sociological imagination in a time of climate change' (2018) that 'despite rising calls for social science expertise in the face of local weather change, too few sociologists have been engaged in the conversations about how we have arrived at such perilous climatic circumstances, or how society can change course.' You can encourage learners to think about how their own behaviour contributes to climate change, together with aspects of social order between individuals, social norms, cultural mores and political economy. This topic also supports Learning for Sustainability.

In 'Visual Sociology: Using Sociological Images to Develop the Sociological Imagination' (2021), Georgiana Bostean and Lisa Leitz emphasise the growing evidence that demonstrates the effectiveness of digital and visible media in sociological learning and teaching. You could use image essays and blogs to engage learners, as they discover sociology is not only relevant but also connects to their personal lives and experiences. Learners could use photography to document their everyday lives, analyse current events and news using popular media, and use podcasts or other media such as YouTube (Margo Belet's, 2017 work 'The Importance of Relevance to Student Lives: The Impact of Content and Media in Introduction to Sociology' used manipulated videos that showed the use of YouTube engaged disadvantaged students' learning). These strategies strengthen and enhance their essential questioning skills.

Sociological Images is a blog 'presenting brief discussions of compelling and timely imagery that span the breadth of sociological inquiry'. It was developed by sociologist Lisa Wade of Occidental College, Los Angeles. Anyone may submit images for inclusion, such as those of advertisements, products, news coverage or music videos. The blog moderator and guest bloggers write the analysis of the images. Posts stimulate the sociological imagination by evoking questions about the distinction between personal troubles and public issues. For instance, one post exposes the problematic nature of news reporting on terrorism and its use by the state. The author discusses how the reporting is an example of fearmongering, exaggerating the incidence of terror recruitment by showing a rate, when the actual number of cases is very small (Mark G. Stewart, 2018). The Society Pages website is a forum for sociological discourse, engaging the public as well as academics from

various disciplines. The blog is written in an accessible manner, making it ideal for introductory courses. You can use the website to introduce sociological concepts through visuals and to stimulate discussion of those concepts. It is available at https://thesocietypages.org/socimages/ [accessed 3 May 2024].

Other scholars have determined that blogs are a useful learning and teaching strategy (see Julia Davies and Guy Merchant, 2009; Fiona Pearson, 2010). The usefulness of blogs and different social media stems from learner familiarity and derives from educational research that points to the importance of context and applicability of concepts (Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, 1991; Hilary McLellan, 1996).

The integration of visual sociology with the sociology of learning and teaching has demonstrated the importance of using visuals to communicate information and assist students with applying course theory to their daily lives (Cameron T. Whitley, 2013). Such connections are essential to understanding daily life, personal experiences and the sociological imagination.

Sources to help with the sociological imagination

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Foucault, M. (1976) *The History of Sexuality*, New York: Vintage.

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Denzin, N. K. (1990) 'The Sociological Imagination Revisited', *The Sociological Quarterly*, 31 (no.1:1).

Puga, I. and Easthope, R. (2017) *An Analysis of C. Wright Mills's 'The Sociological Imagination'.* London: Routledge.

Information for centres

Equality and inclusion

The units in this qualification are designed to be as fair and as accessible as possible, with no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment.

You should take into account the needs of individual learners when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs is available on the assessment arrangements web page.

Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used in this qualification should be internally verified according to your centre's policies and SQA's guidelines.

SQA carries out external verification to ensure that internal assessment meets the national guidelines for this qualification.

Further information on internal and external verification is available in SQA's Guide to Assessment.

Glossary

SQA credit value: the credit value allocated to a unit gives an indication of the contribution the unit makes to an SQA group award. An SQA credit value of 1 represents approximately 40 hours of programmed learning, teaching and assessment.

SCQF: the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) provides the national common framework for describing programmes of learning and qualifications in Scotland. SCQF terminology is used throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF, visit the SCQF website.

SCQF credit points: SCQF credit points provide a way of describing and comparing the amount of learning required to complete a qualification at a given level of the framework.
1 National Unit credit is equivalent to 6 SCQF credit points. 1 National Unit credit at Advanced Higher and 1 SQA Advanced unit credit (irrespective of level) is equivalent to
8 SCQF credit points.

SCQF levels: the level a qualification is assigned in the framework is an indication of how hard it is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. SQA Advanced Certificates and SQA Advanced Diplomas are available at SCQF levels 7 and 8, respectively. SQA Advanced units are usually at levels 6 to 9 and graded units at level 7 and 8. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2 to 6 and are usually made up of National Units, which are available from SCQF levels 2 to 7.

Information for learners

HNC Social Sciences (SCQF level 7)

This information explains:

what the qualification is about
what you should know or be able to do before you start
what you will need to do during the qualification
opportunities for further learning and employment

Group award information

HNC Social Sciences provides you with a comprehensive grounding in social science disciplines, research methodology and social science-related subjects. This qualification provides several articulation pathways to undergraduate degree programmes in universities across the UK. You may be able to go on to study the Higher National Diploma (HND) in Social Sciences. The qualification also equips you with the knowledge and skills, and personal behaviours (meta-skills) that employers expect from individuals entering employment in a wide range of occupational areas.

You should have good communication skills and an interest in social sciences. It would also be helpful to have some basic digital skills.

HNC Social Sciences contains a mandatory unit: Social Sciences: An Evidence-Based Approach to Social Problems at SCQF level 7. This introduces you to key developments in the social sciences and social science research. You are presented with information on research methodology. You are then able to apply an evidence-based approach to a social problem through planning a research investigation, including evaluating and applying a research method activity as a pilot research investigation.

In this version of NextGen: HNC Social Sciences, you also study between 72 SCQF credit points (9 SQA credits) and 96 SCQF credit points (12 SQA credits) of named social sciences along with the mandatory unit. You study social science disciplines chosen from:

Criminology
Economics
Geography
History
Philosophy
Politics
Psychology
Social Anthropology
Sociology

Each subject has two units that you could study. In these named social sciences units, you study theories, concepts and ideas about society, which encourage you to think about how it operates and how it impacts the lives of individuals. These units help you develop an enquiring and critical mind.

Each named social sciences unit is assessed by an open-book assessment, in which you provide written or oral evidence. There are two assessments in the mandatory unit. One is an open-book project that covers the evidence requirements in the form of a research investigation, and the other is an open-book self-evaluation of your own development of meta-skills within a social science context.

Meta-skills

Throughout HNC Social Sciences, you develop meta-skills to enhance your employability in the social sciences sector.

Meta-skills include self-management, social intelligence and innovation.

You develop these naturally as you take part in a range of learning and teaching activities and produce assessment responses. Improving meta-skills such as organising your time (self-management) and communicating ideas clearly (social intelligence) are useful for future study and employment, as well as during this qualification.

You also develop academic skills, such as citation, referencing and essay-writing skills. This can help you progress to degree-level study.

Learning for Sustainability

Each unit introduces you to Learning for Sustainability ideas, making relevant links to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Appendix — example portfolio for capturing meta-skills and other skills

HNC Social Sciences meta-skills competences and profile portfolio

This profile outlines the range of meta-skills you develop during HNC Social Sciences. The meta-skills listed are important in the vocational areas that social sciences support, as well as in further academic studies in social sciences. These meta-skills support your academic progression and future employment.

As a first step, once your lecturer has outlined what each skill is, use the portfolio table to review each skill to identify if you have previous experience of using it. You do not need to cover every bullet point — they are just prompts.

Decide how confident you feel for each skill on the following scale:

1 very confident
2 quite confident
3 unconfident

For 1 and 2, you should be confident that you can demonstrate the skill in your current studies.

You have several opportunities during the course to stop and review the skills you are demonstrating and developing across all units. When reviewing, please think about the following questions in relation to each skill:

1 Do you understand it? How do you or might you use it? How does it help you to be more effective?
2 How confident are you in using this skill?
3 Can you carry out this skill without thinking much about it or do you focus on the specific aspects needed?
4 How could you practise this skill as you progress through the course?
5 Are there other areas of your life in which you use this skill?

Fill in the portfolio with your ratings and descriptions of your meta-skills development. You do not need to record every occasion that you used a skill, but give a general idea of activities that are helping you to develop it. There are also sections that you can fill out to

show your development of academic skills and knowledge of Learning for Sustainability. These sections are optional, but they are helpful to show your overall development of knowledge and skills. You should reflect at various points as you study, as well as at the end of the qualification.

Self-management

Taking responsibility for your own behaviour and well-being.
Key: 1 = very confident 2 = quite confident 3 = unconfident

Meta-skill	**Initial review (1, 2 or 3)**	**What is the source of evidence for your rating?** **What did you do previously that contributed to you developing this meta-skill?**	**Where and how did you develop or improve the skill during HNC Social Sciences?** You can name specific units and outcomes, or identify activities you do as part of this qualification. Occasionally reflect on how well you are progressing with a skill and if it is impacting your level of confidence. Ask yourself if you should make changes to your action plan as a result of your reflection.	**Review towards the end of the unit (1, 2 or 3)**
Focusing: sorting attention filtering				
Integrity: self-awareness (reflexivity) ethics self-control				

Meta-skill	**Initial review (1, 2 or 3)**	**What is the source of evidence for your rating?** **What did you do previously that contributed to you developing this meta-skill?**	**Where and how did you develop or improve the skill during HNC Social Sciences?** You can name specific units and outcomes, or identify activities you do as part of this qualification. Occasionally reflect on how well you are progressing with a skill and if it is impacting your level of confidence. Ask yourself if you should make changes to your action plan as a result of your reflection.	**Review towards the end of the unit (1, 2 or 3)**
Adapting: adaptability self-learning resilience critical reflection openness				
Initiative: independent thinking decision making courage self-belief self-motivation taking responsibility				

Social intelligence

Being aware of others' feelings, needs and concerns to effectively navigate and negotiate complex social relationships and environments.

Key: 1 = very confident 2 = quite confident 3 = unconfident

Meta-skill	**Initial review (1, 2 or 3)**	**What is the source of evidence for your rating?** **What did you do previously that contributed to you developing this meta-skill?**	**Where and how did you develop or improve the skill during HNC Social Sciences?** You can name specific units and outcomes or identify activities you do as part of this qualification. Occasionally reflect on how well you are progressing with a skill and if it is impacting your level of confidence. Ask yourself if you should make changes to your action plan as a result of your reflection.	**Review towards the end of the unit (1, 2 or 3)**
Communicating: receiving information listening giving information				
Feeling: social conscience empathy				
Collaborating: teamworking and collaboration social perceptiveness				

Meta-skill	**Initial review (1, 2 or 3)**	**What is the source of evidence for your rating?** **What did you do previously that contributed to you developing this meta-skill?**	**Where and how did you develop or improve the skill during HNC Social Sciences?** You can name specific units and outcomes or identify activities you do as part of this qualification. Occasionally reflect on how well you are progressing with a skill and if it is impacting your level of confidence. Ask yourself if you should make changes to your action plan as a result of your reflection.	**Review towards the end of the unit (1, 2 or 3)**
Leading: influencing developing others				

Innovation

The ability to define and create significant positive change.
Key: 1 = very confident 2 = quite confident 3 = unconfident

Meta-skill	Initial review (1, 2 or 3)	What is the source of evidence for your rating? What did you do previously that contributed to you developing this meta-skill?	Where and how did you develop or improve the skill during HNC Social Sciences? You can name specific units and outcomes or identify activities you do as part of this qualification. Occasionally reflect on how well you are progressing with a skill and if it is impacting your level of confidence. Ask yourself if you should make changes to your action plan as a result of your reflection.	Review towards the end of the unit (1, 2 or 3)
Curiosity: observation questioning information sourcing problem recognition				
Creativity: imagination idea generation visualising having a maker mentality				

Meta-skill	**Initial review (1, 2 or 3)**	**What is the source of evidence for your rating?** **What did you do previously that contributed to you developing this meta-skill?**	**Where and how did you develop or improve the skill during HNC Social Sciences?** You can name specific units and outcomes or identify activities you do as part of this qualification. Occasionally reflect on how well you are progressing with a skill and if it is impacting your level of confidence. Ask yourself if you should make changes to your action plan as a result of your reflection.	**Review towards the end of the unit (1, 2 or 3)**
Sense-making: pattern recognition holistic thinking synthesis opportunity recognition analysis				
Critical thinking: deconstruction logical thinking judgement				

Academic skills

Key: 1 = very confident 2 = quite confident 3 = unconfident

Academic skill	**Initial review (1, 2 or 3)**	**What is the source of evidence for your rating?**	**Where and how did you develop or improve the skill during HNC Social Sciences?** You can name specific units and outcomes or identify activities you do as part of this qualification. If you need to develop any specific areas, you can add these to your action plan.	**Review towards the end of the unit (1, 2 or 3)**
Plan and manage own work effectively and efficiently — time management				
Keep track of work schedules and deadlines by multi-tasking				
Digital skills — use a range of ICT and digital means to support work (data literacy)				

Academic skill	**Initial review (1, 2 or 3)**	**What is the source of evidence for your rating?**	**Where and how did you develop or improve the skill during HNC Social Sciences?** You can name specific units and outcomes or identify activities you do as part of this qualification. If you need to develop any specific areas, you can add these to your action plan.	**Review towards the end of the unit (1, 2 or 3)**
Use an appropriate approach to questioning to gain information to draw conclusions from				
Use appropriate essay writing and referencing and citation conventions				
Present work to a high standard (oral or written)				
Use and apply a range of numerical and statistical skills				

Academic skill	**Initial review (1, 2 or 3)**	**What is the source of evidence for your rating?**	**Where and how did you develop or improve the skill during HNC Social Sciences?** You can name specific units and outcomes or identify activities you do as part of this qualification. If you need to develop any specific areas, you can add these to your action plan.	**Review towards the end of the unit (1, 2 or 3)**
Use feedback from peers and staff to improve work				
Set targets for personal development — you can use the 'Action plan for personal development' for this				

Other skills

List any other skills you have developed that are not listed in the meta-skills or academic skills tables.

Key: 1 = very confident 2 = quite confident 3 = unconfident

Skill	**Where and how did you develop or improve the skill during HNC Social Sciences?** You can name specific units and outcomes or identify activities you have done as part of this qualification.	**Review towards the end of the unit (1, 2 or 3)**

Learning for Sustainability

Which of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are you aware of and comfortable talking about?

The units you study in this qualification refer to the SDGs, as many of them are relevant to the social sciences subjects. It is useful to note down the SDGs you have learned about or that have come up in discussions. You should fill in the initial review column before you are taught about the SDGs in this qualification.

Goal group	**UN Sustainable Development Goals**	**Initial review at start of HNC** Tick those you are comfortable talking about	**Review towards the end of the qualification** Tick those you are comfortable talking about
Health and well-being	**2: Zero hunger** End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.		
Health and well-being	**3: Good health and well-being** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.		
Health and well-being	**6: Clean water and sanitation** Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.		
Biosphere	**13: Climate action** Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.		

Goal group	UN Sustainable Development Goals	**Initial review at start of HNC** Tick those you are comfortable talking about	**Review towards the end of the qualification** Tick those you are comfortable talking about
Biosphere	**14: Life below water** Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.		
Biosphere	**15: Life on land** Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.		
Equality	**1: No poverty** End poverty in all its forms everywhere.		
Equality	**4: Quality education** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.		
Equality	**5: Gender equality** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.		
Equality	**10: Reduced inequalities** Reduce inequality within and among countries.		

Goal group	UN Sustainable Development Goals	Initial review at start of HNC Tick those you are comfortable talking about	Review towards the end of the qualification Tick those you are comfortable talking about
Society	**8: Decent work and economic growth** Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.		
Society	**9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure** Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, and foster innovation.		
Society	**16: Peace, justice and strong institutions** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.		
Resource stewardship	**7: Affordable and clean energy** Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.		
Resource stewardship	**11: Sustainable cities and communities** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.		
Resource stewardship	**12: Responsible consumption and production** Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.		

Goal group	UN Sustainable Development Goals	Initial review at start of HNC Tick those you are comfortable talking about	Review towards the end of the qualification Tick those you are comfortable talking about
Partnerships	**17: Partnerships for the goals** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.		

Action plan for personal development

What do you want to achieve based on your review of skills?	What do you need to do to achieve it?	How will you know you have been successful (measurement)?	Target date	Review how well you have done — is further action necessary? If so, what?
Example: Improve oral presentation skills.	Carry out at least two presentations. Practise presenting orally. Learn how to produce effective digital slides (ask your lecturer for a resource on this).	Feedback from lecturer and peers. Assessment result.	January 2025	I was very nervous in the first presentation and ran over the allotted time. I will need more practice to make sure I keep to the time. I will use the notes section on digital slides next time with key facts to help.

What do you want to achieve based on your review of skills?	What do you need to do to achieve it?	How will you know you have been successful (measurement)?	Target date	Review how well you have done — is further action necessary? If so, what?

Note: Your plan can include maintaining skills that you are already good at.

What changes are you making to your development plan based on your reflections, and feedback you have received from your peers and lecturers?

For future development

Based on your ratings, look at the three categories of self-management, social intelligence and innovation, and suggest up to three areas that you plan to further develop your skills in.

Skill	Why would it be useful to develop this further?
Self-management	
Social intelligence	
Innovation	

Learner's signature: _____ Date: _____

Tutor's signature: _____ Date: _____

What the meta-skills mean in your programme of study

Self-management	
Focusing sorting attention filtering	You need clear focus to complete assessments and projects. This includes: the ability to maintain a sense of focus on the job at hand, despite lots of competing information paying attention to the present
Integrity self-awareness (reflexivity) ethics self-control	Integrity is essential for communicating honestly with your peers and lecturers. It also helps when issues arise, as it can help reduce tension. Integrity includes: having a strong sense of personal values acting in an honest way
Adapting adaptability self-learning resilience critical reflection openness	It is important to be adaptable as this helps you to work in different ways than you may be used to. Using different technologies and digital means of communicating or carrying out assessments can be hard to grasp. Having resilience will help if you face setbacks or need more support to complete assessments. Adapting includes: being able to reflect on your performance to support improvements in your approach learning new things

Self-management	
Initiative independent thinking decision making courage self-belief self-motivation responsibility	Improving processes and finding solutions can be easier if you develop the skill of initiative. This includes: being able to read and think about theories and research evidence to help you make decisions about what is valuable information and what is misinformation being able to motivate yourself and have self-belief to ensure you stick to tasks and make sufficient progress getting started on things

Social intelligence	
Communicating receiving information listening giving information	Clear communication is a significant skill to ensure you can explain ideas, work effectively with others and produce suitable assessment responses that your lecturer can understand. It also helps you to share your ideas and opinions on theories and topics you cover in this qualification. Remember to listen!
Feeling social conscience empathy	Feeling helps you to fully understand others' needs, as well as being able to respond appropriately to people, situations and facts. Consider your impact on others.
Collaborating teamworking and collaboration social perceptiveness	Collaborating is vital when working with your peers or in teams. Being able to take account of others when you plan and carry out tasks is useful. Collaborating also includes building relationships.

Social intelligence	
Leading influencing developing others	Having the skill of leading helps you to make decisions in good time, as well as taking responsibility for tasks. It also includes the support you give to others and being able to have a clear vision.

Innovation	
Curiosity observation questioning information sourcing problem recognition	Curiosity is an important skill for all social scientists. Seeking knowledge about theories of human behaviour is an important part of the work on this course. Curiosity includes: questioning motives, ideas, information and research evidence the desire to learn new things or information
Creativity imagination idea generation visualising maker mentality	Creativity can help you to improve processes and ways of working. This includes thinking of new ways to address problems or answer questions.
Sense-making pattern recognition holistic thinking synthesis opportunity recognition analysis	Sense-making is useful in social sciences because it includes: gaining an understanding of why people behave as they do developing the ability to blend a range of ideas, considering and evaluating them identifying wider themes and patterns

Innovation	
Critical thinking deconstruction logical thinking judgement	The ability to think clearly, making logical connections and reasoned judgements, is key to being an effective social scientist. Good critical thinkers discuss, debate and draw conclusions based on evidence. This skill also includes the ability to evaluate information.

Administrative information

Published: December 2024 (version 0.2)

History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date
0.2	Changed group award code and title on assessor and verifier qualifications on page 79.	December 2024

Note: please check SQA's website to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this guide, and check SQA's APS Navigator to ensure you are using the most up-to-date qualification structure.

If a unit is revised:

no new centres can be approved to offer the previous version of the unit
centres should only enter learners for the previous version of the unit if they can complete it before its finish date

For further information on SQA's Next Generation Higher National Qualifications please contact nextgen@sqa.org.uk.