Next Generation Higher National Educator Guide

Higher National Diploma in HND Social Sciences

Group award code GV23 48

Valid from session 24–25

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

The Higher National Diploma (HND) in Social Sciences helps learners to develop a deep knowledge and understanding of a range of social science subjects and themes, as well as higher-order transferable skills and academic skills prized by higher education institutions (HEIs), and valued in both academic and vocational environments.

The qualification's title HND Social Sciences reflects the competences of the qualification, as well as progression and articulation pathways in higher education. The mandatory, named social sciences and optional units of the HND give learners a secure and comprehensive grounding in social science disciplines.

Learners develop subject-specific knowledge and skills to enable progression into degree programmes. They also develop a wide range of meta-skills, and have opportunities to develop their knowledge of learning for sustainability, particularly social sustainability, which fits well with all social science units.

Structure

Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) are designed at SCQF level 8 and consist of 120 SCQF credit points (15 SQA credits). HNDs must incorporate at least 80 SCQF credit points
(10 SQA credits) at SCQF level 8.

HNDs contain 15 SQA credits at SCQF level 8 that can be used flexibly to increase opportunities for learners returning to education. Refer to the 'Meta-skills' section of this guide for more information.

HND Social Sciences gives learners the opportunity to develop meta-skills across all units, supporting the development of professional behaviours and self-awareness, and increasing their employability. Evidence from engagement in the development of meta-skills contributes to the grading of the HND.

Learners have opportunities in all units to develop their knowledge and understanding of sustainable development and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). HND Social Sciences includes a mandatory project unit of 24 SCQF credit points
(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 the mandatory outcomes for
meta-skills, and Learning for Sustainability linked to the UN SDGs and relevant to unit content.

Framework

The HND is made up of the following mandatory unit and four of the named social science units.

Mandatory unit

Unit code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J7D4 48	Social Sciences: Social Policy	3	24	8

Named social science units

Unit code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J80N 48	Criminology — Themes and Criminal Cases	3	24	8
J80M 48	Economics: Themes from a Global Perspective	3	24	8
J7D8 48	History: Themes from a Historical Perspective	3	24	8
J7D7 48	Politics: Themes from a Political Perspective	3	24	8
J7D5 48	Psychology: Critical Analysis and Research of Themes	3	24	8
J80J 48	Social Anthropology: Thematic Ethnography	3	24	8
J7D6 48	Sociology: Thematic and Critical Approaches	3	24	8

There may be opportunities to add further social sciences in future; for example, units in Geography or Philosophy.

Aims of the group award(s)

HND Social Sciences aims to help learners develop a deep knowledge and understanding of a range of social science subjects and themes. Learners develop higher-order transferable meta-skills, including academic skills to help them progress to further study and employment.

General aims

1 Develop skills in planning, analysing and synthesising
2 Reach conclusions through independent research
3 Develop essential, transferable 21st century meta-skills to function and thrive in a modern employment environment
4 Develop skills to work collaboratively with others, as well as independently, to respond to the needs of a constantly changing environment
5 Develop digital literacy by taking opportunities to use a variety of digital tools and technologies to communicate and achieve learning goals
6 Allow progression to employment or articulation to higher education

Specific aims

1 Develop a questioning and evidence-based approach to social science topics, themes or debates
2 Reflect critically on the contribution of different social science disciplines and theorists to the study of human behaviour and society, demonstrating in-depth knowledge of competing perspectives, theories, viewpoints and evidence
3 Demonstrate professional practice and behaviours in a social science context
4 Deepen engagement in debates in the social sciences; developing skills of gathering, interpreting, and using evidence to evaluate arguments of others

Group award structure

HND Social Sciences contains 15 SQA credits (120 SCQF credit points), with all 15 SQA credits at SCQF level 8.

All HND Social Sciences learners study the mandatory common core unit: Social Sciences: Social Policy. This is the project unit of 3 SQA credits.

Each learner must also study four further social science subjects (a total of 12 SQA credits) from the named social sciences units to complete the programme. Each subject unit has 3 SQA credits. All units contribute to the general and specific aims of the group award.

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

Grading requires 12 out of 15 SQA credits. That will be the mandatory 3-SQA credit common core project unit Social Sciences: Social Policy and three of the named social sciences units.

Who is this group award for?

This group award is suitable for learners who have completed HNC Social Sciences, as HEIs normally require learners to have the knowledge and skills from the HNC alongside those of the HND to progress into year 2 or year 3 of a degree programme. We would advise school leavers, adult returners, those changing career and those looking for specific routes into degree programmes to study the HNC first. This ensures learners have the underpinning knowledge and skills for studying the HND.

Part-time study

Part-time learners can study the HND 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 for HND

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:
 	
• HNC Social Sciences
• Higher Education Certificate in social science subjects
• good communication skills
• previous study of social sciences, preferably at SCQF level 7 or other similar qualifications
	• Learners need all 15 SQA credits from the HND to aid progression opportunities.
	• The HND Social Sciences Qualification has different articulation pathways to undergraduate degree programmes across the UK. Learners can progress to further study, often directly to second- or third-year degree programmes, in subjects such as:
	  ○ Social Sciences or Applied Social Sciences
	  ○ specific social science subjects, such as Psychology (only year 2), Sociology, Politics, Geography
	  ○ humanities subjects, such as History
	  ○ 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 and recruitment Some of these areas require additional post-graduate 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

Many HEIs recognise the value of HND Social Sciences for articulation to year 3 of degree programmes in social sciences, and year 2 or year 3 in specific subject disciplines related to the named social sciences. Learners may be able to progress to year 3 of a degree programme if they have 240 SCQF credit points. This is likely to come from studying HNC Social Sciences as well as HND Social Sciences, a study path that reinforces knowledge and skills.

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 studying individual HND Social Sciences units from a previous version of the qualification (that is, not NextGen: HN) might have covered similar skills and subject content at SCQF level 8. Any credit transfer of individual units should be supplemented with information on what meta-skills learners developed when they studied the existing units, as the content should be similar. Credit transfer is dependent on the topic or theme coverage in a unit, and what meta-skills (transferable and academic skills) the learner developed.

Credit transfer possibilities by unit

Existing unit	New unit	Comment	Possible credit transfer
J038 35 Social Science: Research Issues	J7D4 48 Social Sciences: Social Policy	New unit is 3 SQA credits, so outcomes from existing 1-SQA credit unit only contribute to a small part of the new unit.	No.
FM43 35 Criminology	J80N 48 Criminology: Themes and Criminal Cases	The current level 8 unit is only 2 SQA credits, and the new unit is 3 SQA credits. The focus of the new unit is different from the previous level 8 unit.	No.
J0LW 35 Economics C: Applied Economics — The Global Perspective	J80M 48 Economics: Themes from a Global Perspective	Tests similar skills. Some of the areas of study would match with the themes in the new unit. ‘Global minority’ and ‘global majority’ used in place of ‘least-developed countries’ and ‘developed countries’ in the new unit.	You could consider credit transfer if the learner has achieved both C and D units. Check topics covered fit with the new unit. Learners should provide examples of meta-skills covered in the existing units’ learning and teaching activities. Meta-skills may have been identified as transferable skills or academic skills or similar.

Existing unit	New unit	Comment	Possible credit transfer
FJ35 35 Economics D: Economics Today	J80M 48 Economics: Themes from a Global Perspective	Tests similar skills. Some of the areas of study would match with the themes in the new unit. 'Global minority' and 'global majority' used in place of 'least-developed countries' and 'developed countries' in the new unit.	You could consider credit transfer if the learner has achieved both C and D units. Check topics covered fit with the new unit. Learners should provide examples of meta-skills covered in the existing units' learning and teaching activities. Meta-skills may have been identified as transferable skills or academic skills or similar.
J0LS 35 History C: Evaluating Topics within a Historical Period	J7D8 48 History: Themes from a Historical Perspective	Covers only two topics. One assessed. Tests similar skills. Most topics would fit in with themes covered in the new unit.	You could consider credit transfer if the learner has achieved both C and D units. Check topics covered fit with new unit. Learners should provide examples of meta-skills covered in the existing units' learning and teaching activities. Meta-skills may have been identified as transferable skills or academic skills or similar.

Existing unit	New unit	Comment	Possible credit transfer
FK7T 35 History D: Specialist Study	J7D8 48 History: Themes from a Historical Perspective	One topic covered. One assessed. Tests similar skills. Most topics would fit in with themes covered in the new unit.	You could consider credit transfer if the learner has achieved both C and D units. Check topics covered fit with new unit. Learners should provide examples of meta-skills covered in the existing units' learning and teaching activities. Meta-skills may have been identified as transferable skills or academic skills or similar.
J0NB 35 Politics C: The United States and European Union	J7D7 48 Politics: Themes from a Political Perspective	US and EU are two comparative political contexts. However, neither are applied to a theme. Tests some skills that are in common, but focus is on the structures, but not the approaches.	No. Partial skills and subject matter matches, but no evidence of engagement in themes-based learning in the existing C unit. No focus on approaches in the unit. Learners would benefit from taking part in learning and teaching for this unit and to complete the assessment task.

Existing unit	New unit	Comment	Possible credit transfer
FK84 35 Politics D: Political Representation	J7D7 48 Politics: Themes from a Political Perspective	Political representation is one of the themes in the new unit. It also touches on the theme of power. Tests some skills in common, but the focus is on the systems being used, not the political approaches.	No. While there are partial skills and subject matter matches, there is no evidence of engagement in themes-based learning in the existing C unit. No focus on approaches in the unit. Learners would benefit from taking part in learning and teaching for this unit and from completing the assessment task.
J0NC 35 Psychology C: Analysis and Evaluation of Psychological Topics	J7D5 48 Psychology: Critical Analysis and Research of Themes	Similar skills being tested that fits with outcome 1 and its evidence requirements. Covers four topics plus two debates, which would fit with many of the themes.	You could consider credit transfer if the learner has achieved both C and D units. Check topics covered fit with new unit. Learners should provide examples of meta-skills covered in the existing units' learning and teaching activities. Meta-skills may have been identified as transferable skills or academic skills or similar.

Existing unit	New unit	Comment	Possible credit transfer
FK8C 35 Psychology D: The Research Process in Psychology	J7D5 48 Psychology: Critical Analysis and Research of Themes	Outcomes match with outcomes 2, 3 and 4 of new unit.	You could consider credit transfer if the learner has achieved both C and D units. Check topics covered fit with new unit. Learners should provide examples of meta-skills covered in the existing units' learning and teaching activities. Meta-skills may have been identified as transferable skills or academic skills or similar.
Not applicable	J80J 48 Social Anthropology: Thematic Ethnography	This is the first unit in this subject at level 8. There is no corresponding unit at level 8.	No.
J0NA 35 Sociology C: Analysing and Evaluating Sociological Debates	J7D6 48 Sociology: Thematic and Critical Approaches	Outcomes fit well with outcome 2 and outcome 3 of the new unit. Most topics in existing unit could fit in well with themes in the new unit. Covers three topics.	You could consider credit transfer if the learner has achieved both C and D units. Check topics covered fit with new unit. Learners should provide examples of meta-skills covered in the existing units' learning and teaching activities. Meta-skills may have been identified as transferable skills or academic skills or similar.

Existing unit	New unit	Comment	Possible credit transfer
FK8P 35 Sociology D: Specialist Study	J7D6 48 Sociology: Thematic and Critical Approaches	The specialist study fits well with outcome 1 of the new unit and its evidence requirements. Covers one theorist, topic or study in depth.	You could consider credit transfer if the learner has achieved both C and D units. Check topics covered fit with new unit. Learners should provide examples of meta-skills covered in the existing units' learning and teaching activities. Meta-skills may have been identified as transferable skills or academic skills or similar.

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

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Information and Communication 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, journals and presentations, all using digital tools • use a virtual learning environment (VLE)
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 their peers on 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 their 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 is 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: in each social science subject, learners sort information into a cohesive narrative to understand the relationship between the various perspectives. You should ensure learners can access suitable reading materials and sources to encourage them to read and think about theories and research evidence. Consulting sources will help them to make decisions about what is valuable information and what is misinformation. Any activity in social sciences that requires learners to read and discuss theories or research supports learners' development of this meta-skill.
- Integrity: learners can take part in discussions on the importance of integrity in the social sciences. In the mandatory unit, you can encourage learners to act ethically

in their project work. Create a learning activity on the academic skill of citations and referencing for assessments to support the development of this meta-skill. You can highlight to learners the need for academic rigour in all that they do on the HND course.

- 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 development of meta-skills across all units.
- Initiative: in the common core unit, ask learners to get started on things as early as possible, as this will support the development of their decision-making skills and
self-motivation. Learners can read and think about theories and research evidence, or use sources to help them decide what is valuable information and what is misinformation. You should make sure they know how to use your centre's library facilities. Organise 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: you can ask learners to listen to information on different theories or perspectives, research and sources related to the chosen themes. Explaining aspects of a theme to one another helps learners 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). In other subjects, you could get learners to work in groups to present aspects of perspectives, theories or historical events.
- Feeling: learners need to show empathy when carrying out primary research with human participants, such as in psychology or in the mandatory unit. You should coach learners in briefing and debriefing participants, and understand and anticipate factors that may unintentionally cause them distress. You can support their development of feeling by giving them time to discuss theories and express opinions to help them to understand other perspectives. You should ask learners to respect one another's viewpoint in discussions.
- Leading: you can give responsibility to learners in a formative task, encouraging them to take account of others' perspectives, and to share information in a useful way. You can use the jigsaw technique of learning, 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 to analyse points in an oral presentation. They can show creativity in producing materials for the research investigation task.
- Sense-making: in the mandatory 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 can ask learners to give a presentation to their peers on a theme, topic or policy, including an explanation of how a specific social policy was influenced by research evidence.
- Critical thinking: in history, you could ask learners to use sources of information to help them discuss or debate different interpretations of a historical issue or event, and draw conclusions. Learners should use primary or secondary 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.

Learners are more likely to complete activities and assessments on time if they plan them. You can model good planning for your learners by sharing a clear lesson plan with them, noting the time allocated to different activities. Creating a schedule for assessment across the whole course can also support their planning skills. You can discuss how best to make time for studying, reading theories and carrying out internet searches to help learners focus on the specific activities required for success. You can encourage them 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 HEIs' websites include advice on how to create a useful study plan, with some also giving templates.

Some of the units in this qualification assess learners' knowledge and skills through a project. The main project is in the mandatory common core unit Social Sciences: Social Policy. This 3-credit unit involves a large project assessing outcomes 1 to 3. You can advise learners of suggested timings for this unit assessment, and encourage them to plan when and how they complete each section. Learners could devise their own timing and deadlines for this project (while still complying with unit completion requirements), which would support their development of initiative as a meta-skill.

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

Learners can discuss how to operationalise the research question or hypothesis, developing their social intelligence meta-skills of communicating, feeling and collaborating. They decide on their 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, each learner should propose a specific piece of research, showing a plan with a basic research process, identifying specific steps to be taken, and providing reasons for their choices.

Learners further develop the meta-skills of critical thinking, using judgement and logical thinking by interpreting and analysing key findings and information.

Planning is important in outcome 4 of the mandatory common core unit Social Sciences: Social Policy. 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 will help them to identify gaps in their knowledge and how they use meta-skills. You could do this review in week 3 or 4.

There is a project in the unit Psychology: Critical Analysis and Research of Themes, which is used to assess all outcomes. To help learners complete it on time, you can ask them to create a plan to decide on a suitable topic and specific research, carry out a literature review, organise any collaboration meetings, prepare materials, collect data, and analyse and interpret results. Other units may also have involve learners doing a project to meet the evidence requirements. Planning is 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 discussions 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

You do not assess learners 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).

You assess learners on evidence that they have gone through a process of developing their meta-skills. This process includes 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 generate 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 on all 12 meta-skills and provide some justification for their opinions based on the work they do 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 those meta-skills most relevant to them.
- A personal plan for the learner's own meta-skills development. This should include goals and intended actions or strategies to develop meta-skills (one in each heading).
- A record of activities to develop and demonstrate meta-skills. This can be a straightforward checklist of coursework, experience, workshop activities, research, or discussion, as appropriate to this qualification.
- Examples of reflective practice to monitor and assess the meta-skills being developed. These should 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.

Learners may choose to keep an ongoing portfolio of reflection as a valuable part of their personal development. This approach may be helpful to those who find it difficult to reflect once time has elapsed. You could plan in time and activities that focus specifically on reflection for the mid-point and end-point of the course. You could combine these with academic or guidance tutorials, feedback on other assessments and project reviews. You could structure these reflective pause points around a repetition of the self-assessment exercises and justifications, and a reconsideration of goals, actions and strategies. At SCQF level 8, learners' reflections should be more than simple or singular reasons backing self-assessment. Learners should reflect on their understanding of the ways in which meta-skills, experience 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. They should reflect on the three categories of self-management, social intelligence and innovation, focusing on those meta-skills most relevant to them. Their evidence can take any suitable form or medium.

Learners can use any type of portfolio 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, and to summarise them in an assessable format for outcome 4 of the unit Social Sciences: Social Policy. They can choose to record this in a podcast format, write in a blog, or use any other method that would capture their information. Learners do not need to record every activity they do in every class, but they should reflect on the many opportunities they have to develop meta-skills across the course. You should encourage learners to record their development digitally.

You could encourage learners to use a learning journal for meta-skills self-reflection. They may have already done this when they studied the HNC. You can share the following notes with learners on using a learning journal if they are not already familiar with the process.

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 HND 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 job applications.
- 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.

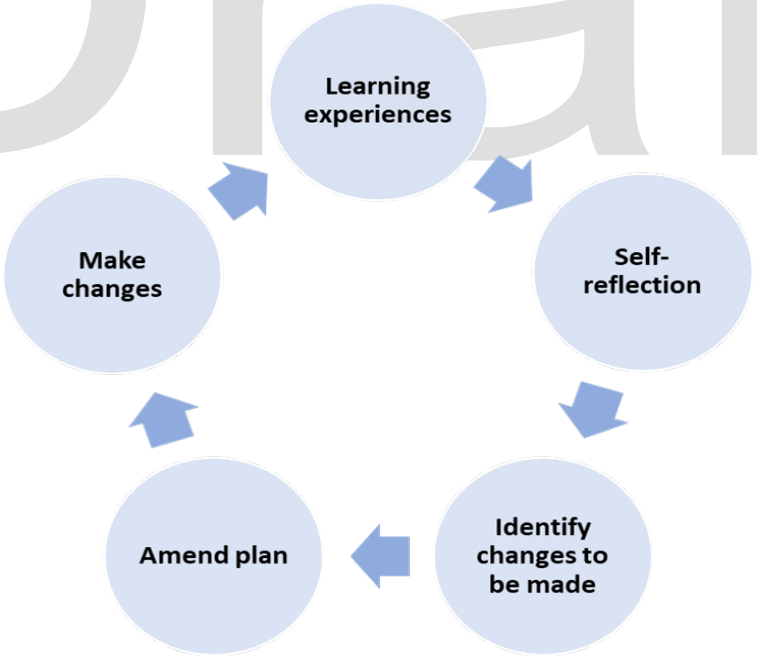
What is self-reflection?

Self-reflection is a deliberate practice where you examine how you are performing the tasks and activities that are part of your HND, 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 feeds into your next learning experiences, and forms the basis of further self-reflection.



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 8 May 2024].
- SQA Academy NextGen: HN — Meta-skills for learners modules. Available from: https://www.sqaacademy.org.uk/course/view.php?id=1012 [accessed 8 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 8 May 2024].
- UCD Teaching & Learning Resources. ‘Learning Journals and Logs’. Available from: https://www.ucd.ie/teaching/t4media/learning_journals_logs.pdf [accessed 8 May 2024].

Learners can focus their meta-skills development on academic skills, as HEIs want learners to recognise and apply these skills in post-HN studies. You can shape delivery and assessment to help learners develop academic skills, such as time management,
multi-tasking ability, digital skills, essay-writing skills and questioning ability. You can design formative and summative activities and assessments that encourage learners to practise those skills that they need to progress to the next level of study.

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

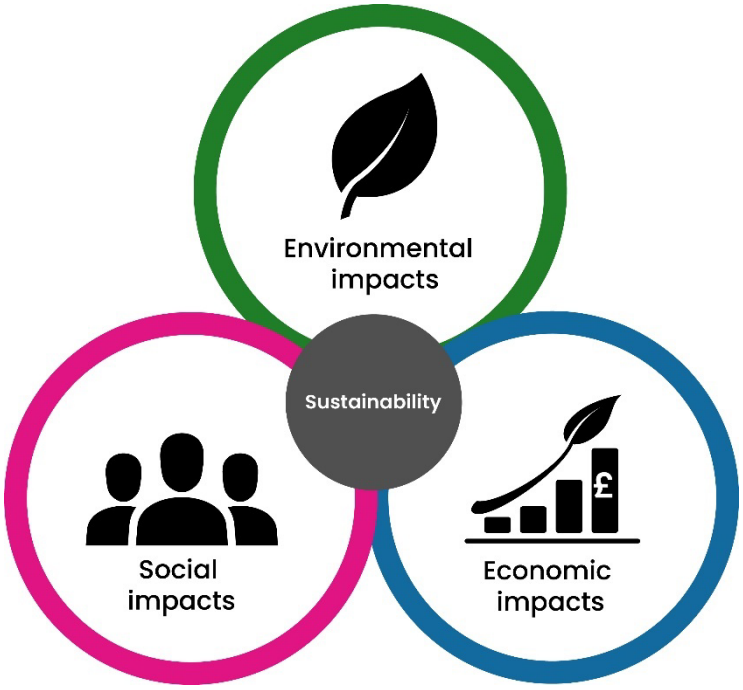
Central to these aims is a need for familiarity with both the SDGs and the concept of sustainability (which is the need to ensure a balance between economic growth, environmental stewardship and social well-being). Knowledge and understanding of current industry practices and behaviours, and consideration 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 as an outcome in Social Sciences: Social Policy. 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 SDGs to social sustainability, economic sustainability or environmental sustainability within different social sciences.



Three pillars of sustainability

The world faces many global challenges that can have local, national, and international impacts. These impacts can be grouped into 'the three pillars of sustainability'.

The three pillars are:

- Environmental stewardship — reflecting the need for responsible and conscientious management of Earth's natural resources, and for the protection of the environment
- Social sustainability — referring to a society's ability to maintain and enhance the well-being and quality of life of its citizens; it involves creating an equitable and just society that promotes social cohesion, protects human rights, and ensures that everyone has access to basic needs and opportunities
- Economic sustainability — balancing economic development with the preservation of natural resources, social well-being and the needs of future generations

All three pillars are of equal importance. Achieving sustainability requires collective action from individuals, businesses, governments, and organisations at local, national, and international levels. It involves making conscious choices and adopting practices that minimise negative impacts on the environment, promote social equity, and contribute to
long-term economic sustainability.

To address global challenges and promote sustainability, the United Nations established the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a shared blueprint for people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership.

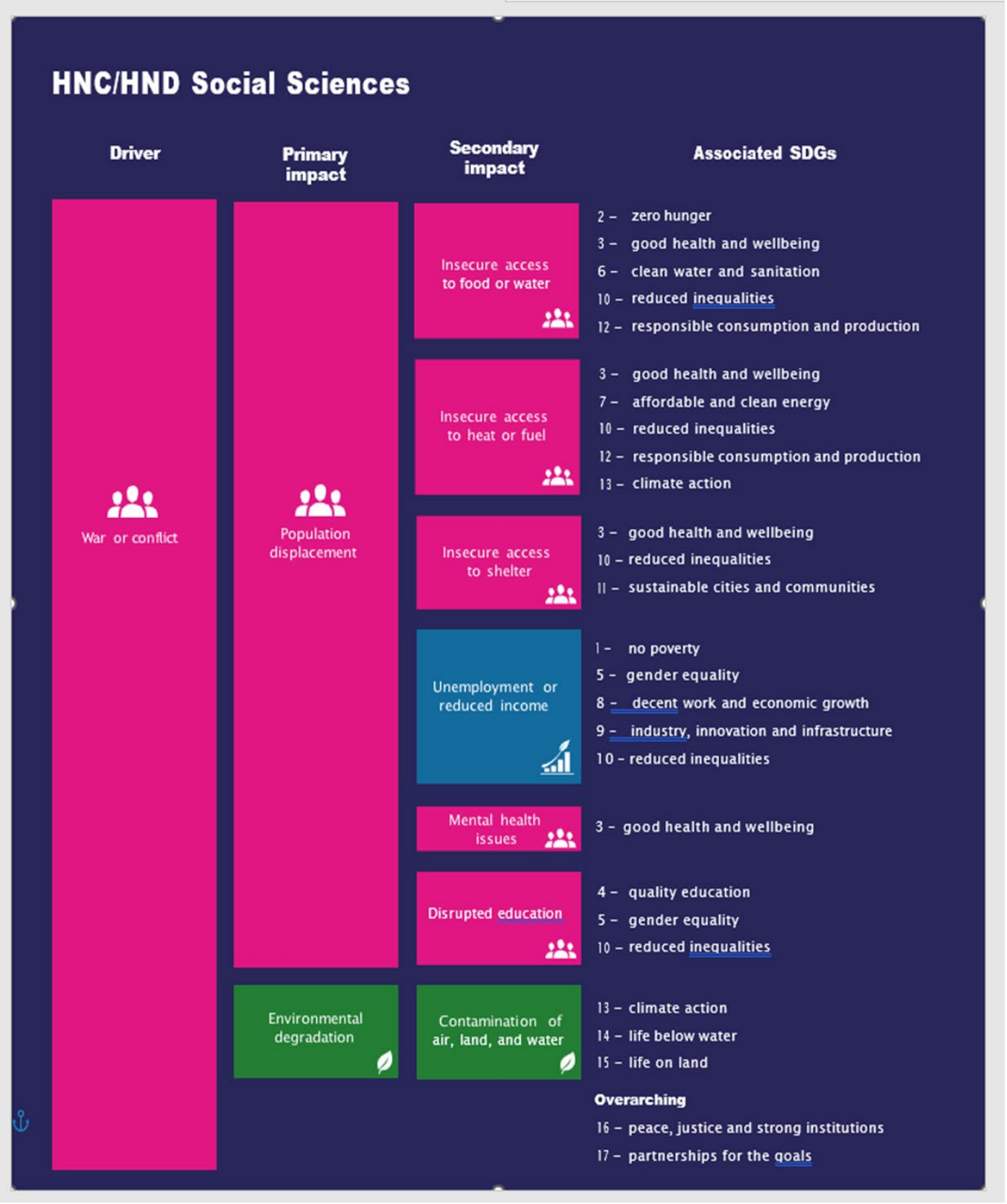
At its heart is a set of 17 goals (Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs), which aim to stimulate action by 2030 in areas of critical importance for humanity and the

planet. Behind each goal is a set of specific targets against which progress towards the individual goals can be monitored.

The following infographic displays drivers, impacts, secondary impacts and associated sustainable development goals linked to one aspect of social science: war or conflict.

Although wars or conflicts may differ in scale and intensity, they often share common impacts such as population displacement and environmental degradation. These two particular impacts are not mutually exclusive; a population on the move can cause significant environmental degradation, and vice versa.

Impacts of war or conflict, and how they align with SDGs



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 8 May 2024].
- EAUC (The Alliance for Sustainability Leadership in Education) Scotland. Available at: https://www.eauc.org.uk/what_we_do [accessed 8 May 2023].
- Education Scotland information and resources. Available at: https://education.gov.scot/resources/a-summary-of-learning-for-sustainability-resources/ [accessed 1 May 2024].
- The General Teaching Council Scotland (GTCS) has a Learning for Sustainability Hub, designed to help teachers and lecturers LfS and how it relates to the Professional Standards for Scotland's teachers. Available at: https://www.gtcs.org.uk/news/gtc-scotland-and-learning-for-sustainability-launch-resources-to-help-teachers-engage-with-learning-for-sustainability-and-their-professional-standards/ [accessed 8 May 2023].
- GTCS Hub materials include a series of self-directed Professional Learning modules to explore LfS. They introduce LfS and help readers understand the nature of and context for it in Scotland and globally. Available at: https://www.gtcs.org.uk/resource/making-learning-for-sustainability-part-of-my-teaching [accessed on 8 May 2024].
- Learning for Sustainability Scotland, Scotland's United Nations University-recognised centre of expertise on education for sustainable development. Available at: https://learningforsustainabilityscotland.org/ [accessed: 8 May 2024].
- *Nations United: Urgent Solutions for Urgent Times* helps give context to the UN sustainability goals. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVWHuJOmaEk [accessed 8 May 2024].
- Reporting Hub for the SDGs in Scotland and in the UK. Available at: https://globalgoals.scot/report-hub/ [accessed 8 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 8 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 8 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 8 May 2024].

Learning for Sustainability — HND Social Sciences Reflective Framework

You should refer to the SDGs in the units, as many are relevant to social science subjects. Learners should 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 SDGs when they arise. You can 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 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 being studied. Consider how you could integrate this aspect into this subject context. What activities should you include in a learning and teaching plan to highlight this development goal?

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 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 learners are studying. Consider how you could integrate this aspect into this subject context. What activities should you include in a learning and teaching plan to 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 — Reducing inequalities:** Reduce income inequality within and among countries.	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 being. Consider how you could integrate this aspect into this subject context. What activities should you include in a learning and teaching plan to 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 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 being studied. Consider how you could integrate this aspect into this subject context. What activities should you include in a learning and teaching plan to 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 to highlight this development goal?

Goal group	Description	UN Sustainable Development Goals	Relevant meta-skills and academic skills	Relevant class activities
Partnership	In this goal group, there are opportunities to learn about the potential of cooperation 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 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 to highlight this development goal?

Example of reflective framework filled in for unit: Psychology: Critical Analysis and Research of Themes

Goal group	Description	UN Sustainable Development Goals relevant to this unit	Relevant meta-skills or 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.	**3 — Good health and well-being for people**: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.	Choose from: • **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	Learners work in groups, using specific internet sources to explain specific contemporary psychological theories related to a chosen theme, such as Theoretical diversity of psychology. Each group focuses on a different theory. They then give an oral presentation to the class on the chosen theory. Class discussion on the importance of integrity in research. Examples drawn from classical studies; for example, Milgram. This fits with the overall course theme of Ethics. It could also fit with Power and control or History and social change. Learners prepare a poster or essay showing how memory works (for the theme of Cognitive processes). You should give clear information on referencing, and ensure learners reference as part of the exercise. Learners explain the poster to each other in a peer exercise.

Anti-racism within NextGen: HN

The Scottish Government has made anti-racism within education a priority. SQA is taking on the recommendations of the Curriculum Reform Sub-group (https://www.gov.scot/publications/curriculum-reform-sub-group/) to ensure curriculum content is anti-racist. We are seeking 'opportunities to meaningfully include and articulate race equality and anti-racism', including ethnic minority history, taking into consideration marginalised perspectives in various contexts. Broadening the curriculum does not negate or restrict knowledge that qualifications previously focused on. Instead, it adds to the story, and questions whether a Eurocentric approach meets the needs of a complex and changing world. Engaging a critical lens allows for a 'zoom in/ zoom out' approach, which encourages learners to analyse detail in relation to a global picture. This is where evidence-based study comes in.

You and your learners can explore issues throughout social science by investigating, questioning and evaluating knowledge of competing perspectives. These skills are vital to understanding current socio-political structures. Anti-racism becomes a priority under this umbrella because understanding the past (enslavement and colonialism) and the present (widespread racial inequities) may offer insight and solutions in the future.

If you foster these ideas with your learners, you can encourage them to think in terms of a sustainable world: one that achieves equity among peoples, justice for our planet and a responsible economic structure. Using Learning for Sustainability's mission of equity, social justice and global citizenship, you could encourage learners to consider the distinct effects racism has had on communities both locally and globally. Anti-racism in education becomes a tool to help us reset our thinking around what knowledge and skills support Learning for Sustainability.

If you contextualise anti-racism within social science, you allow learners to understand, develop and reflect on how marginalised groups have been affected by the omission of certain facts and considerations in history, politics, economics, criminology, social anthropology, sociology and psychology. At the same time, they can explore how the default of the white experience pervades current systems. Contextualising promotes reflective practice that is both interpersonal and professional, encouraging learners to build on key meta-skills.

Course teams should consider if the themes that lecturers choose to deliver support anti-racist education. Please consider where in the delivery of the group award you could develop this important aspect in learning and teaching.

The following table is a brief snapshot of how you could integrate this by theme and subject discipline.

Integrating anti-racism within HND Social Sciences

Course themes	Anti-racist concept	Contextualised topic within theme	Relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals
History and social change	Filling in the gaps of historical archives with storytelling and lived experience. Creating multiplicity of perspective. Avoiding single stories, which enforce stereotypes and misconceptions.	History • Abolition of the slave trade included various arguments amongst the Scottish philosophers in opposition to enslavement while at the same time many Scots benefited from the profits made in relation to slave labour. • Writer Olaudah Equiano as an example of a story of someone with lived experience.	4 quality education 10 reduced inequalities 16 peace, justice and strong institutions
Power and control	Racism can be defined as prejudice plus power. Prejudice without power does not result in systemic disadvantage and discrimination.	Politics • Macpherson report (1999) on the investigation into the killing of black teenager Stephen Lawrence, and the definition of institutionalised racism.	10 reduced inequalities 16 peace, justice and strong institution
Our changing world	Race as a social construct, shifting ideas of who is racialised. Changing of stereotypes to meet political motives.	Sociology • Evolution of stereotypes and the representation of black people and people of colour in the media.	10 reduced inequalities

Course themes	Anti-racist concept	Contextualised topic within theme	Relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals
Deviance	Unconscious and implicit bias.	Politics, History, Criminology • Anti-Chinese and Anti-Asian hate crime before and after COVID-19 • Islamophobia hate crime before and after 9/11 • Civil rights movement • Bristol Bus Boycotts • Global Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement	10 reduced inequalities 16 peace, justice and strong institutions
Inequalities	Inequalities are interlinked. Advancing only one marginalised group keeps social hierarchy in place. Those with the most power stay at the top and marginalised groups fight for middle slots.	Sociology, Politics • Race and health inequalities • Race and employment rates • Within Scotland, marginalised people by race, sex (single mothers) and sexuality are overly represented in areas of multiple deprivation • Intersectional nature of inequality	1 no poverty 3 good health and well-being 8 decent work and economic growth 10 reduced inequalities
Globalisation	Long-lasting effects of colonisation has resulted in the adoption of ideas and practices that may not be universally applicable or beneficial.	Sociology, History • Global perceptions of blackness often centre on the African-American experience and not on the range of cultures within the black diaspora	11 sustainable cities and communities

Course themes	Anti-racist concept	Contextualised topic within theme	Relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals
Culture and identity	Race, culture and identity are intimately connected concepts. But, even if two people share the same race, they may not share the same culture.	Sociology, Psychology • Distinct racialisation of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities • Intersection of race and religion within Jewish and Muslim communities living in historically Christian countries • Social Identity Theory — in-group or out-group favouritism and discrimination • White terrorism or the rise of white supremacy in the 21st century	1 no poverty 4 quality education 10 reduced inequalities
Human environments	Racism has become normalised across different environments.	Sociology • In the UK, ethnic and racial minorities often suffer the ill effects of urban living as well as a lack of access to greenspaces • Global minority more effected by climate crisis	3 good health and well-being 11 sustainable cities and communities 10 reduced inequalities
Ethics	Race as a social construct. Bias and stereotyping.	Psychology • Ethics of genetic projects as they link to ideas of race and ethnicity • Ethnic disparities in maternal care	4 quality education

Course themes	Anti-racist concept	Contextualised topic within theme	Relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals
Origins of behaviour	Continuous microaggressions and experiences of discrimination result in racial trauma, which has an impact on individuals' mental and physical well-being. Race as a social construct.	Psychology • Transgenerational trauma and the role of epigenetics • Growth in the popularity of DNA testing that is incorrectly interpreted by the public	3 good health and well-being 16 peace, justice and strong institutions 10 reduced inequalities

Useful resources to support anti-racism teaching

- *Breaking the mould: Principles for an anti-racist curriculum*. Education Scotland, Resources. Available from https://education.gov.scot/resources/breaking-the-mould-principles-for-an-anti-racist-curriculum/ [accessed 8 May 2024].

  General reference on how to expand your anti-racist approach in the classroom.
- *Introduction to Anti-racist Curriculum Development*. *A Guide for Teachers in Scotland.* (July 2021). Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights. Available from: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/615c1bee105b4f55a98326d0/t/617156d98bed7f670b9bc46d/1634817765892/b0353f_052075128cb14350a9121e2bb206f187.pdf [accessed 8 May 2024].

- *Words Matter: That's Why Oxfam is Launching an Inclusive Language Guide* (March 2023). Views and Voices. Available from: https://views-voices.oxfam.org.uk/2023/03/launch-inclusive-language-guide/ [accessed 8 May 2024].

  Good information on race, power and decolonisation, as well as equalities, migration and migrants' rights.
- *Inclusive Language Guide* (March 2023). Oxfam. Available at: https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/621487/tk-inclusive-language-guide-130323-en.pdf;jsessionid=79C40173C09A077E61B4C166C4C1CBF1?sequence=4 [accessed 8 May 2024].

- *Promoting race equality and anti-racist education: an overview* (August 2021). Education Scotland. Available from https://education.gov.scot/resources/promoting-race-equality-and-anti-racist-education/ [accessed 8 May 2024].

Grading

You can find more information in the Grading Information for this qualification.

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

To determine a learner's whole-qualification grade, you use the grading matrix to assess and judge their performance across the key aspects of the HND. You must align your judgements with the following whole-qualification grade descriptors.

Whole-qualification grade descriptors

Achieved with Distinction

The candidate has achieved an excellent standard across the whole course content, going significantly beyond meeting the qualification requirements. They showed a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of course concepts and principles, and consistently used them to apply skills to complete high-quality work. They engaged significantly with the process of developing their meta-skills in the context of their HN qualification.

Achieved with Merit

The candidate has achieved a very good standard across the whole course content, going beyond meeting the qualification requirements. They showed a very good knowledge and understanding of course concepts and principles, and consistently used them to apply skills to complete work of a standard above that expected for an Achieved grade. They actively engaged with the process of developing their meta-skills in the context of their HN qualification.

Achieved

The candidate has achieved a good standard across the whole course content, credibly meeting the qualification requirements. They showed a good knowledge and understanding of course concepts and principles, and used them to apply skills to complete work of the required standard. They engaged with the process of developing their meta-skills in the context of their HN qualification.

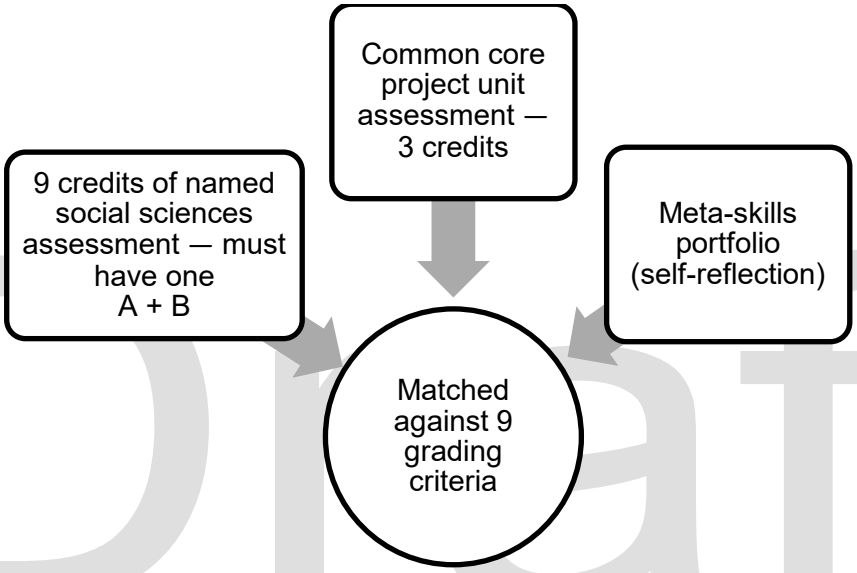
Successful learners receive a grade, along with grade descriptor text, on their commemorative certificate.

You assess learners' fulfilment of the individual units' evidence requirements on a pass or fail basis. Learners must pass all unit assessments to be considered for whole-qualification grading.

In HND Social Sciences, all 15 SQA credits count towards the overall grade for the group award, with no weighting.

Course teams make judgements about learners' quality of assessment evidence using a grading matrix, based on important criteria in the qualification. In HND Social Sciences, you judge learners against six criteria.

You base learners' grades on their performance across the three SQA credits of the common core project unit Social Sciences: Social Policy and nine SQA credits of the named social science subjects in the qualification. You can share the grading matrix from the Next Generation Higher National Grading Pack with your learners to help them understand 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 qualification. 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 Assessing and Grading Meta-skills in Next Generation Higher National Qualifications 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 relevant to unit (N/A)

General aims

Unit code	Unit title	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4	Aim 5	Aim 6
J7D4 48	Social Sciences: Social Policy	X	X	X	X	X	X
J80N 48	Criminology: Themes and Criminal Cases	X	X	X	X	X	X
J80M 48	Economics: Themes from a Global Perspective	X	X	X	X	X	X
J7D8 48	History: Themes from a Historical Perspective	X	X	X	X	X	X
J7D7 48	Politics: Themes from a Political Perspective	X	X	X	X	X	X
J7D5 48	Psychology: Critical Analysis and Research of Themes	X	X	X	X	X	X
J80J 48	Social Anthropology: Thematic Ethnography	X	X	X	X	X	X
J7D6 48	Sociology: Thematic and Critical Approaches	X	X	X	X	X	X

Specific aims

Unit code	Unit title	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4
J7D4 48	Social Sciences: Social Policy	X	X	X	X
J80N 48	Criminology: Themes and Criminal Cases	X	X	X	X
J80M 48	Economics: Themes from a Global Perspective	X	X	X	X
J7D8 48	History: Themes from a Historical Perspective	X	X	X	X
J7D7 48	Politics: Themes from a Political Perspective	X	X	X	X
J7D5 48	Psychology: Critical Analysis and Research of Themes	X	X	X	X
J80J 48	Social Anthropology: Thematic Ethnography	X	X	X	X
J7D6 48	Sociology: Thematic and Critical Approaches	X	X	X	X

Mapping opportunities to develop meta-skills across the group awards

Self-management

Unit code	Unit title	Meta-skills
J7D4 48	Social Sciences: Social Policy	Integrity Adapting Initiative
J80N 48	Criminology: Themes and Criminal Cases	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative
J80M 48	Economics: Themes from a Global Perspective	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative
J7D8 48	History: Themes from a Historical Perspective	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative
J7D7 48	Politics: Themes from a Political Perspective	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative
J7D5 48	Psychology: Critical Analysis and Research of Themes	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative
J80J 48	Social Anthropology: Thematic Ethnography	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative
J7D6 48	Sociology: Thematic and Critical Approaches	Focusing Integrity Adapting Initiative

Social intelligence

Unit code	Unit title	Meta-skills
J7D4 48	Social Sciences: Social Policy	Communication Feeling Collaborating
J80N 48	Criminology: Themes and Criminal Cases	Communication Feeling Collaborating Leading
J80M 48	Economics: Themes from a Global Perspective	Communication Feeling Collaborating Leading
J7D8 48	History: Themes from a Historical Perspective	Communication Feeling Collaborating Leading
J7D7 48	Politics: Themes from a Political Perspective	Communication Feeling Collaborating Leading
J7D5 48	Psychology: Critical Analysis and Research of Themes	Communication Feeling Collaborating Leading
J80J 48	Social Anthropology: Thematic Ethnography	Communication Feeling Collaborating Leading
J7D6 48	Sociology: Thematic and Critical Approaches	Communication Feeling Collaborating Leading

Innovation

Unit code	Unit title	Meta-skills
J7D4 48	Social Sciences: Social Policy	Curiosity Sense-making Critical thinking
J80N 48	Criminology: Themes and Criminal Cases	Curiosity Creativity Sense-making Critical thinking
J80M 48	Economics: Themes from a Global Perspective	Curiosity Creativity Sense-making Critical thinking
J7D8 48	History: Themes from a Historical Perspective	Curiosity Creativity Sense-making Critical thinking
J7D7 48	Politics: Themes from a Political Perspective	Curiosity Creativity Sense-making Critical thinking
J7D5 48	Psychology: Critical Analysis and Research of Themes	Curiosity Creativity Sense-making Critical thinking
J80J 48	Social Anthropology: Thematic Ethnography	Curiosity Creativity Sense-making Critical thinking
J7D6 48	Sociology: Thematic and Critical Approaches	Curiosity Creativity Sense-making Critical thinking

Assessment strategy for the group awards

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method
J7D4 48	Social Sciences: Social Policy	Two or three open-book assessments. One covering unit outcomes 1 to 3 and one or two covering outcomes 4 and 5. Learners provide written or oral evidence for both. Outcomes 1 to 3 are assessed by a research investigation project. Learners must produce a written response of approximately 3,000 words in length, or an oral response of 20 to 22 minutes in duration. Outcomes 4 and 5 are assessed using any appropriate method. For both outcomes, learners can show evidence in, for example, a written portfolio or blog or in a podcast or recorded oral presentation. They must include an action plan for development of meta-skills and, for LfS, suggest improvement to a product or process (such as a social policy) that would make them more sustainable. This must be related to at least two UN SDGs.
J80N 48	Criminology: Themes and Criminal Cases	An open-book assessment covering all unit outcomes. Learners must produce a written response of between 2,500 to 3,000 words in length, or an oral response of 18 to 22 minutes in duration. You assess learners on one theme from the four they study in the unit, and one criminal case relevant to the theme. This assessment could take the form of an open-book essay or structured questions or an individual oral presentation or a poster exhibition or an individual blog or creation of a website, or any other appropriate 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
J80M 48	Economics: Themes from a Global Perspective	An open-book assessment covering all unit outcomes. Learners must produce a written response of between 2,500 to 3,000 words in length, or an oral response of 18 to 22 minutes in duration. You assess learners on one theme from the four they study in the unit. This assessment could take the form of an open-book essay or structured questions or an individual oral presentation or a poster exhibition or an individual blog or creation of a website, or any other appropriate method that meets the evidence requirements. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.
J7D8 48	History: Themes from a Historical Perspective	An open-book assessment covering all unit outcomes. Learners must produce a written response of between 2,500 to 3,000 words in length, or an oral response of 18 to 22 minutes in duration. You assess learners on one theme from the four they study in the unit. This assessment could take the form of an open-book essay or structured questions or an individual oral presentation or a poster exhibition or an individual blog or creation of a website, or any other appropriate 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
J7D7 48	Politics: Themes from a Political Perspective	An open-book assessment covering all unit outcomes. Learners must produce a written response of between 2,500 to 3,000 words in length, or an oral response of 18 to 22 minutes in duration. You assess learners on one theme from the four they study in the unit. This assessment could take the form of an open-book essay or structured questions or an individual oral presentation or a poster exhibition or an individual blog or creation of a website, or any other appropriate method that meets the evidence requirements. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.
J7D5 48	Psychology: Critical Analysis and Research of Themes	An open-book assessment covering all unit outcomes. Learners must produce a written response of between 2,500 to 3,000 words in length, or an oral response of 18 to 22 minutes in duration. You assess learners on one theme from the four they study in the unit. This assessment could take the form of an open-book essay or structured questions or an individual oral presentation or a poster exhibition or an individual blog or creation of a website, or any other appropriate 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
J80J 48	Social Anthropology: Thematic Ethnography	An open-book assessment covering all unit outcomes. Learners must produce a written response of between 2,500 to 3,000 words in length, or an oral response of 18 to 22 minutes in duration. This assessment could take the form of a written report on the research investigation or an individual oral presentation or a poster exhibition or an individual blog or creation of 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.
J7D6 48	Sociology: Thematic and Critical Approaches	An open-book assessment covering all unit outcomes. Learners must produce a written response of between 2,500 to 3,000 words in length, or an oral response of 18 to 22 minutes in duration. You assess learners on one theme from the four they study in the unit. This assessment could take the form of an open-book essay or structured questions or an individual oral presentation or a poster exhibition or an individual blog or creation of a website, or any other appropriate method that meets 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 successfully complete an HND in Social Sciences, learners must achieve:

- the 3-SQA credit unit: Social Sciences: Social Policy. Alongside this unit, learners should have a portfolio showing how they have reflected on their own development of
  meta-skills, and evidence of suggesting improvement to a product or process related to at least one UN Sustainability Development Goal
- four named social sciences of 24 SCQF points (3 SQA credits) from the mandatory named social sciences section

This is 120 SCQF credits (15 SQA credits) in total.

You can reflect learners' individual interests and specialisms in some of the units if you give them a choice in the themes they study.

Learners who have studied units in the NextGen: HND Social Sciences can demonstrate:

- knowledge and understanding of the subject in general embedded in the main theories, concepts and principles
- knowledge and understanding of themes, with related social science theories, concepts, and studies
- critical and evaluative thinking skills
- an ability to manage and absorb large amounts of information
- a questioning and evidence-based approach to social issues and solutions

The HND gives learners an opportunity to develop a range of meta-skills, including academic skills, through an active learning approach and diverse assessment methods focused on knowledge and skills development.

Themes across HND Social Sciences

You must use the following themes across HND Social Sciences. Each course team should choose four course themes from the approved course themes list to use in their programme each academic session. Learners cover particular themes in more than one social science unit, which supports breadth and flexibility of choice for the project in Social Sciences: Social Policy. Lecturers delivering each named social sciences unit in a programme should choose to cover two of the four chosen approved course themes for that year, alongside two other subject-specific themes for their unit.

Each social science subject covers four themes in total (two course themes and two subject-specific themes) in each 3-SQA credit social science unit.

Approved course themes

- History and social change
- Power and control
- Our changing world
- Deviance
- Inequalities
- Globalisation
- Culture and identity
- Human environments
- Ethics
- Origins of behaviour

Example of a possible combination of themes

College A chooses to use the four themes of: 1. History and social change, 2. Power and control, 3. Origins of behaviour and 4. Ethics. Each social science subject lecturer chooses two from those four alongside two subject-specific themes taken from their unit specification.

Subject unit	Example of course theme 1	Example of course theme 2	Example of subject-specific themes 1	Example of subject-specific themes 2
History: Themes from a Historical Perspective	History and social change	Power and control	Welfare state	Modern history (1800s onwards)
Politics: Themes from a Political Perspective	Power and Control	Ethics	Political representation	International political governance
Psychology: Critical Analysis and Research of Themes	Origins of Behaviour	Ethics	Cognitive processes	Debates in psychology
Sociology: Thematic and Critical Approaches	Power and Control	History and social change	Post colonialism	The body and self

Each cohort studies the four themes for each subject (two course-specific and two subject-specific).

We suggest areas of study in each unit specification for each theme. These are indicative lists, which suggest what you could cover in that unit for each of the approved course themes and the subject-specific themes. You are not expected to

cover all aspects suggested under each theme and you can introduce other appropriate aspects instead. You can decide what is best for the theme.

Approved course themes in named social sciences units

You should read this alongside the information in each unit specification. These are additional suggestions, and you can decide to use these examples, the examples in the unit specification, or any other aspects of a theme that would be of interest to your learners.

History and social change

Criminology

- Brown v Board of Education of Topeka (1954) involved a case on racial segregation in public schools in the US, which was one of the catalysts for the Civil Rights Movement in the country.
- Rebecca Steinfeld and Charles Keidan, an opposite-sex couple, challenged the law on civil partnerships in the UK in 2018, arguing that they should have the same legal rights and recognition as same-sex couples.

Economics

- The Great Depression (1929–1930s) led to significant social changes in many Western countries, including strengthening the social safety net to help those in need with unemployment benefit, public work projects and housing programmes.
- Members of the feminist movement tackled wage disparities and workplace discrimination, leading to improvements in gender equality. The movement emerged in the late 19th century, and contemporary campaigners are currently focusing on
gender-based violence and sexual harassment.

History

- Any time period allows exploration of valuable social changes — both positive and negative — on specific societies.
- Identify patterns and trends that show social change has taken place.
- Causation and consequences: examining political, economic or social factors.

Politics

- Political power struggles, social movements, revolutions, and wars.
- Political decisions regarding foreign policy, military intervention, and trade agreements.
- Decisions on joining or leaving international bodies; for example, the EU.

Psychology

- The individual and collective psychological processes that drive human behaviour and shape historical and social events.
- Various theories that psychology can use to explain behaviour in times of change, including social identity theory, cognitive dissonance theory, social learning theory and evolutionary psychology.

Social Anthropology

- Cultural transformation.
- Social movements.
- Colonisation and decolonisation.
- Migration and diaspora.
- Conflict and peace.

Sociology

- A response to dysfunction or imbalances in the social system that require adjustments to restore equilibrium.
- A struggle for power and resources between different dominant and subordinate groups. Marxist theory, feminist theory, critical race theory or intersectionality can all be useful in this area.
- The result of collective action and social movements driven by shared meanings and values, negotiating new meanings and understandings of the world. Social constructionism, ethnomethodology or dramaturgy could be helpful to relate to this theme.

Power and control

Criminology

- The Enron Corporation scandal (early 2000s), was the largest white-collar crime in the US at that time. It involved a massive accounting fraud and the abuse of corporate power through manipulation and deception.
- The Windrush scandal (2018) involved the wrongful detention and deportation of long-term Commonwealth residents in the UK, who were wrongly classified as illegal immigrants, due to changes in immigration policy. The case demonstrates the impact that those in power can have on vulnerable individuals, especially those from minority communities.

Economics

- The impact of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) on global oil prices and the world economy. The organisation consists of major oil-producing countries. It has historically exerted significant power and control over the global oil market by influencing oil prices through production quotas and manipulating supply.
- The Bank of England’s role in monetary policy and the stability of the financial system.

History

- How power has been exercised and maintained in different time periods.
- The role of imperialism and colonisation, force, coercion and exploitation of people in Africa, India or Latin America.
- Resistance and the struggle for independence.

- The use of race, gender or class to justify and maintain power imbalances.

Politics

- The essence of functioning of political systems and the maintenance of social order.
- Various forms of power that exist within society; for example, economic power (control over resources, capital, and markets), political power (control of government institutions, policy-making, and the exercise of authority), cultural power (cultural institutions, media, and the shaping of public discourse) and social power (social norms, values, and attitudes).
- How power and control are distributed and exercised on a global scale; that is to say, the global minority versus the global majority (international relations, foreign policy, and global governance).

Psychology

- Psychological and social factors and mechanisms that underlie acquiring and maintaining power, including power imbalances.
- Positive and negative psychological effects of power.

Social Anthropology

- Political and legal systems.
- Social hierarchies.
- Economic control.
- Gender and power.
- Cultural practices, such as rites of passage, reinforcing power structures and control mechanisms.

Sociology

- The distribution of power in society (social hierarchies).
- Social processes (networks, status and reputation).
- Different cultural contexts (norms, values and beliefs).

Our changing world

Criminology

- United States v Ross Ulbricht (2015), also known as the ‘Silk Road’ case. Ulbricht ran an online marketplace, called the Silk Road, on the dark web, where users buy and sell illegal goods.
- Dobbs v Jackson Women’s Health Organization (2020) reversed the ruling on Roe v Wade (1973). This means that states in the US will again be permitted to ban or severely restrict abortion, making abortion illegal across most of the South and Midwest.

Economics

- Various court cases involving Uber versus taxi and transport industry bodies highlight the profound changes brought about by the rise of the gig economy and the impact of technology on established industries. The rise of Uber has led to regulatory changes and societal shifts.
- Theranos (2003) was a biotech firm seen as a game-changer in healthcare and valued at billions of dollars. Serious technological, corporate governance and financial issues emerged, which had an impact on trust in other emerging healthcare technologies.

History

- Any time period allows exploration of technological changes looking at social, cultural, economic and political contexts in which they emerge.
- The Industrial Revolution's transformative impact on the production of goods and consequent rise in urbanisation in the United Kingdom.
- The impact of technologies, such as the printing press, the telephone and the internet, on communication.
- The impact of technologies on war or military action.
- The impact of state decisions on scientific changes; for example funding space exploration.

Politics

- Advancements in technology are primary drivers of change (technological determinism).
- Technology is not value-neutral. It embodies and reinforces political and economic power structures (critical theory).
- The interests of different political actors, including developers, governments, regulators and the public.
- Regulating new technology: exploring the role of stakeholders, agencies and industry.
- Risk society theory: looking at the risks and benefits of artificial intelligence (AI) or biotechnology.

Psychology

- Technology's effect on cognitive processes; for example, the impact of smartphones on memory, or video games on spatial reasoning.
- The social and cultural impact of technology use; for example, how we interact with others online.
- The impact of remote working on group behaviour; for example, virtual work environments.

Social Anthropology

- Migration and displacement.
- Urbanisation.
- Social movements or advocacy groups.

Sociology

- How social factors, such as values and expectations, shape technology and developments (social construction of technology).
- How relationships and networks shape technological advancements (actor-network theory).
- How technology itself shapes social and cultural change that can change social structures, employment and inequalities (technological determinism).
- The blurred boundaries of human and non-human: what it means to be human and how we can relate to machines (post-humanism).

Deviance

Criminology

- The impact of the Dunblane massacre (1996), when Thomas Hamilton shot dead 16 children and a teacher, on UK gun laws. The incident prompted significant changes in gun control and firearm licencing.
- The Jonestown massacre (1978), was a mass murder-suicide orchestrated by ‘cult’ leader Jim Jones, in Jonestown, Guyana. It raised questions about mind control, manipulation, and the dangers of charismatic leaders in religious or cult-like groups, leading to increased scrutiny of such organisations.

Economics

- The Bernie Madoff Ponzi scheme, a case of fraud discovered in 2008, was a classic example of financial deviance. Madoff misrepresented his investments to investors, who suffered devastating losses.
- The Libor scandal (early 2010s), another example of market deviance, involved bankers manipulating the London Interbank Offered Rate (Libor), with global ramifications.

History

- Who defines deviance and how those definitions have changed over time.
- How individuals or groups have been stigmatised or punished for deviant behaviour in different time periods or places.
- How punishment for deviant behaviour has changed from public shaming to rehabilitation.

Politics

- Enforcing social norms and values through laws or policies and regulations.
- Power and privilege to decide what is deviant.
- Moral panics in different political contexts.
- Social movements that challenge dominant values; for example, LGBTQI+.

Psychology

- Biological factors (genes, neurological abnormalities).
- The personality traits or disorders that make individuals more likely to engage in deviant behaviours.
- Environmental and social factors.
- How sociocultural perspective, norms and values vary across cultures.
- The work of forensic psychology in mental health evaluations, and how it can explain criminal behaviour, violence and victimisation.

Social Anthropology

- Cultural relativism and deviance.
- Social norms, taboos and social control mechanisms.
- Stigmatisation.
- Deviant subcultures.
- Moral panics.
- The medicalisation of deviance.

Sociology

- The role of social institutions in defining and regulating deviant behaviour (power dynamics and social inequality).
- Historical and political contexts.
- What shapes definitions of deviance today (power and inequality, gender, sexuality, cultural beliefs and attitudes).
- Different punishments for marginalised groups.
- Labelling process.

Inequalities

Criminology

- Trayvon Martin (2012) was an unarmed black teenager who was fatally shot by George Zimmerman, a neighbourhood watch volunteer, in Florida, US. Zimmerman was acquitted, leading to widespread protests and discussions about racial profiling and the criminal justice system's treatment of black individuals.
- Brock Turner (2015), a former Stanford University student, received a lenient sentence for sexual assault, which highlighted disparities in the US criminal justice system’s treatment of offenders based on privilege and social status.

Economics

- The Enron Corporation scandal (2001) was the biggest case of corporate fraud in the US at the time. It involved a massive accounting fraud and the abuse of corporate power through manipulation and deception. It showed massive inequalities in executive compensation, with thousands of employees losing a huge amount in pensions due to corporate misconduct.
- The Subprime Mortgage Crisis (mid-2000s) resulted in a global financial crisis (2007–2008). It involved widespread financial misconduct in the mortgage industry, primarily in the US, and affected low-income individuals and those from a minority background more than others.

History

- Any suitable time period would allow exploration of inequalities.
- Social inequalities (class, gender, race, religion).
- Political systems (democracy, colonialism, authoritarianism).
- Comparative history (rise and fall of empires).

Politics

- Distribution of resources (wealth, education, healthcare).
- Representation: who has a voice and who is excluded?
- How policy choices favour certain groups above others.
- Electoral systems; for example, proportional representation.

Psychology

- Implicit biases and stereotypes.
- The negative effects of discrimination and prejudice on individuals (self-esteem, identity and behaviour).
- Power dynamics in groups and organisations leading to unequal access to resources.
- The dynamics of inequality between the global majority and the global minority.

Social Anthropology

- Economic inequalities within societies.
- Social class and hierarchies.
- Race, ethnicity, gender, health or educational inequalities (intersectionality).
- Urban versus rural disparities.
- Indigenous rights.

Sociology

- The ways in which social structures, institutions, and cultural norms contribute to social inequality, and how it is maintained and perpetuated over time.
- Social structures and unequal power.
- Conflicts between groups with different interests leading to the control of resources and information.
- How social inequality is perpetuated by the way people interact with each other (symbolic interactionism).
- The impact of intersectionality (race, gender and class) on people's experiences of inequality and oppression.

Globalisation

Criminology

- United States v Siemens AG (2008) involved a large-scale global corruption scandal across multiple jurisdictions.
- Bernie Madoff Ponzi scheme (2008) was one of the largest financial frauds in history, with investors around the world losing significant money.

Economics

- McLibel case: McDonald's Corporation v Steel & Morris (1990s) where McDonald's sued two campaigners who were distributing leaflets that criticised McDonalds practices, such as low wages, and their impact on local economies. It ended in a partial victory for McDonalds but had wider implications for multinational corporations.
- Siemens AG Bribery scandal: the United States v Siemens AG case (2008), showed how multinational corporations can engage in corruption across many jurisdictions.

History

- The historical origins of globalisation: the emergence of long-distance trade networks, the spread of religions, and the movement of people across continents and the rise and fall of the British Empire.
- The economic dimension: historical development of capitalism; the rise of multinational corporations, and the emergence of global financial systems; the Industrial Revolution, the Great Depression and the Cold War.
- The development of global political institutions; for example, the United Nations and the International Criminal Court.

Politics

- Free trade agreements; for example, of goods and services across borders.
- Multilateral institutions — for example, the World Health Organization, the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank — and their impact in different political contexts.
- Immigration policies; for example, labour shortages versus demographic changes.
- Cultural exchanges; the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office and British Council activity and partners.
- Shared political ideology.

Psychology

- Changes for individuals in terms of cultural diversity and attitudinal changes.
- The psychological impacts on ethnic and national groups.
- Coping with stressors; for example, unemployment, cultural displacement and social dislocation.
- Cross-cultural psychology; for example, thought processes, conflict, cooperation, trust.

Social Anthropology

- Hybrid cultural practices.
- Transnational communities.
- Media and communication.
- Migration and diaspora.

Sociology

- Sociology as a social process involving the spread of values and ideas across borders (Western dominance).
- Social, political and economic inequalities between and within countries (the global minority versus the global majority).
- Individual and collective identity: what is it to be British, Scottish or European?
- Transnational movements, such as on human rights.
- The role of international organisations, states and corporations in shaping policies and practices.

Culture and identity

Criminology

- United States v Dzhokhar Tsarnaev (2015), otherwise known as the Boston Marathon Bombing case, and considerations of the immigrant experience, radicalisation, media portrayal and terrorism.
- The Rochdale child sex abuse scandal (2012) involved men of predominantly Pakistani and British Muslim background who engaged in the sexual exploitation of underage girls in Rochdale.

Economics

- Brexit referendum (2016) resulted in the UK leaving the EU. At its heart was a debate over culture and identity, sovereignty and immigration. The economic consequences include financial instability, disruption to trade and fewer short-term workers.
- Catalan independence referendum (2017), which was declared illegal by the Spanish government, relates to issues of culture and identity. It had a major impact on businesses, exposed social divisions and created political tensions in Spain. The economic disparities between the richer Catalonia and other parts of Spain contributed to the drive for independence.

History

- Political, social and economic factors that influence development of culture and identity over time.
- How migration and colonisation affect cultural identities of different groups.
- How specific cultural groups have struggled to preserve their identities in the face of dominant cultural forces.
- Specific examples of how cultural practices have been modified or abandoned over time.

Politics

- How national identity is influenced by history, language, religion, and cultural traditions, promoted by political leaders and institutions through symbols, rituals, and narratives.
- Multiculturalism, affirmative action, multicultural education and cultural exchange programmes.
- How social movements — such as LGBTI+ rights, civil rights and feminism — challenge existing power structures and promote equality.
- How political ideologies promote particular cultural values and identity.

Psychology

- How culture and identity shapes cognition and behaviour (childhood development).
- The culture of the group versus that of the individual.
- How social status, gender or experience shapes identity formation (nature and nurture).
- Multiple identities and their impact (coping strategies, self-esteem).

Social Anthropology

- Cultural identity.
- Aspects of identity — gender, religion, nationhood, ethnicity, youth — and its impacts.
- Intersectionality and identity (gender, race, class, sexuality).
- Cultural practices and symbols.
- Identity expression.

Sociology

- How culture and identity are constructed, negotiated, maintained and changed.
- Using a range of perspectives: symbolic interactionism, cultural relativism, postmodernism, intersectionality.

Human environments

Criminology

- Thames River oil spill (1989) involved the dredger Bowbelle colliding with the Marchioness pleasure boat on the river Thames in London. The Marchioness sank and created an oil spill. The incident raised concerns about the safety of water transportation on the Thames and prompted inquiries into safety practices and regulations for vessels navigating the river.
- Love Canal environmental disaster (1978) involved the release of toxic chemicals (dioxin and benzene) in an abandoned canal in Niagara Falls, New York. As a result, people suffered various long-term health issues, including birth defects and cancers.

Economics

- The Grenfell Tower fire (2017) in a high-rise building in London, had catastrophic effects on residents, with 72 dying in the fire. The economic impact is still being felt, with many people unable to sell their high-rise flats, because the cladding on the buildings is not fire-resistant. The cost of investigation and responses to the fire are continuing issues.
- Asbestos contamination and related lawsuits (1970s onwards). This global problem affects many countries, including the UK. The many legal actions and regulatory responses have had important impacts on those who were affected. Many companies who faced legal action have filed for bankruptcy and many of the individuals affected have received no or little compensation. The cleanup cost is difficult for the companies involved.

History

- How early agricultural societies transformed their landscapes through irrigation and land management practices.
- How industrialisation in the 19th and 20th centuries led to increased pollution and environmental degradation.
- The development of urban and rural communities over time.
- How the development of means of transport impacted on alliances and trade.

Politics

- National government versus local government (councils) in planning issues.
- Social policies addressing poverty, inequality, access to education and healthcare.
- Environmental policies regulating human interactions with natural resources, pollution or climate change.
- Urban planning policies guiding the development of urban spaces, including zoning laws, building codes and transportation.

Psychology

- How physical and social environments influence human behaviour and attitudes (green spaces, public spaces, building design).
- The impact environments can have on emotions.
- Stressors in the environment.

Social Anthropology

- Rural versus urban environments.
- Built environments.
- Environmental knowledge and practices.
- Human influences on the environment.
- Conservation and activism.

Sociology

- Human ecology and the relationship between human populations and their natural and built environment (social, economic and ecological factors).
- The social construction of space with cultural practices and representations at its heart (power, inequality and resistance).
- Environmental justice and the unequal distribution of environmental risks and benefits (race, gender and class).
- Urban sociology and how cities are organised and experienced (social and economic processes).

Ethics

Criminology

- The Enron Corporation scandal (early 2000s) was the largest corporate fraud in the US at the time. It involved a massive accounting fraud and a betrayal of trust, especially as the company portrayed itself as having ethical standards.
- The Volkswagen 'Dieselgate' scandal (2015) involved unethical manipulation of diesel emissions data to meet environmental standards. The company used software in their vehicles, known as 'defeat devices', which change a car's performance when it's being tested, thereby permitting higher emissions.

Economics

- PPI Mis-selling scandal (2000–2019) involved banks and other financial institutions selling payment protection insurance (PPI) to cover loan and credit card payments if the borrower could not meet payments. There was evidence of considerable unnecessary and ethically unsound practices. Mis-selling claims continued until August 2019, with billions of pounds being paid back to customers.
- Enron Corporation scandal (early 2000s), was the largest corporate fraud in the US at the time. It involved a massive accounting fraud and a betrayal of trust, as the company portrayed themselves as having strong ethical standards. It showed massive inequalities in executive compensation, with thousands of employees losing a huge amount in pensions as a result of corporate misconduct.

History

- How historians deal with ethical concerns in their studies (bias, inaccurate interpretations, sensitive or controversial topics, privacy and dignity).
- Ethical concerns from the Cold War (nuclear war, political repression, human rights abuses).
- The origin and evolution of human rights (apartheid, human rights international law, US abolitionist movement).

Politics

- Moral values (justice, equality, freedom).
- Public policy implications for society (healthcare, education).
- Politicians' responsibilities to uphold ethical standards (harassment, bullying, non-declaration of income, Partygate).
- How politicians are held accountable (codes of conduct, elections, media).
- The impact of the Nuremberg Code (1947).

Psychology

- Ethical principles in research (informed consent, confidentiality, privacy).
- What we learned from specific research that flouts ethical principles.
- The challenge of applying ethical principles and values in contemporary society.

Social Anthropology

- Cultural moral systems, including norms and values.
- Religion and ethics.
- Ethical systems in conflicts and resolution.
- Global ethics, such as human rights and international relations.
- Ethical dilemmas in social anthropological research.
- Cross-cultural ethics.

Sociology

- Ethical principles in research (informed consent, confidentiality, privacy).
- How moral ethical principles and values are constructed, and how they influence behaviour.
- How ethical principles are applied in different social contexts.
- Specific ethical issues and debates in sociology (Max Weber, Carol Gilligan).

Origins of behaviour

Criminology

- Jeffrey Dahmer (1991–1994), was a serial killer and sex offender who committed heinous acts of violence, including dismemberment. There were early warning signs for his extreme behaviour. The impact of family dynamics and substance abuse was important in this case.
- James Bulger (1993) was abducted and murdered by two ten-year olds, Jon Venables and Robert Thompson. The case led to debates on the origin of criminality in children. The perpetrators' offending involved a wide range of factors, including their backgrounds, their experiences, and their psychological profiles, as well as the impact of watching extremely violent films.

Economics

- How market bubbles, created by over-optimism, can drive up the price of products beyond their value. Examples are the 'dot-com bubble' and the 'housing market bubble'. The role of psychology and social influences are important here.
- Prospect Theory and Investment Decisions explores prospect theory, a behavioural economics concept that suggests people evaluate the potential outcomes of decisions based on perceived gains and losses relative to a reference point (usually the status quo). It examines how these perceived gains and losses influence individuals' risk preferences and decision-making. This case highlights the role of psychological biases, such as loss aversion and the endowment effect, in shaping economic behaviours.

History

- The behaviour of early hominids or different human populations throughout history.
- How different cultures have historically approached issues like child-rearing, gender roles and social hierarchy.
- The impact of specific events, such as wars, revolutions and societal changes (industrial revolutions, world wars, the Civil Rights Movement of 1950s and 1960s and the internet revolution) on the behaviour of different groups of people.

Politics

- The influence of political factors on political behaviour: why people hold particular views, vote for particular parties or candidates and take part in political activism.
- Why some political ideologies are more prevalent in certain societies.
- How different political systems shape political behaviour (cultural and institutional factors).

Psychology

- Genetic and biological processes.
- Evolutionary perspective (adaptive to modern environments).
- Development over the lifespan (shaped by social, cultural and biological factors).
- Cognitive processes (influenced by nature and nurture).

Social Anthropology

- Cultural evolution; for example, kinship systems, religious rituals and economic activities, and adapting traditional behaviours.
- Cultural transmission within society: behaviours, knowledge, and traditions, including material culture and technology.
- Socialisation of social norms and taboos.

Sociology

- How social structures and institutions shape human behaviour.
- Social and cultural factors influencing behaviour.
- Social and cultural dimensions linked to genetics and biology.

Subject-specific themes

Each named social sciences unit can draw from themes that are specific to the subject area. Learners must study two of these themes alongside the two approved course themes. We list the subject-specific themes in each unit here:

J80N 48 Criminology — Themes and Criminal Cases

- Punishment
- Social harms and social justice
- Police organisation and culture
- Extraordinary behaviour

J80M 48 Economics: Themes from a Global Perspective

- Economic development
- International trade
- International institutions

J7D8 48 History: Themes from a Historical Perspective

- Warfare
- Welfare state
- 20th century to 1945
- 20th century from 1946 onwards
- Pandemics (prior to COVID-19)
- Medieval history
- Early modern history (1500s to circa 1799)
- Modern history (1800s onwards)

J7D7 48 Politics: Themes from a Political Perspective

- Welfare reform
- International political governance
- Political representation
- Political economy

J7D5 48 Psychology: Critical Analysis and Research of Themes

- Debates in psychology
- Theoretical diversity of psychology
- Subjectiveness of individual experience
- Sociohistorical influences on the psychology of childhood development
- Cognitive processes

J80J 48 Social Anthropology: Thematic Ethnography

- Work and economies
- Human life courses
- Health and healing
- Religion and spiritual life
- Art, museums and heritage
- Sport and leisure
- Tourism
- Language and ways of thinking

J7D6 48 Sociology: Thematic and Critical Approaches

- Social theory (contested knowledge)
- Society and welfare
- Religion
- Post colonialism
- Sport and leisure
- Public health and pandemics
- Society, risk and security

You can decide how much time to apportion to delivering learning and teaching for each theme. You do not need to devote an equal amount of time for each theme, as how much time is required depends on the theme and the aspects within it that you cover.

You can also consider whether to combine themes to give learners a more comprehensive coverage of the themes or the aspects within.

For example:
In criminology, you can choose a criminal case that is connected to several themes. By focusing on the criminal case, you can bring in links to the various themes. One example would be the Enron Corporation scandal (2006), the largest corporate fraud at the time in the US. This fits well with several approved course themes, such as Power and control or Ethics, as well as subject-specific themes, such as Punishment or Extraordinary behaviour. You can find further detail on suitable cases in the ‘Additional unit information’ section.

In history, if you choose the aspect of 20th century Scotland (that is two subject-specific themes — 20th century to 1945 and 20th century from 1946 onwards) and then cover areas such as Race relations (approved course theme of Inequalities) and Role of women (approved course theme of Culture and identity), you would be able to cover the four themes for the unit in the learning and teaching for that unit.

In economics, you can usefully introduce certain case histories to cover several themes. For example, the Enron Corporation scandal can relate to the course approved themes of Globalisation, Inequalities or Ethics. Themes intersect well for many relevant economic case histories.

In sociology, you can find many intersecting themes. By studying one theme, you can highlight the links to another. For example, studying the approved course theme of Culture and identity and covering different aspects of identity (such as race, sex or class) you can make strong links to the theme of Power and control. These themes intersect well. You could also use theories on the theme of Globalisation, such as those of Anthony Giddens or Ulrich Beck that challenge the postmodern view and traditional sociological perspectives. This also fits well with the theme of Social theory (contested knowledge). Specific theories can intersect well with more than one theme.

In politics, choosing a broad aspect of a political event could allow you to introduce several themes. You could look at the decision and effects of Brexit on the UK and EU. Themes of Political economy, Political representation and International political governance intersect well with the Brexit topic.

In psychology, you could consider the themes of History and social change and Inequalities to focus on gender. Alternatively, you could use the subject-specific theme of Debates to focus on nature versus nurture, and highlight theories related to the theme of Theoretical diversity.

In social anthropology, choosing themes of History and social change and Human environment allows you to look at urban and rural disparities. Meanwhile, using the themes of Inequalities, and Work and economies would work well with the study of Economic inequalities.

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 the unit Social Sciences: Social Policy across the whole session, as it gives scope to review meta-skills learners develop in other contexts and units, and develops learners' knowledge of what it is to be a social scientist. The unit also acts as a focus for Learning for Sustainability, which is highlighted across all units in the HND Social Sciences Qualification.

An HN unit with an SQA credit value of 1 represents approximately 40 hours of programmed learning, teaching and assessment, with a 2-SQA credit unit having a notional 80 hours and a 3-SQA credit unit having a notional 120 hours. Learners are expected to give the same amount again (for example, another 40 hours for a 1-SQA credit unit) to private study for that unit. We recommend these timings for learners to have 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 for them to have the best chance of overtaking the content and skills for each unit.

In the following tables, we suggest how you could deliver the units, 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 ways to schedule learning and

teaching for NextGen: HND Social Sciences to ensure there is enough time for learners to cover the required knowledge and skills.

One simple method is to allocate three hours a week to each unit all year, giving 15 hours of learning and teaching each week throughout year.

A suggested timetable for delivering the qualification over two semesters

Unit	Semester 1: weeks 1 to 18	Semester 2: weeks 1 to 18
Social Sciences: Social Policy — mandatory 3 SQA credits	4 hours a week	2 hours a week
Unit 2 — named social science — 3 SQA credits	6 hours a week	Not applicable
Unit 3 — named social science — 3 SQA credits	Not applicable	6 hours a week
Unit 4 — named social science — 3 SQA credits	2 hours a week	4 hours a week
Unit 5 — named social science — 3 SQA credits	4 hours a week	2 hours a week
Total:	16 hours a week of timetabled learning and teaching	14 hours a week of timetabled learning and teaching

A suggested timetable for delivering the qualification over three blocks

Unit	Block 1: week 1 to 12	Block 1: week 1 to 12	Block 1: week 1 to 12
Social Sciences: Social Policy — mandatory — 3 credits	3 hours a week	3 hours a week	3 hours a week
Unit 2 — named social science — 3 SQA credits	3 hours a week	6 hours a week	Not applicable
Unit 3 — named social science — 3 SQA credits	3 hours a week	3 hours a week	3 hours a week
Unit 4 — named social science — 3 SQA credits	3 hours a week	Not applicable	6 hours a week
Unit 5 — named social science — 3 SQA credits	3 hours a week	3 hours a week	3 hours a week
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.

You can choose to split assessment tasks across a period of time, as this could help learners to plan their workload. If you do so, you can feed back generic points to the class group to help them with their development. You should give specific feedback to individual learners only once their whole assessment is complete and marked.

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). In social sciences, learners' evidence is in the knowledge and skills they show in their assessment responses.

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

We recommend you use holistic assessment for each unit to minimise learners' overall assessment load. If you prefer, however, and to avoid bottlenecks or assessment congestion 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 give generic feedback to the class group before the final submission date, so that learners can 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 outcomes, 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 they need to improve by providing specific information about their performance. Giving constructive criticism can motivate a learner if it also involves recognising learners' achievements and hard work.

Feedback can serve as a platform for learners to ask questions and get their questions answered. 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 a learner 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

SQA uses the phrase ‘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 learning and teaching 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 can offer counsel, explanation, and guidance (see examples below).

As with any assessment, learners must be able to meet the evidence requirements, and the evidence they produce must be their own original work. Learners develop skills of planning, analysing and evaluating, including working independently. Balancing reasonable assistance and 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 types of reasonable assistance for every potential assessment scenario, the following examples illustrate the types of appropriate support that you can give, whatever the planned assessment schedule is.

- Selecting a subject for research, or a topic or theme for assessment
  - Unless the unit specifies that the learner must choose the activity, topic, or theme on their own, it is acceptable for you to give 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 if learners are struggling to find suitable ones.
- 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 the 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

them, before asking them to choose a course of action. This helps learners to think through the options to help them come to a suitable solution. It is not telling the learner which option to choose.

- Asking learners to review or double-check material they have already been taught
  - If learners find it challenging to produce appropriately analytical or evaluative assessment responses, or are making errors in their thinking, evident in their work, you can direct them to re-read relevant material or give them additional reading materials.
- Guiding students 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 them to consider the initial issue, allowing them to produce their own solutions without giving them the answers.
- Arranging for introductions and access
  - In certain circumstances, centre staff 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 can provide help in the form of prompts, question, 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. You would not, however, 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 them a re-assessment if they failed to complete the evidence requirements correctly.

For holistic assessment, you should carry out remediation or re-assessment 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 a unit assessment. In this approach, you set several tasks for learners to complete during the unit delivery. This allows you to spread the workload across the life of the unit. If you choose 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. You should 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 they need to develop. 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 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. You should consider their response to feedback, in remediation or in future assessment, when grading the awards. Grade Criterion 6 in the HNC and HND is 'Quality of assessment submissions (including reflecting/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 learners complete them, and give individual feedback after marking each task. Remediation or re-assessment can take place immediately after 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: Social Policy is the main project unit for this qualification. When you deliver this unit, you should focus on how social policy can be used in the process of solving social issues. Social policy is formed as a result of research, the conclusion of which suggests a direction of travel that could help solve a specific issue.

Outcome 1 sets the scene for the research investigation by introducing learners to specific topics that have an associated social policy. You should emphasise the relevance of two social sciences to developing solutions, such as a specific social policy. Outcome 2 covers the philosophical principles underpinning research into social issues. It is important that learners are aware of these and how they can impact on research and subsequent solutions to social issues.

In outcome 3, you make learners aware of how to carry out primary research, including how to conduct research ethically,. You should introduce learners to using ethical standards in research, such as the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, whose principles are:

- reliability in the quality of research
- honesty in all aspects of carrying out research, including reporting results
- respect for colleagues, participants and heritage
- accountability for the whole research process

Consider setting up a small group to review learners' plans for research, so that you can approve those that fit with these principles and embody good research practice, including taking account of safeguarding and good data management.

You should outline how to complete a research investigation for the project being used to assess outcomes 1 to 3 (outcome 4 is the meta-skills outcome and outcome 5 is the Learning for Sustainability outcome — both of which will be assessed by any suitable assessment or combined in a portfolio).

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

1 Planning stage

- Research planning — general plan of timing for the research, steps to be taken.
- Decide whether to use primary research.
- Initial literature review – to help form ideas of what information might be suitable, particularly whether there is an available social policy they could evaluate. Identify a range of possible key texts and journal articles.
- Choose a topic (from the unit list) with an associated social policy — learners should agree a broad topic with their lecturer, and have a clear reason for their choice.
- Identify two social science disciplines and perspectives to be used for the project.
- Agree a format for the project — how learners will submit it on an agreed date.
- Choose a specific, suitable research method and clearly explain their choice. They should use primary research only to gather suitable information relating to the effectiveness of a social policy.
- Identify which ethical controls should be in place for this research.
- Create a plan for specific research showing a basic research process, identifying specific steps to be taken and giving reasons for choices. This must be approved by a college team ethics process.
- Identify specific key texts and journal articles from secondary research to use in the project.

2 Literature review and analysis of topic

- Carry out a specific literature review containing existing literature, related theories and a relevant social policy that impacts on the chosen topic. This should aim to explain the background to a social problem. It should cover explanations from two social science disciplines.
- Analyse the topic using the information from the literature review.
- Explain the specific social policy and why it can be a solution to a social problem.

3 Carrying out primary research (on the effectiveness of a specific social policy)

- Operationalise a study using one or two research methods.
- Carry out research ethically, including using informed consent.
- Use data handling techniques effectively on any quantitative or qualitative data collected in the research.
- Analyse the data and interpret the results.

4 Critical evaluation of the effectiveness of a social policy

- Review the social policy.
- Weigh up how well the specific social policy acts as a solution to the social issue — does it work for those it is intended for?

The project should contain evidence from each of these stages, ensuring the response fulfils the evidence requirements, as set out in the unit specification.

How to structure the project in the common core unit

Submitted projects do not need to have a common structure. They are likely to vary, depending on their content and whether they are written or oral. A project is more than a report summarising findings. Learners can discuss the format or their report with their lecturer, using the following list of suggested headings to help structure it, if they want. Other structures are acceptable. You could, for example, combine sections — like the literature review and discussion, or have different headings — like planning, development and conclusion.

Suggested headings

Abstract or Executive Summary — approximately 250 to 300 words
You should make sure that learners understand that an abstract is a summary of the whole project, and that they should therefore write it last, just before handing in the complete work. It should, however, come at the start of the response. It should summarise each section of the project, giving a sentence or two for each section of the project, including the conclusion.

Table of contents
Including a table of contents in a piece of written work is good practice in academic writing.

Introduction — approximately 250 words
This should give a purpose and context for the project, including reasons for picking the specific social issue and related social policy. It should also contain information on the social issue, why it is an issue, on whom it has an impact and what that impact is likely to be. Learners should outline other key terms here. They should describe the specific social policy under review and explain how it operates.

Learners should state the research question or objectives that the project is hoping to answer or meet. For example:

Research question
How effective is the social policy of XXX at providing a solution to the social issue of YYY?

Research objective
To analyse the social issue of YYY and to assess how effective the related social policy of XXX as a solution.

Literature review — approximately 800 to 900 words
You should give learners opportunities to read other literature reviews in research articles, so they can see ways of phrasing this in their own project. Literature reviews give a summary of previous research or theories related to your chosen topic. 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 question or objective they are developing in the project. When learners mention certain theories or research, you can assume that the writer has read the detail, evaluated it, and is reporting it because it is relevant to the proposal.

Encourage your learners to keep accurate records of the sources they read or watch. They should summarise key ideas from each useful source, noting citation details. Learners should provide background 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. The more up to date the information, the better. 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. They can include information on long-held but discredited theories, if it is 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.

In this project, they should give information from the perspective of two social sciences. This is an extended piece of work. It can start with an overview, with broad theories or viewpoints on the topic. It can go on to more specific theories or studies and other evidence that supports key themes. Learners should also give alternative viewpoints, theories or studies that counter this support.

In each section of the literature review, you should encourage learners to use a structure that is straightforward for them to follow. Learners could start with an introduction that outlines the theme of the section, details the evidence that is put forward (theory or study) and then ends with an evaluation in terms of strengths and weaknesses of the evidence, including outlining whether it supports or refutes the ideas or topic. Evaluating the evidence strengthens the argument. A literature review is more than a list of sources; it must include links and comments on the sources used. You should provide examples of literature reviews in social sciences, so that learners become more familiar with what they are required to do.

The literature review should be selective, and refer to several sources (not just the core text that you use in class). Access to online sources would be helpful.

You can direct learners to answer a few questions when they are deciding 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 sufficient detail to cite the information and give a suitable reference for it?
3. Is it relevant to your research topic?
4. What are the strengths of the information? Does it help you to give background or explain a particular aspect? Can you use it as supporting evidence or does it contrast with points made by others?
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. They could start by defining terms, then by summarising relevant background information. They could then summarise information on theories and associated research chronologically or thematically, as they work through the various sources. Approximately, 100–200 words per source would be a useful rule of thumb. You can suggest that learners split the word limit in a particular way. The following wordcount split is only one suggestion.

Methodology — approximately 600 words (if primary research is used)
This section should outline the method used in any primary research. It should use the common research process, giving information under each subheading, as outlined here:

- Aim of the research.
- Method — qualitative or quantitative, method used (survey, interview).
- Participants — who were they? How did you know they would be suitable to use? How did you persuade them to take part? Were they 16 or over (informed consent)?
- Procedure — how did you collect the data? Is it replicable?
- Ethical controls — what ethical concerns were there and how did you control for them? Implementing controls is crucial. Learners should complete an ethical checklist. Centre teams should have a protocol for approving learner research to ensure it meets ethical standards.
- Results — give a summary of results.

You should encourage primary research as it can strengthen work and progression opportunities. It is useful to collect first-hand data to evaluate the effectiveness of a specific social policy in this project. Primary research methods, such as document analysis and policy analysis, transcripts for interviews and carrying out surveys or interviews, could all be suitable. If learners decide to use an interview or survey, it is best if they do so with an organisation that advocates for those who feel the impact of the social issue, rather than with individual users of the social policy. Individual users may be vulnerable, and learners may not be equipped to deal with the individual circumstances and feelings involved.

If learners are not using primary research, they can allocate the word count to the literature review. You shouldn’t penalise learners for using only secondary research in situations where primary research is not possible.

When carrying out social sciences research, learners should prioritise ethical considerations and ensure that participants can give informed consent. As such, we strongly recommend that learners focus their studies on individuals who are 16 years of age or older. This age group is typically deemed capable of understanding the nature of the research and granting their consent in an informed manner. 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 in conducting ethical and meaningful social science research.

Discussion — approximately 600 to 800 words
This section is where the learner interprets the findings, both from the literature review and any primary research carried out. It is also where they discuss the effectiveness of the social policy as a solution to the social issue identified previously.

Learners should start by stating findings and relating them to the work presented in the literature review. Do any of the theories and viewpoints persuade you that the policy is effective. Do the results make sense? Does the literature and any primary research match?

Learners can highlight how they are measuring effectiveness, in terms of, for example, number of recipients, satisfaction levels and reduction in the social issue. They can then discuss what the evidence leads them to conclude, emphasising any relationships or patterns. They should also highlight alternative explanations or areas that could be misinterpreted, such as unexpected findings.

Learners can comment on the limitations of their research. Was it wide enough? Were the right sources found? Did they look at the right theorists and studies?

They can end by discussing any wider implications of their findings and the implications for future research.

Conclusion — approximately 100 words
Learners conclude by stating what the purpose was for the research and then what the main message was. They should state their findings and their interpretation of them in a few sentences, relating them to the research question or the research objective.

Referencing — references do not count towards the total word count.
Learners should use citation throughout and give a bibliography or references section at the end, using an established convention, such as Harvard referencing.

Appendices
Learners should include any materials used in primary research, such as the questions used in interviews and the ethical checklist used.

Useful resources

- The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity. Available at: https://allea.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/European-Code-of-Conduct-Revised-Edition-2023.pdf [accessed 8 May 2024].

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 is likely to follow the same structure and timing using e-assessment 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 when remediation is needed.

Re-assessment

If learners fail a unit, you should give them a further unit assessment opportunity or, in exceptional circumstances, two further 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 needed in a project-based unit, you must use a substantially different project.

Remediation and re-assessment for all units

Remediation

Remediation allows an assessor to clarify learner responses, either by means of 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, either in writing or recording, and make them available to the internal and external verifier.

For closed-book assessments remediation is not permitted.

In NextGen project units, such as, the Social Sciences: Social Policy unit, you should be close enough to the assessment activity to identify the need for remediation when it occurs.

For outcome 4 of the mandatory common core unit, learners should show how they have engaged in the process of developing relevant meta-skills during the programme. It is not the number of meta-skills developed that is important as much as their engagement in the process of planning and development, and learners recognising where they are developing meta-skills.

For outcome 5 on Learning for Sustainability, you should have discussions with learners during the delivery of the unit and the course so that they can identify a suitable sustainability issue. You can guide them if their choice is unsuitable or if they are unable to suggest an appropriate improvement that connects to a UN SDG. They could connect the sustainability improvement to the social policy or legislation they consider in their project for outcomes 1 to 3. However, they can suggest something that is unconnected, as long as it is relevant to a UN SDG and to the subjects they have studied during their programme. We suggest that you timetable this unit all year to allow time for these discussions.

In named social sciences units, learners should complete remediation for outcomes by reviewing their original work. If this is a written response, you should ask them 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. Alternatively, ask them to rewrite their work fully to a prescribed format if it does not meet evidence requirements. You should use your professional judgement about the number of words that the learner needs to add. However, we would expect that if more than approximately 10% of words are needed overall to meet gaps or clarify, then a re-assessment would be more appropriate. You can use oral clarification for minor omissions or to clarify minor detail 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 would help to reduce the need for re-assessment.

In formative assessment situations, you can give feedback at any point. There is one summative assessment point at the end of each unit and you should give feedback then, rather than as each task may be completed. This is to ensure a common approach across the qualification and a standardisation of approach.

Re-assessment

If learners fail their unit or assessment after remediation opportunities, you must give them a further assessment opportunity or, in exceptional circumstances, two further assessment opportunities.

You must use a different assessment for each re-assessment. This could take the form of a different topic or question, or a different assessment method, such as an oral presentation if the first method was a written assessment.

In an oral assessment, you should use a re-assessment if there are large gaps in information requiring more than approximately 10% of words to be added or to fulfil the evidence requirements. In this situation, you should use 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 delivering this qualification must have suitably qualified staff and appropriate learning and teaching resources in place for each of the subject components for the award prior to delivery. See SQA's Systems and Qualification Approval: Guidance for Centres, in particular Category 2, Criterion 2.1 and 2.4:

Learners should have access to library resources to allow them to research topics and theories across the social science subject disciplines. Learners will find it useful if they can access original research articles. While curated textbooks containing summarised studies are available, learners would benefit from engaging with the language and structure of formal academic published research. Where possible, then can use peer-reviewed journals, some of which are available. You should make sure that learners have access to the research articles you reference in your teaching.

Access to digital equipment, such as computers, laptops or tablets will help support learners' digital skills development. NextGen: HN developments aim to be digital first.

The HND 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, such as having a degree in the subject. Course delivery is better when 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 undertake the following qualifications:

Lecturers and tutors

- Teaching Qualification Further Education (TQFE)

or

- GR5K 49 Teaching Practice in Scotland's Colleges

Assessors

- Teaching Qualification Further Education (TQFE) plus CPD to meet current NOS

or

- GR5K 49 Teaching Practice in Scotland's Colleges

or

- 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

The following supportive notes on various units may help centres to shape the focus for learning and teaching activities.

Academic writing and referencing

In response to learner feedback, we developed SQA Academy modules to help learners understand how to write for academic purposes, and how to reference their work. The resulting modules are now live on SQA Academy, and we plan to develop additional content in the future. Please share these modules with your learners.

- NextGen: HN — Academic Writing — to help learners understand the core principles of academic writing.
- NextGen: HN — Referencing — a short module covering the fundamental aspects of referencing in academic writing.

Critical analysis and critical evaluation

Characteristic 3 in the Scottish and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) framework is Generic Cognitive Skills. At SCQF level 8, learners are expected to ‘undertake critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of ideas, concepts, information and issues that are within the common understandings in a subject, discipline or sector’, as well as ‘use a range of approaches to formulate and critically evaluate evidence-based solutions or responses to defined or routine problems and issues’.

Across NextGen: HND Social Sciences, learner responses at SCQF level 8 should be more critically analytical and critically evaluative than at SCQF level 7. Descriptive responses should be minimal. Learners’ levels of integration and synthesis of knowledge and understanding are likely to be reasonably sophisticated at SCQF level 8.

So, what do we mean by critical analysis, critical evaluation or synthesising information? These notes below may be helpful to your learners, so are addressed to them. Please share them with your learners.

Critical analysis

When the SCQF framework uses the word ‘critical’ it tells us that it means ‘fully informed, capable of supporting in-depth analysis and assessment’. Critical analysis is a skill of taking apart information that you read or listen to in a logical way to get to the heart of it. Critically analysing a theory or study requires more than a description. You have to analyse, evaluate, criticise and conclude. You should show where you have used your wider reading, or others’ opinions and ideas. You should make it clear to the reader what is argument or opinion and what is evidence. It is important to show that you are questioning assumptions and claims, reflecting on the information, and identifying bias or other possible errors. It takes valuable skill to give clarity to the ideas you are reading or hearing.

You should use a range of resources to read about a subject in some detail before starting to use the skill of critical analysis. Having background information and alternative viewpoints is crucial to being able to explain the significance of certain views or evidence. You should ask searching questions, like the ones we list here, to help you to critically analyse a theory, the work of the theorist or a study:

- What do I know about this?
  - Fact — can it be substantiated with others agreeing?
  - Evidence — is there any, and is it valid and reliable, with credible sources?
  - Argument — is it convincing, current and relevant to the theme?
  - Explanation — are there other ways this can be explained?

Making a judgement about sources of information on a theme or topic can be time-consuming but it is essential. You may bring your own biases when you are looking for sources, so you look only for those that agree with the point of view you intend showing. This will restrict your ability to critically analyse well. Well-argued and well-researched information can add to the work you do, even if it goes against your original direction or viewpoint on an issue. College libraries can be a great source of help in supporting your development in academic skills such as searching for credible sources.

In critical analysis, you analyse your work and make comparisons to the work of others. You should not just use others’ work to support what you write; you should also give your own view of the credibility of those views. You should discuss the merits of their arguments and the problems associated with their viewpoint or they evidence they use to support the view (or lack of evidence). Do not argue from only one perspective or viewpoint. Subject matter at SCQF level 8 is complex and you need to consider wider ideas before you can draw any conclusions on an argument.

You should:

- start with the topic — define the topic and say why is it important?
- use a range of sources: textbooks and chapters, journal articles, research papers, literature reviews and commentary. Read the text, paying attention to structure, language and content.

- identify the main ideas — make notes of text and page numbers to use to make it easier to refer back to the different aspects of the topic.
- examine the main theory and evidence — not just description but analysis. Is there evidence that the original viewpoint of the theory is reliable, credible, and relevant? Do others agree? Are there supporting studies or evidence? Is there a logic to the argument put forward?
- consider alternative theories or viewpoints — in what way do they differ?
- check if there is alternative evidence (conflicting with original theory or viewpoint)? Is the evidence useful? In what way?
- decide which argument is most compelling? Does the evidence support your initial argument or not? You should give your opinion on what you have read and digested.

By engaging in critical analysis, learners can develop a deeper understanding of a text or argument, identify any flaws or limitations, and develop their own informed opinions and interpretations.

Useful resources for critical analysis

This website gives information on critical analysis as well as examples of the difference between description and critical analysis.

- *Critical Analysis* (2022) *Academic Skills Advice*. University of Hertfordshire. Available at: https://academic-skills.health.herts.ac.uk/academic-writing/workbook/critical-analysis-academic-writing-workbook/ [accessed 8 May 2024].

This website provides useful explanations and links to examples of questions to ask that support critical analysis, as well as how to read a theory critically. Following the links also gives an example of how to write critically about a theory — giving a useful example.

- *Critical Analysis* (n.d.) *Glasgow School for Business and Society*. Glasgow Caledonian University. Available at: https://www.gcu.ac.uk/aboutgcu/academicschools/gsbs/study/ldc/academicwriting/criticalanalysis [accessed 8 May 2023].

This offers a good basic description of critical analysis.

- *Critical Analysis* (2023) University of Wollongong Australia. Available at: https://www.uow.edu.au/student/support-services/academic-skills/online-resources/assessments/critical-analysis/ [accessed 8 May 2025].

Critical evaluation

Critical evaluation involves a comprehensive examination of arguments or evidence to establish their strengths and weaknesses, to show how well something works or what its limitations are. As with critical analysis, it is more than description. Learners must consider any information they consult for bias, inaccuracy or assumption. This is an important skill across a wide range of academic disciplines, including social sciences.

To critically evaluate a piece of information effectively, you must understand its context and purpose. This includes considering the intended audience and the basis of the various contentions made in the theory, debate or discussion.

You need to examine the quality of the sources and evidence used to support the argument. Consider the reliability and credibility of the sources, as this is important. Ask questions about whether the evidence produced supports the contentions made.

Identify any preconceptions or unfairness in the contentions. This includes any misconceptions, unsupported claims, or statements that lessen the case.

Ask if the overall argument is logical and consistent with others' viewpoints — does the argument flow? Are there any contradictions or gaps? Are there other perspectives? Do they give a better account of the evidence? Counterarguments and other interpretations allow for better balance.

Critical evaluation supports you in making informed decisions. It helps you to improve your understanding of a topic, and develop your own arguments and reasoning.

Useful resources for critical evaluation

This document provides advice on judging evidence and avoiding bias, with links to other helpful information.

- *Critical evaluation: Overview* (2023) *Library and Learning Resources*. Birmingham City University. Available at: https://libguides.bcu.ac.uk/critical-evaluation [accessed 8 May 2024].

- *Critically evaluate* (2023) *The student hub live.* Open University. Available at: https://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/abstract/critically-evaluate [accessed 8 May 2024].

What is the difference between critical analysis and critical evaluation?

Critical analysis and critical evaluation both involve careful examination of something to determine its strengths, weaknesses and implications. But, there are some differences between the two.

Critical analysis is primarily concerned with examining the individual components of a text or argument — such as the language, structure and style, breaking down a text or argument into its component parts, and examining each one in detail. In contrast, critical evaluation is focused on assessing the overall value and credibility of a text or argument, and involves synthesising information from multiple sources to form an overall judgement or opinion.

The purpose of critical analysis is to identify the meaning and significance of a text or argument, while the purpose of critical evaluation is to determine whether the text or argument is credible, reliable, and useful.

Critical analysis often results in an interpretation or explanation of a text or argument, while critical evaluation typically results in a judgement or evaluation of its quality or worth.

Overall, critical analysis and critical evaluation are both important tools for examining and interpreting complex information; but, they have different focuses, processes, and outcomes.

What does synthesising information mean?

Synthesising information means to combine and integrate different pieces of information from multiple sources into a coherent and unified whole. This involves analysing and evaluating various sources of information; identifying common themes, patterns and trends; and organising them in a way that creates new understanding or insight.

The process of synthesising information typically involves the following steps:

- gathering information from multiple sources — such as books, articles, reports, or websites — that are relevant to the topic or question at hand.
- analysing and evaluating the information to consider its credibility, relevance and significance.
- identifying common themes, patterns and trends across the various sources of information.
- organising the information in a way that creates a coherent and logical structure, such as by grouping similar ideas or arguments together.
- drawing conclusions and insights from this gathered and organised information, and using it to develop new ideas, theories or arguments.

More simply, synthesising information means taking different pieces of information from different sources and putting them together in a way that makes sense. It involves analysing the information, identifying common themes and patterns, and organising it into a clear and logical structure. By doing this, you can gain a better and deeper understanding of a topic, see connections between different ideas and perspectives, and come up with new insights and ideas that you might not have thought of otherwise. This can lead to creative solutions or innovative ideas. It supports learners to be critical thinkers

Being a learner who can think critically means having the ability to engage in critical thinking and analysis when learning. It involves questioning assumptions, evaluating evidence and arguments, and being open to new perspectives and ideas. Critical learners are able to think deeply and critically about the information they encounter, and are able to identify biases, assumptions, and gaps in knowledge.

Critical learners are able to assess the reliability and validity of information and can distinguish between credible and unreliable sources. They are also able to evaluate their own thinking and biases and are willing to revise their views based on new evidence or arguments. Being a critical learner is an important skill for success in

SCQF level 8 and beyond, as it enables individuals to make informed decisions, solve complex problems, and navigate a rapidly changing world.

One area that can often hold learners back in their assessment responses is not knowing how to start sentences or what words to use in analysis or evaluation. Learners could find the following resource helpful to get started.

- *Being critical* (n.d.) *Academic Phrasebank*. University of Manchester. Available at: https://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/being-critical/ [accessed 8 May 2024].

Additional assessment information by unit

J80N 48 Criminology: Themes and Criminal Cases

You can assess this unit using any appropriate format. If you choose to ask learners to produce a report, they can present information, findings, analysis, and recommendations on a specific topic or subject in a structured way that works well with the subject matter..

Learners could follow this report format:

- Title — this should be meaningful and indicate what is in the report. An example is ‘A Critical Analysis of Criminological Theories Applied to a Case Study of Social and Political Significance’.
- Abstract — a concise and condensed formal summary of the report’s content, without references or citations This should give a brief overview of the report’s main points and findings, and may be subject to a word limit. It should focus on presenting the main objectives, methods, results, and conclusions of the work in a clear and structured manner.
- Introduction — an overview of the selected criminological case study with an explanation of its social and political significance. It could outline the purpose of the analysis and highlight the importance of understanding the incident through various criminological perspectives.
- Review of criminological theories — a comprehensive review of at least two prominent criminological theories relevant to the cases being examined. Learners should explore each theory's key principles and assumptions, as a foundation for the subsequent analysis.
- Background to the criminal case — an in-depth account of the criminal event, including its context, participants, and consequences. Learners should focus should be on how the incident reverberated throughout society and politics, and its impact on various stakeholders.
- Application of criminological theories to the criminal case — an examination of the criminal case through the lens of each criminological theory. Learners’ analyses should aim to identify how each theory explains the causes and motivations behind the crime and its wider implications on social and political dynamics. This involves assessing the relevance and limitations of each theory in understanding the case.
- Comparative analysis —a holistic evaluation. This may include the strengths and weaknesses of each criminological theory in its application to the case study. It may also consider any overlaps or contradictions between theories, providing insights into a more holistic understanding of the crime's complexity.
- Policy Implications — should derive from the critical analysis of the criminal case using different criminological theories. Learners should aim to identify potential strategies and interventions to prevent similar incidents in the future, and address their social and political repercussions.
- Conclusion — a summary of the key findings of the analysis, highlighting the most effective criminological theories in explaining the case study's dynamics. This may reiterate the importance of integrating multiple perspectives for a

comprehensive understanding of complex criminal events with social and political significance.

- References — at the end of the document, a comprehensive list of all the sources cited in the paper. Learners should use a standard method, such as Harvard.

Examples of criminal cases that could be used in several themes

You could use the following criminal cases to help you direct your learning and teaching if you want to combine themes. You can approach these examples using several criminological theories, including (but not limited to) classical, biological, psychological, sociological and conflict theories. You could ask learners to choose the theory they want to apply. You can also choose to use any other cases that you may be familiar with.

History and social change — Roe v Wade (1973)

The topic of abortion fits with the course themes of Power and control and Inequalities, as well as the subject-specific themes of Social harms and social justice and Punishment.

One case that has had significant consequences for the criminal justice system, particularly related to abortion laws in the US, is Roe v Wade (1973). This landmark case addressed the constitutional right to privacy and established the framework for legalising abortion in the country.

Before the Roe v Wade case, many states in the US had laws criminalising or severely restricting access to abortion. This case involved a woman named Jane Roe (a pseudonym) who challenged the constitutionality of a Texas law that prohibited abortion except to save the life of the mother.

In its ruling, the US Supreme Court held that a woman's right to have an abortion fell within the constitutional right to privacy. The Court recognised that the right to privacy encompassed a woman's decision to terminate a pregnancy, particularly in the early stages when the state's interest in regulating the procedure was not compelling. The decision established a woman's right to access safe and legal abortion under certain conditions.

The impact of Roe v Wade on the criminal justice system was significant. Politically, the ruling sparked heated debates and deep divisions within society. It became a central issue in political campaigns, with activists and interest groups on both sides advocating for their positions. The case fundamentally shaped the political landscape, contributing to the formation of pro-choice and pro-life movements that continue to influence policy discussions and elections.

Criminally, the case had a direct consequence on abortion laws across the US. It invalidated existing laws that criminalised or severely restricted access to abortion, leading to the repeal or modification of many state-level restrictions. The ruling ensured that women had the legal right to seek abortion services without fear of criminal prosecution.

Socially, Roe v Wade case sparked broader conversations about reproductive rights, women's autonomy, and the role of the state in regulating personal decisions. It contributed to the empowerment of women, providing them with greater control over their reproductive choices. The case also highlighted the need for comprehensive sexual education and access to reproductive healthcare.

Judicially, Roe v Wade decision set an important precedent regarding the constitutional right to abortion. The Supreme Court established a legal framework that balanced a woman's right to choose with the state's interest in protecting potential life. The case has since been subject to ongoing legal challenges and interpretations, resulting in subsequent Supreme Court decisions that have clarified and modified aspects of the original ruling.

Power and control — Furman versus Georgia (1972)

A death penalty case fits with the approved course themes of Power and control and Deviance, as well as the subject-specific themes of Punishment and Social harms and social justice.

The case of Furman v Georgia (1972) in the US was described as a landmark case that addressed the constitutionality of the death penalty and its application, leading to profound changes in the criminal justice system. Before the Furman v Georgia case, the death penalty was widely used across the US, but concerns were raised about its arbitrary and discriminatory application. The case involved three separate defendants who had been sentenced to death and argued that their punishments violated the Eighth and Fourteenth Amendments of the US Constitution, which prohibit cruel and unusual punishment and guarantee equal protection under the law, respectively.

In a significant ruling, the US Supreme Court held that the death penalty, as it was being applied at the time, was unconstitutional due to its arbitrary and discriminatory nature. The Court found that there were no objective standards guiding the decision to impose the death penalty, leading to a substantial risk of arbitrary and capricious outcomes.

The consequences of the Furman v Georgia case on the criminal justice system were profound. It resulted in an effective moratorium on executions in the US for several years as states re-evaluated and revised their capital punishment statutes. Many states enacted new legislation to address the concerns raised by the Court, introducing more objective criteria and guidelines to ensure a fair and consistent application of the death penalty.

Following the Furman decision, the Supreme Court's subsequent ruling in Gregg v Georgia (1976) reinstated the death penalty but under a more structured framework. The Court held that capital punishment itself was not inherently unconstitutional, but states need to follow specific guidelines and procedures to avoid arbitrariness. This decision led to the resumption of executions in the US, with states adopting new laws that provided clearer standards for determining eligibility for the death penalty.

The Furman versus Georgia case also had significant political, social and judicial implications. Politically, the case sparked debates and discussions about the morality and effectiveness of the death penalty, with advocates and opponents of capital punishment arguing their respective positions. The case brought attention to the potential for racial and socioeconomic disparities in the application of the death penalty, leading to further scrutiny of the system.

Socially, the case contributed to a broader movement for criminal justice reform and had consequences for public opinion on the death penalty. It heightened awareness of the potential for wrongful convictions and the irreversibility of capital punishment, leading to increased calls for alternatives, such as life imprisonment without parole.

Judicially, the Furman decision set important precedent regarding the constitutional limits of the death penalty. It emphasised the need for fairness, consistency, and objective standards in its application. The case prompted a re-evaluation of sentencing practices and contributed to ongoing legal debates about the constitutionality of various aspects of the death penalty, including methods of execution and the impact of mental illness and intellectual disability on its application.

Inequalities — Stephen Lawrence (1993)

A case focused on the nature of policing relates to the course themes of Inequalities and Power and control, as well as the subject-specific themes of Punishment and Police organisation and culture.

The murder of Stephen Lawrence in the UK in 1993 had significant consequences for the criminal justice system, particularly in relation to racism in policing. Stephen Lawrence, a black British teenager, was brutally attacked and killed by a group of white youths in a racially motivated attack. The case brought to light systemic failures and racial biases within the police investigation and had far-reaching implications for the criminal justice system and policing practices in the UK.

The initial police investigation into Stephen Lawrence's murder was marred by incompetence, racial prejudice and institutional failures. The Lawrence family faced obstacles in their pursuit of justice, with key evidence being mishandled or ignored. The case exposed the systemic racism within the police force and highlighted the unequal treatment of ethnic minorities in the criminal justice system.

The impact of Stephen Lawrence's murder on the criminal justice system was profound. Politically, the case prompted widespread public outcry and led to a significant shift in public opinion regarding racism and police practices. It forced the government to confront issues of institutional racism and take action to address them.

The Macpherson Report, published in 1999, was a seminal moment in the aftermath of Stephen Lawrence's murder. The report concluded that the Metropolitan Police Service was institutionally racist, and made a series of recommendations to tackle racism within the force. It called for reforms in police procedures, training and recruitment practices to ensure equal treatment for all communities.

The case also had a lasting impact on policing practices. It led to changes in the law, including the introduction of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, which placed a legal duty on public authorities, including the police, to promote equality and tackle racial discrimination. The case highlighted the need for more diverse police forces that better represent the communities they serve and foster trust between the police and minority communities.

Socially, the Stephen Lawrence case brought issues of racial injustice to the forefront of public consciousness. It sparked conversations about racism in society, the experiences of minority communities, and the need for systemic change. The case became a rallying point for anti-racism activists and led to increased awareness and activism against racial discrimination in various aspects of society.

Judicially, the case exposed flaws in the criminal justice system's response to racially motivated crimes. It raised questions about the adequacy of existing legislation and the treatment of hate crimes. The consequence of the case was the development of hate crime legislation in the UK, strengthening protections for victims and ensuring that racially motivated offences are treated with the seriousness they deserve.

Globalisation — United States versus Enron Corporation (2006)

A case focused on white-collar crime fits with the course themes of Globalisation and Ethics, as well as the subject-specific themes of Punishment and Extraordinary behaviour.

One example of white-collar crime that has had a significant impact on the criminal justice system, is the case of United States versus Enron Corporation (2006). The Enron scandal is one of the largest corporate fraud cases in history, and its repercussions have had far-reaching effects on politics, criminal justice, society and the judicial system.

Enron Corporation, once considered one of the world's leading energy companies, collapsed in 2001 due to widespread accounting fraud and corporate misconduct. Executives at Enron engaged in deceptive accounting practices, hiding debts and inflating profits, which ultimately led to the company's bankruptcy and the loss of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars for shareholders and employees.

Politically, the Enron case exposed the need for increased regulation and oversight of corporate activities. The scandal led to public outrage and calls for reform to prevent similar fraud in the future. It prompted lawmakers to introduce and pass legislation such as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, which aimed to enhance corporate governance, strengthen financial reporting and increase penalties for corporate fraud.

Criminally, the Enron case resulted in the prosecution and conviction of several high-ranking executives involved in the fraud. The trials highlighted the complexities of prosecuting white-collar crimes and the challenges of holding corporate executives accountable for their actions. The case served as a wake-up call for law enforcement agencies, demonstrating the need for specialised units and resources to investigate and prosecute complex financial crimes.

Socially, the Enron scandal eroded public trust in corporations and the financial system. It exposed the dangers of unchecked corporate greed and the potential consequences for employees, shareholders, and society at large. The case led to increased scepticism and scrutiny of corporate practices and executive compensation, sparking conversations about ethics, corporate responsibility and the moral obligations of business leaders.

Judicially, the Enron case had a significant impact on white-collar crime prosecutions and sentencing. The high-profile nature of the case brought attention to the severity of corporate fraud and the need for deterrent punishments. The trials and subsequent convictions of Enron executives set precedents for future white-collar crime cases, reinforcing the importance of holding individuals accountable for their roles in fraudulent schemes.

Additionally, the Enron case had broader implications for the judicial system's handling of white-collar crimes. It highlighted the challenges of investigating and prosecuting complex financial schemes and the importance of cooperation between regulatory agencies, law enforcement, and prosecutors. The case prompted discussions on the allocation of resources, the need for specialised training, and the development of expertise in investigating and prosecuting white-collar crimes.

Human environments — United States versus Exxon Valdez (1994)

A case that focuses on environmental crime relates to the course themes of Globalisation and Human environments, as well as the subject-specific themes of Punishment and Social harms and social justice.

The case of United States versus Exxon Valdez (1994) could be a useful example if you are covering environmental crimes. This case arose from one of the most devastating oil spills in history, and its repercussions had profound effects on politics, criminal justice, society and the judicial system.

The Exxon Valdez oil spill happened in 1989 when the oil tanker Exxon Valdez ran aground in Prince William Sound, Alaska, resulting in the release of approximately 11 million gallons of crude oil into the surrounding waters. The spill had catastrophic consequences for the environment, causing extensive damage to wildlife, habitats and the local fishing industry.

Politically, the Exxon Valdez case exposed the need for stricter regulations and oversight in the oil industry. The spill brought public attention to the potential environmental hazards associated with oil transportation and highlighted the importance of preventive measures and emergency response protocols. It led to the passage of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which strengthened regulations governing oil spills and increased liability for companies involved in such incidents.

Criminally, the case resulted in both civil and criminal legal actions against Exxon Corporation, the owner of the Exxon Valdez. The company was charged with multiple criminal violations, including violating the Clean Water Act (1972). The criminal trial brought attention to the responsibility of corporations in preventing environmental

disasters and holding them accountable for their actions. Exxon Corporation was eventually convicted of criminal charges and ordered to pay substantial fines.

Socially, the Exxon Valdez case sparked widespread outrage and concern for the environment. The images of oil-soaked wildlife and the devastating impact on the local community resonated with the public, leading to increased awareness about the importance of environmental conservation and the need for corporate accountability. The spill prompted discussions about the trade-offs between economic development and environmental protection, as well as the responsibilities of companies in preventing and mitigating environmental disasters.

Judicially, the Exxon Valdez case had a significant impact on environmental law and the criminal justice system's response to environmental crimes. The case highlighted the challenges of proving corporate culpability and the complexities of quantifying environmental damage. It underscored the importance of robust investigation and evidence-gathering techniques in prosecuting environmental crimes. The case also prompted discussions about appropriate penalties and restitution for environmental harm, leading to ongoing debates on the adequacy of fines and the effectiveness of deterrence.

Furthermore, the Exxon Valdez case served as a precedent for subsequent environmental crime cases, influencing the legal framework and standards for corporate liability. It set an example of the potential criminal consequences for companies that cause significant environmental harm through their actions or negligence. The case emphasised the importance of corporate responsibility and the role of the criminal justice system in deterring environmental crimes.

Ethics — Miscarriages of Justice: the Central Park Five (1989)

Cases that focus on miscarriages of justice fit with the course themes of Power and control and Inequalities, as well as the subject-specific themes of Punishment and Police organisation and culture.

One case that had a significant impact on the criminal justice system and brought attention to the issue of miscarriages of justice is the case of the Central Park Five in the US. The case involved the wrongful conviction of five teenagers for the rape and assault of a female jogger in New York City's Central Park in 1989. The consequences of this case can be analysed across political, criminal, social and judicial domains.

In terms of criminal justice, the Central Park Five case exposed flaws in the criminal justice system, including coerced confessions, unreliable evidence and racial bias. It led to a re-evaluation of investigative techniques, such as interrogations of juveniles, and highlighted the need for reforms to prevent future miscarriages of justice. The case contributed to changes in policies and practices surrounding interrogations, eyewitness identification procedures and the use of DNA evidence.

Socially, the case generated significant public attention and became a focal point for discussions on race, class, and crime in the US. It highlighted the dangers of a rush to judgement and the consequences of racial bias on criminal investigations and

media coverage. The case sparked debates about systemic racism, wrongful convictions and the treatment of minorities within the criminal justice system. It served as a catalyst for raising awareness about the potential for injustice and inspired calls for more equitable treatment.

Politically, the Central Park Five case had consequences for political discourse and policy-making. The controversy surrounding the case became intertwined with racial tensions and contributed to the 'tough on crime' rhetoric prevalent in the 1990s. However, as the case gained widespread attention and new evidence emerged, it also prompted discussions about the need for criminal justice reforms, rehabilitation and a more nuanced approach to addressing crime.

Following the wrongful convictions, the case underwent a long legal process. In 2002, based on DNA evidence, the convictions were overturned, and the Central Park Five were exonerated. The case prompted a re-evaluation of evidence, eyewitness testimony, and the reliability of confessions. It exposed the potential for injustice within the judicial system and contributed to efforts to improve the accuracy and fairness of criminal trials.

The Central Park Five case raised important questions about the treatment of victims and their families. The exoneration of the Central Park Five led to discussions about the consequences of wrongful convictions on victims and the need to provide support, resources, and justice for all parties involved. It highlighted the complexities and challenges in cases of miscarriages of justice and the need for a more comprehensive and compassionate approach.

The 2012 documentary film 'The Central Park Five' by Ken Burns, Sarah Burns and David McMahon played a crucial role in bringing public attention to the case. The documentary examined the investigation, trials and eventual exoneration of the Central Park Five, shedding light on the flaws and injustices they experienced. The film, along with media coverage, further contributed to the public discourse and increased awareness of wrongful convictions.

The Central Park Five case had consequences for the criminal justice system, sparking reforms, exposing racial bias, and highlighting the potential for miscarriages of justice. It changed public perception, political discussions, and judicial practices. The case serves as a reminder of the importance of fair and impartial investigations, the protection of individual rights and the ongoing need for reforms to prevent wrongful convictions and ensure justice for all.

J7D7 48 Politics: Themes from a Political Perspective

Useful resources for studying subject-specific themes

Welfare reform

Analysis into the causes for welfare state growth, as well as processes of cross-national variation:

- Esping-Andersen, G. (2013). *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. John Wiley and Sons.
- Pierson, P. (2009). *The New Politics of the Welfare State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

'New social risks', and problems of long-term unemployment or labour market inactivity:

- Taylor-Gooby P. (1996). New Risks, New Welfare: The Transformation of the European Welfare State. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.

International political governance

The continued globalisation of certain norms of governing states and societies:

- Downie, C. (2022). How do informal international organizations govern? The G20 and orchestration. *International Affairs,* 98(3), pp.953-972.
- Phillips, N. (2017). Power and inequality in the global political economy. *International Affairs*, Volume 93, Issue 2, pp.429-444. Available at: https://academic.oup.com/ia/article/93/2/429/2997439 [accessed 8 May 2024].

Political representation

Useful texts include:

- Bevan, S. and Jennings, W. (2014). Representation, Agendas, and Institutions. *European Journal of Political Research*. Volume 53, Issue 1, pp. 37-56.
- Held, D. (2006). *Models of Democracy.* Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Greenwood, J. (2011). *Interest Representation in the European Union.* Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Piattoni, S. and Piattoni, S. (2001). *Clientelism, Interests, and Democratic Representation.* Cambridge University Press.

Political Economy

- Phillips, N. (2023). Global Political Economy. Oxford University Press.

J7D5 48 Psychology: Critical Analysis and Research of Themes

Learners must produce a report of their own research into a theme for this unit. They can present the report in written form, orally using presentation software, or as a poster exhibition with oral explanation. If they choose to do this orally, learners should still follow the advice given below on the structure to ensure they cover the appropriate information.

We suggest these ten points to help your learners produce a laboratory report in psychology. You can give them the ten points as a note, or produce your own version:

1. A standard format. A laboratory report in psychology typically follows the format of an empirical research paper, which includes an abstract or summary, an introduction, hypotheses, methods section, results section, discussion section and conclusion. Follow this format and include all the necessary information in each section.
2. Use clear and concise language throughout the report. Avoid using complex jargon or technical terms that may be difficult for the reader to understand.

3 Use an experimental or alternative hypothesis and a null hypothesis. An experimental hypothesis is a statement that proposes a relationship between the independent variable(s) and the dependent variable(s) in an experiment. An alternative hypothesis can be used in research that is not experimental in nature, such as a survey. In survey research, an alternative hypothesis may be used to propose a specific relationship between variables that are being measured or to propose an alternative explanation for the relationship between variables. A null hypothesis assumes there is no significant difference between two groups or no significant relationship between two variables. This is used in both experiments and in survey research. If the statistical tests show that there is not enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis, the conclusion is that there is no significant difference or relationship between the groups or variables being compared. If there is enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis, the conclusion is that there is a significant difference or relationship between the groups or variables being compared, and the alternative or experimental hypothesis is accepted. Generally, you state that the null hypothesis is rejected, or the experimental (or alternative) hypothesis is rejected.

4 In the methods section, be specific about the procedures used in the study. Give enough detail so that someone else could replicate the study. We recommend that learners ensure participants are 16 or older and not vulnerable for informed consent in psychology research, and that they uphold ethical standards and research integrity.

5 In the results section, report the data in a clear and organised manner, using tables and graphs when appropriate.

6 Use inferential, as well as descriptive statistics, to determine whether the results obtained in the study are statistically significant, that is, due to the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable, or simply due to chance. This allows you to make inferences about the population based on the sample data collected, providing valuable information about the generalisability of the results beyond the study sample.

7 Interpret the results of the study in the discussion section and explain their significance. Begin by summarising the results, including any significant effects or relationships that you observed. Make connections to the broader field of psychology, discussing any implications or practical applications of the result. Discuss any limitations of the study and suggest directions for future research.

8 Conclude by summarising the key findings and implications. Restate the research question or hypotheses and say how you addressed them in the study.

9 Cite your sources. Cite any sources you used in your report, including previous research, relevant theories and any other sources of information.

10 Proofread and edit. Before submitting your report, proofread and edit it carefully for spelling, grammar and punctuation errors. Make sure the report is well-organised and flows logically from one section to the next.

Ethical concerns

Learners should pay particular attention to is that of ethical concerns, some of the most important of which include:

- Informed consent: participants must be fully informed about the study's purpose, procedures, and potential risks and benefits. They must also provide their voluntary consent to participate. We recommend not using under 16s, or vulnerable participants.
- Confidentiality: participants' personal information must be kept confidential and not disclosed without their consent. Learners must ensure that data is handled and stored appropriately, according to ethical and legal guidelines.
- Deception: this should be avoided unless absolutely necessary and agreed in advance between staff and learner. When used, it must be carefully explained to participants afterwards, giving them another opportunity to withdraw their consent for their data to be used.
- Debriefing: participants must be debriefed about the true purpose of the study and can receive the results after the study is complete.
- Risk of harm: learners as researchers must take precautions to minimise the risk of physical or psychological harm to participants. This includes monitoring participants' well-being during and after the study.
- Respect for participants: learners must treat participants with respect.
- Cultural sensitivity: learners must be sensitive to the cultural and social context of the study and take steps to ensure that the study does not harm or offend participants.

Course team ethical review

Centres should consider setting up a small group to review learners' research plans formally, and approve research projects that fit with the principles of good research practice. This would ensure that learners meet ethical standards before they start the research. You should introduce learners to the use of ethical standards in research, such as The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity.

By taking these ethical concerns into account when carrying out research in psychology, learners can carry out their studies responsibly and ethically, protecting the well-being and rights of participants involved.

The summary or abstract

This section sits at the start of a laboratory report and should provide a brief overview of the study and its key findings. It should be a concise and clear summary of the entire report, including the purpose, methods, results, and conclusions.

This information could be helpful to learners who lack confidence in writing the summary and the literature review, which is part of the introduction section.

Learners should structure the summary in a way that clearly and logically presents the study's main components, and includes the following key elements:

- Background and purpose — give a brief overview of the research problem and the purpose of the study.
- Methods — briefly describe the study design, including the sample size, data collection methods and any procedures used.
- Results — summarise the key findings of the study, including any statistical analyses carried out.
- Conclusions — discuss the implications of the study's findings and its contribution to the broader field of psychology.

Learners should write the summary clearly and concisely, using language that is easy to understand for the target audience. It should include enough information to give the reader a good understanding of the study's main components and findings, without going into too much detail.

The summary is often the first section of the report that a reader will see, so it should be engaging and well-written to capture their attention and encourage them to read on.

Literature review

A literature review typically involves the following steps:

- Identifying the research topic — clearly define the topic that the literature review addresses.
- Conducting a comprehensive search — search for and gather relevant literature and research on the topic from various sources, such as academic journals, textbooks,
  e-books, films, TV programmes, podcasts, conference proceedings and online databases.
- Evaluating the sources — evaluate the gathered sources based on their relevance, reliability and credibility. Only high-quality sources that meet certain criteria are included in a literature review. Learners do not need to give full details of the work they have read or watched but should summarise the key aspects that are directly relevant to the research proposal they are developing.
- Analysing the sources — analyse and summarise selected sources to identify the key themes, concepts and debates in the literature, highlighting the most important and relevant information.

A literature review is a comprehensive and critical analysis of existing literature, research, and other relevant sources on a particular topic, research question or hypothesis. It involves a systematic review and synthesis of available literature to identify key themes, trends, gaps and debates in the field.

Learners should critically analyse key psychological contributions to a chosen theme in this section, to fulfil the evidence requirements for outcome 1 in this section of their report. They should include:

- A clear and coherent explanation of how the theme relates to psychology.
- Identification of relevant conflicting psychological theories that relate to the specific theme.
- A critical analysis of the contribution of relevant conflicting theories to the theme.
- An evaluation of research evidence appropriate to the psychological theories.

We would expect learners to write approximately 800 words in the literature review for the laboratory report. The review should be selective, with several sources used (not just the core text that is used in class).

Appropriate format for an oral or poster presentation

If your learners use an oral, or poster and oral presentation, they should write it in a clear, precise unambiguous manner. This is good practice. They should prepare their information so that would be relatively straightforward to replicate the work.

Learners may produce several drafts of their poster or digital slides before deciding on the final version, as the material they choose should be succinct and engaging, as well as visually inviting. Using graphics as well as text will make their poster presentation or digital slide presentation more appealing.

The presentation can be a mix of oral and written information. This could be, for example, a written response of approximately 1,000 words, accompanied by an oral explanation of 6 to 8 minutes in duration. The poster presentation should be a summary of a learner's research report, with learners giving more detail for each section in their oral explanation or presentation.

Learners could use the following headings in the structure of their presentation, whether written, oral or a mix of the two:

- Title.
- Abstract — on top left (summary of entire poster).
- Introduction (short) — mention whose theories and research this study is based on.
- Hypotheses — null and experimental or alternative.
- Aim of research — maximum of one or two sentences.
- Methodology — include design, participants, materials or apparatus.
- Ethical concerns — a heading or graphic on each concern; for example, they could explain why all the participants were over 16.
- Results — include table and bar charts or graphs and visual representations, such as images and diagrams, to demonstrate and analysis of the data gathered.
- Conclusion — two or three sentences.

They could cover the following areas in their oral input, as well as explaining items on the poster:

- Literature review and background — giving fuller details than on the poster (after introduction).
- Discussion — an oral presentation should repeat key findings and relate to hypotheses and previous research, and details what learners discovered through their research? Did they come across any problems, or interesting data? What critique method did they use? What would be the next step for this research? (This section would come after the results but before the conclusion.)

Learners should hand in a copy of the poster or slides and a reference or bibliography list to their lecturer after their presentation, as well as a copy of any questionnaire they used, raw data and detailed instructions.

If learners choose to deliver a digital slide presentation, each slide should have similar headings to the poster, with the literature review and background and discussion added in. Each slide must be concise, with no more than a few bullet points or sentences. They can give additional details in their oral presentation.

Useful resources

- The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity. Available at: https://allea.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/European-Code-of-Conduct-Revised-Edition-2023.pdf [accessed 8 May 2024]

J80J 48 Social Anthropology: Thematic Ethnography

Ethnography is the focus for this unit. The following are suggestions of useful ethnographies that could be useful for the subject-specific themes.

Roth, P. A., et al. (1989). Ethnography Without Tears [with Comments and Reply]. *Current Anthropology* 30, no. 5 (December 1989). pp. 555 – 69.

Work and economies

Freeman, C. (2000). *High Tech and High Heels in the Global Economy: Women, Work, and Pink-Collar Identity in the Caribbean*. Duke University Press.

Gershon, I. (2016). ‘I’m not a businessman, I’m a business, man’ Typing the neoliberal self into a branded existence. *Hau Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 6 (3): pp. 223 – 246.

High, M. (2017). *Fear and fortune: spirit worlds and emerging economies in the Mongolian gold rush*. Cornell University Press.

Ho, K. (2009). *Liquidated: An Ethnography of Wall Street*. Duke University Press.

Jegathesan, M. (2015). 'Deficient realities: expertise and uncertainty among tea plantation workers in Sri Lanka'. *Dialectical Anthropology*. April 2015.

Mollona, M. (2005). Factory, Family and Neighbourhood: The Political Economy of Informal Labour in Sheffield. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 11: pp. 527–548.

Human life courses

Winkler-Reid S. (2016). Friendship, bitching, and the making of ethical selves: what it means to be a good friend among girls in a London school. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*. 22(1), pp. 166–182.

Art, museums and heritage

Cant, A. (2019). *The Value of Aesthetics: Oaxacan Artisans in Global Economies of Culture*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Sport and leisure

Cassidy, R. (2002). The Sport of Kings: Kinship, Class and Thoroughbred Breeding in Newmarket. *Anthrozoös Journal*. University of Cambridge Press.

Hopkinson, L. (2023). Boxing family: theorising competition with boxers in Accra, Ghana. *Critique of Anthropology*. SAGE publications.

Language and ways of thinking

Course, M. (2019). Houses of Uist: memory and dwelling in the Outer Hebrides. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*. Vol.25, No.1: 51-65.

J7D6 48 Sociology: Thematic and Critical Approaches

In outcome 1 of this unit, learners must 'evaluate the contribution of a theory, theorist or study to the development of sociological thinking on a theme'. This involves several steps. We offer general guidelines in the following bullet points using the example themes of Power and control and Post colonialism.

- Understand the context — before learners evaluate the contribution of a theory, theorist or study, it is important that they understand the historical and intellectual context in which the theory or study emerged, or the theorist worked. This includes the social and political conditions that shaped the theorist's perspective, as well as the theoretical debates and conversations that were happening at the time.
- Identify the main concepts — to evaluate the contribution of a theory, theorist or study, learners should identify main concepts and how they relate to the theme. For example, if the theme is Power and control, learners should outline the theorist's definition of power, the different types of power that the theorist or theory explains, and how power operates in different social contexts. If the theme was Post colonialism, learners would use the same process, explaining the theorist's definition of post colonialism, their understanding of the legacies of

colonialism, and how they conceptualise power relations in the post colonial context.

- Highlight the key arguments — once they have identified the main concepts , learners should consider how the theorist explains the mechanisms of power, and how they understand the relationships between, for example, power and social inequality. For Post colonialism, learners could explain the mechanisms of postcolonial power relations, how theories or theorists explain the relationships, for example, between post colonialism and globalisation, and how theorists propose strategies for resistance and liberation.
- Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses — after highlighting the key arguments, learners should assess the extent to which the theory provides new insights into the theme of Power and control or into postcolonial thinking, and how well it explains and predicts social phenomena. Learners should also consider the limitations of the theory and its potential blind spots.
- Consider the broader impact — finally, it's important for learners to consider the broader impact of the theory on the development of sociological thinking on Power and control or Post colonialism. This includes examining how a theory or a theorist's ideas have been taken up and applied by other scholars, how it has influenced public discourse, and how it has contributed to broader social and political movements.

The same steps apply to evaluating the contribution of a study. Overall, evaluating the contribution of a theory, theorist or study to the development of sociological thinking on a theme involves a careful and critical consideration of the theoretical concepts, arguments, and impact, within their broader historical and intellectual context.

Outcomes 2 and 3 involve learners looking at the same themes as for outcome 1, but using alternative theories to the one studied in outcome 1.

Useful resources for studying sociology themes

Any of the main texts for sociology at this level allow development of these themes and highlight key theorists, debates and studies. They also highlight further resources and reading, which are often available as open source.

- Giddens, A. and Sutton, P.W. (2021) Sociology. John Wiley & Sons.
- Haralambos, M. and Holborn, M. (2013). Sociology Themes and Perspectives. London: HarperCollins Publishers.

If you are covering the themes of Inequalities; Society, risk and security; Globalisation; or History and social change, you could introduce studies for discussion and evaluation, such as the particularly suitable:

- Beck, U. (1992). *Risk society: towards a new modernity*. London: Sage Publications.

This influential study argues that capitalist societies are changing in important ways and suggests that risk in contemporary societies characterises all groups, making class an increasingly irrelevant concept for social analysis. Beck's views informed

Pakulski and Waters' argument that the concept of class is outdated in a postmodern, globalised consumer society:

- Pakulski, J. and Waters, M. (1996). *The Death of Class*. SAGE Publications Limited.

The following work argues that class differences are becoming 'hardened' and that your economic position defines your opportunities more than ever:

- Westergaard, J. and Resler, H. (1975) *Class in a Capitalist Society: A Study of Contemporary Britain*. London: Heinemann Educational.

You could then introduce learners to connected debates, including the following, which focus on connections between class analysis and culture and oppose the theories of individualisation discussed by theorists such as Beck and Giddens:

- Savage, M. (2000). *Class Analysis and Social Transformation*. Open University Press.
- Devine, F., Savage, M., Scott, J. and Crompton, R. eds., (2005). *Rethinking Class: Cultures, Identities and Lifestyles*. Houndmills; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Social theory contested knowledge

A good introduction to debates on the concepts of involvement, detachment and synthesis is:
Kilminster, R. (2014) 'The Dawn of Detachment: Norbert Elias and Sociology's two tracks', History of the Human Sciences, 27(3), 96–115 [online] Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/274216426_The_dawn_of_detachment_Norbert_Elias_and_sociology's_two_tracks [accessed: 8 May 2024].

Society and Welfare

Useful information on implications of globalisation and capitalism for society and welfare and its inequalities:

- Beck, U. (1992) Risk Society: towards a new modernity. London: Sage Publications.
- Robinson, W.I. (2014). Global capitalism and the crisis of humanity. New York City: Cambridge University Press.

Alongside the work of Beck and Robinson, further studies might include, for example:

- Chapman, S. (2008) 'Is Social Class Still Important?', *Sociology Review,* 18 (2).
- Giddens, A. and Diamond, D. eds., (2005) *The New Egalitarianism.* Cambridge: Polity.
- Savage, M. (2000) *Class Analysis and Social Transformation.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

You could pursue comparative theories and approaches to the welfare state, such as:

- Jessop, B. (2002). *The Future of the Capitalist State.* Cambridge: Polity.
- Jessop, B. (2013). *State Power.* John Wiley & Sons.

- Pierson, C. (2013). Beyond the welfare state?: the new political economy of welfare. Cambridge: Polity.

You could also look at critiques on the welfare state, such as:
- Alcock, P. (2003). *Social policy in Britain: themes and issues*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bartholomew, J. (2006). *The Welfare State We're In.* London: Biteback.

Religion

Otto Maduro suggests religious movements promote social change and counter ruling-class ideologies and interests:
- Maduro, O. (2005). *Religion and Social Conflicts*. Wipf and Stock Publishers.

You could contrast this work with Jose Casanova's, which asserts that religion continues to be irrational and remains a major source of societal conflict:
- Casanova, J. (1994) *Public Religions in the Modern World*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

You could look at the impact of globalisation and commodification on religion and religious cultures, and identities in postmodernist accounts, such as:
- Hervieu-Léger, D. (2000). *Religions as a Chain of Memory.* Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Lyon, D. (2000). *Jesus in Disneyland: Religion in Postmodern Times*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

You could also look at the growth of denominations, sects, or cults and so-called New Age Movements (NAMs), for example:
- Heelas, P. (1996). The New Age Movements: Religion, Culture and Society in the Age of Post Modernity. Wiley-Blackwell.

*Y*ou could look at secularisation, globalisation and fundamentalism in studies such as:
- Bruce, S. (2011). *God is dead: secularization in the West*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Bruce, S. (2008) *Fundamentalism*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Post colonialism

This theme would work well with anti-racism materials. Useful texts include:
- Bhambra, G (2007). Rethinking Modernity: Post colonialism and the Sociological Imagination. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Giddens, A. (1987). The Nation-State and Violence.
- Said, E.W. (2007). Humanism and democratic criticism. Columbia University Press.

Topics of capitalism, war and violence are covered by:
- Tilly, C. (1990). *Coercion, capital, and European states: AD 990-1992*. Cambridge (Massachusetts); Oxford: Blackwell.

Cultural identities are covered in:

- Gilroy, P. (2016). Between camps: nations, cultures and the allure of race. Taylor & Francis.

Resistance and collaboration by colonised peoples are covered in:

- Anderson, B. (2006) Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. Mandaluyong City: Anvil Publishing.

This work highlights the institutional dimensions of empires and colonies:
Steinmetz, G. (2014) 'The Sociology of Empires, Colonies and Postcolonialism', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 40 (1), 77–103

Sport and Leisure

Research on class divisions, ideologies, and conflicts in sport in capitalist societies includes:

- Gruneau, R. (1999). *Class, Sports, and Social Development.* Champaign, II: Human Kinetics.
- Hargreaves, J. (1991). *Sport, Power, and Culture: A Social and Historical Analysis of Popular Sports in Britain.* Oxford: Polity Press.

Sports can enfranchise or disenfranchise marginal or dominated social groups:

- Clarke, J. and Critcher, C. (1994). *The devil makes work: leisure in capitalist Britain*. Houndmills: Macmillan.
- Rowe, D. (1995) *Popular Cultures: Rock Music, Sport, and the Politics of Pleasure.* London: Sage Publications.

The position of minority communities within sport, through the lens of colonialism and post colonialism:

- Carrington, B. (2011) Race, Sport and Politics: The Sporting Black Diaspora. London: Sage Publications.
- Hylton, K. (2009). 'Race' and sport: critical race theory. London; New York: Routledge.

Public health and pandemics

A good place to start is Michel Foucault's analysis of European states' regulation and disciplining of human bodies:

- Foucault, M. (2003). The birth of the clinic. London: Routledge. and
- Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison.* London: Penguin.

For research in this area, you could look at:

- Petersen, A.R. and Lupton, D. (2000). The new public health: health and self in the age of risk. London: Sage.

'How sociocultural knowledge, institutions, and resources shape responses' is explored in:

- Zin, J. (2021). Introduction: Towards a sociology of pandemics. International Sociological Association, [online] 69 (4). Available at: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/00113921211020771 [accessed 8 May 2024].

In all countries, people have had to manage the experience of an uncertain new threat under very different conditions. How this affects them depends on factors, such as how they earn their income, whether they are part of a stigmatised group, and how efficiently pandemics are governed. For more information on this, you can read:

- OECD policy response to Coronavirus (2022). *The unequal impact of COVID-19: A spotlight on frontline workers, migrants and racial/ethnic minorities* [online]. Available at: https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/the-unequal-impact-of-covid-19-a-spotlight-on-frontline-workers-migrants-and-racial-ethnic-minorities-f36e931e/ [accessed 8 May 2024].

Society, risk and security

A study that addresses the development of the postmodern turn and the so-called 'death of class' is:

- Pakulski, J. and Waters, M. (1996). The death of class. London: Sage.

Other research of note that suggests people's needs are not being met, with decreasing security at the individual and societal level includes:

- Beck, U. (1992). Risk Society: towards a new modernity. London: Sage Publications.
- Giddens, A. (1990). The Consequences of Modernity. Padstow: Polity Press.

Unequal life chances and a lack of resources leads to increased uncertainty. For research on poverty, lack of security and inequality as individuals' primary concerns, see:

- Bauman, Z. (2010). Modernity and ambivalence. Cambridge: Polity Press.

The body and self

Reshaping or redefining the body and identity is covered in:

- Roseneil, S. and Seymour, J. (1999). Practising Identities: Power and Resistance. In: Roseneil, S. and Seymour, J. (eds) *Practising Identities. Explorations in Sociology*. British Sociological Association Conference Volume Series. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

The body and self as social and physical constructions is explored in:

- Shilling, C. (2003) *The Body and Social Theory.* London: Sage.

Bodies as instrumental lifestyle tools that can be used through fashion, modification and exercise is explored in this work:

- Giddens, A. (2001) Modernity and Self-identity: Self and Society in Late Modern Age in Seidman, S. and Alexander, J.C., eds., *The New Social Theory Reader* (2008). London: Routledge

The 'project' of focusing on our bodies and working on them for public consumption is developed in:

- Nettleton, S. and Watson, J. (1998). *The body in everyday life*. London: New York: Routledge.

Ageing and the life course

The study of the concept of the life course in sociology with its variation in life stages, generational experience and shifting social conditions is important. You could start with:

- Hunt, S. (2017). *The life course: a sociological introduction*. London: Palgrave Macmillan Education.
- Pilcher, J. (1995) *Age and Generation in Modern Britain.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

You can read more about postmodern sociological thinking on rapid social change in:

- Featherstone, M., Hepworth, M. and Turner, B.S. (2001). *The Body: social process and cultural theory*. London: Sage Publications.
- Green, L. (2015). Age and the Life Course: Continuity, Change and the Modern Mirage of Infinite Choice. *Contemporary Sociology*. Cambridge: Polity.

Information for centres

Equality and inclusion

The units in this group award 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

HND Social Sciences

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

HND Social Sciences develops your deep knowledge and understanding of a range of social science subjects and themes. It also develops higher-order transferable and academic skills, which are useful for progression to further study and employment. The NextGen: HND Social Sciences Qualification gives you subject-specific knowledge and skills, which in turn open up several different articulation pathways to year two or year three in undergraduate degree programmes. 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. In addition, you will develop knowledge of sustainability and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Before you start this qualification, you should have good communication skills, previous study of social sciences at SCQF level 7 or other similar qualifications. You would also find it helpful to have some basic digital skills.

The HND Social Sciences Qualification contains a mandatory unit: Social Sciences: Social Policy. In this unit, you study three topics related to social policy and start looking at relevant social science theories. You learn about philosophical principles that underpin the research process. You can then analyse a specific social issue, which has a related social policy, from two social science perspectives. You review the research principles behind any published research, and critically evaluate how effective the specific social policy is as a solution to the social issue.

You study four further social science units. Each unit sits at SCQF level 8 and consists of 24 SCQF points (3 SQA credits). Your centre can tell you which subject disciplines are available.

Within these units, you study themes that intersect subject disciplines, to help you develop cross-discipline knowledge and understanding. In these named social sciences units, you study theories, concepts and ideas about society, which encourage you to think about how society operates and how it impacts on an individual’s life. You are encouraged to develop an enquiring and critical mind throughout the study of these units.

Each named social sciences unit is assessed by an open-book assessment, giving you the opportunity to respond with written or oral evidence. There are two or three assessments in the mandatory unit:

- an open-book project, which covers the evidence requirements for outcomes 1 to 3
- an evaluation of your development of meta-skills within a social science context and a review of sustainability related to your programme of study covering the remaining two outcomes, assessed by any suitable method

Meta-skills

Throughout the NextGen: HND, 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 the range of learning and teaching activities and produce assessment evidence. 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 course.

You also develop academic skills, such as citation and referencing skills or essay-writing skills, that can help you if you choose to progress to degree programmes.

Learning for Sustainability

During the learning and teaching for the units, you are introduced to Learning for Sustainability ideas, with links made to UN Sustainable Development Goals that are relevant to the themes and concepts being studied in each unit.

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 98.	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.