

Next Generation Higher National Unit Specification

Social Anthropology B: The Body (SCQF level 7)

Unit code: J73T 47
SCQF level: 7 (16 SCQF credit points)
Valid from: session 2024–25

Prototype unit specification for use in pilot delivery only (version 2.0) August 2024

This unit specification provides detailed information about the unit to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year.

This unit specification is for teachers and lecturers and contains all the mandatory information required to deliver and assess the unit.

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Unit purpose

This unit introduces learners to some of the work done by social anthropologists on the variety of ways people describe and perceive the human body, and how different people use their bodies to express social and culture differences as they progress through life.

Learners study some of the history and theory of social anthropological research. This focus helps learners to understand anthropological approaches to gender and sexuality; personhood, including relations between humans and other animals; and to real and imagined technological creations, such as robots, avatars and computer game characters.

The unit is aimed at learners who want to develop their knowledge and understanding of social anthropology, and for those who want to use it as the basis for further study and/or in their career.

Entry to this unit is at your centre's discretion. However, we recommend that learners have one or more of the following:

- ◆ good communication skills
- ◆ previous study of social anthropology, for example units at SCQF levels 5 or 6, or other similar qualifications
- ◆ other knowledge, skills and experience relevant to the unit

The unit works well alongside Social Anthropology A: Anthropological Approaches to Understanding Society.

Learners normally study the unit as part of HNC Social Sciences. They can also study it on a stand-alone basis.

If learners study the unit as part of HNC Social Sciences, they may be able to progress to HND Social Sciences or a degree programme in a related subject.

Unit outcomes

Learners who complete this unit can:

- 1 describe ways in which different societies perceive the idea of the body
- 2 explain anthropological accounts of body modifications in different societies
- 3 explain what is meant by personhood and how this varies between different societies
- 4 apply anthropological concepts to virtual bodies

Evidence requirements

Learners should provide written or oral evidence covering all unit outcomes, produced under open-book conditions. You should give the task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.

Written responses must consist of approximately 2,000 words, and oral responses must be 12 to 15 minutes in duration.

Learners' responses must include:

- ◆ at least two contrasting ways in which different societies describe the body
- ◆ contrasting ideas from two societies of gender and its expectations, including ideas of sexuality
- ◆ explanation of one or more anthropological interpretations of the use of body modification and bodily decorations, including to mark changes of status
- ◆ reference to the concept of personhood in two societies
- ◆ an example of how at least one anthropologist uses anthropological concepts to analyse virtual bodies

You can choose to use a mix of assessment methods across a group, depending on what is most suitable for each learner; for example, some could give a written response, and others could give an oral response.

Learners must fully reference their assessment, using reliable sources appropriate for SCQF level 7. They must list all sources in a bibliography or reference list, in a recognised standard format, such as Harvard or APA.

The SCQF level of the unit provides additional context relating to the quality of evidence. Learners should:

- ◆ contribute information that is complex, accurate and relevant to its purpose and audience
- ◆ present ideas clearly and coherently
- ◆ use a structure that is appropriate to the purpose
- ◆ provide supporting evidence and references

Knowledge and skills

The following table shows the knowledge and skills covered by the unit outcomes:

Knowledge	Skills
<p>Outcome 1 Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the varied ways different societies perceive the body ◆ related ideas of gender and sexuality 	<p>Outcome 1 Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ describe societal perceptions of the body ◆ discuss various ideas about gender and sexuality in different societies
<p>Outcome 2 Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ ways in which people decorate their body to mark their place and role in society ◆ meanings of permanent modifications to the body ◆ some anthropological interpretations of these practices 	<p>Outcome 2 Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ describe the meaning of bodily decoration in the society in which it occurs ◆ discuss how people use body modification to mark changes of status in society ◆ discuss an anthropologist's explanation about the body and its place in society
<p>Outcome 3 Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ concepts of personhood in one or more societies ◆ relations between humans and other animals ◆ that an anthropologist's own society may influence their understanding of personhood 	<p>Outcome 3 Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ give examples of when and how a human being becomes a person in society ◆ discuss the role of personhood indifferent societies

Knowledge	Skills
<p>Outcome 4 Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ an anthropologist's ideas on the creation of virtual bodies, such as robots and avatars◆ anthropological concepts applied to virtual bodies	<p>Outcome 4 Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ give an example of how an anthropologist uses anthropological concepts to analyse virtual bodies

Meta-skills

Throughout the unit, learners develop meta-skills to enhance their employability in the social sciences sector.

The unit helps learners develop the meta-skills of self-management, social intelligence and innovation. Learners should develop meta-skills naturally throughout the unit. You should encourage learners to develop a minimum of one area in each of the three categories, but they do not need to cover all suggested subsections. The following suggestions may help shape delivery and assessment, and will vary depending on the chosen topics and assessment method.

Self-management

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ focussing: completing assessments and projects by working to clear deadlines and understanding the required steps to produce appropriate work
- ◆ integrity: using and carrying out research ethically; acting in an ethical way to complete assessments and carry out work for projects; developing good working relationships with peers; including citations and referencing for assessments
- ◆ adapting: acquiring new knowledge and skills, as well as using different technologies to communicate and complete assessments; working through a virtual learning environment (VLE); reflecting on performance
- ◆ initiative: getting started on projects promptly; making good decisions and staying motivated; reading and thinking about theories; consulting appropriate research evidence or sources; using library facilities; checking in with lecturers to discuss projects; meeting deadlines

Social intelligence

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ communicating: listening to information on theories, research and sources; explaining ideas; producing suitable and understandable assessment responses; sharing written or oral ideas and opinions on theories and topics
- ◆ feeling: discussing theories, expressing opinions, and understanding other perspectives; respecting diversity and viewpoints in discussions
- ◆ collaborating: working together on formative presentations and project work; taking account of others in planning and carrying out tasks; building relationships with peers
- ◆ leading: assuming responsibility; considering others; sharing information

Innovation

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ curiosity: seeking knowledge about theories and research; carrying out library-based research; taking part in class discussion and debates; exploring contrasting ideas and questioning motives, ideas, information and research evidence
- ◆ creativity: giving feedback on unit delivery to encourage new ways of working; suggesting better ways to approach an issue; analysing case studies; creating posters to illustrate body modifications
- ◆ sense-making: exploiting opportunities for discussion; blending the range of ideas by considering and evaluating them
- ◆ critical thinking: making logical connections and reasoned judgements through discussion, debate and drawing conclusions based on evidence; reviewing research evidence and evaluating it

Literacies

Learners develop core skills in the following literacies:

Numeracy

Learners develop numeracy skills by reviewing anthropological research that focuses primarily on collecting quantitative data. Facts and statistics relating to body modification and body shape may be relevant to this unit.

Communication

Learners develop communication skills in formative and summative assessment. It is part of the evidence requirements for the unit to ensure learners convey complex ideas in a well-structured and coherent way, with references, where appropriate. You can give learners opportunities to carry out oral presentations and engage in discussions.

Learners can improve their knowledge and understanding of anthropology by reading and interpreting ethnographic writing.

Digital

Learners develop digital skills and computer literacy by using digital packages to produce assessments, and internet sources to research information on concepts and ideas to research the nature of virtual bodies. You can give them guidance on appropriate sources. Using a VLE also supports digital skills.

Learning for Sustainability

Learning for Sustainability aims to build the values, attitudes, knowledge, skills and confidence needed to develop practices and make decisions that are compatible with a sustainable and equitable society. In this unit, there are opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of social sustainability while studying aspects of daily life in different societies. These may link to the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#).

This unit fits with the following UN Sustainable Development Goals:

- 3 Good health and well-being: local, perhaps ancient, ideas about how a body maintains good health
- 5 Gender equality: particularly in the case of variety of gender classifications
- 10 Reduced inequalities
- 12 Responsible consumption and production: giving consideration to local ideas of bodily needs

Delivery of unit

This unit is in the 'named social sciences' section of HNC Social Sciences. You can deliver it as part of the group award or as a stand-alone unit.

It is one of two social anthropology units within HNC Social Sciences. This unit works well alongside Social Anthropology A: Anthropological Approaches to Understanding Society.

The amount of time you allocate to each outcome is at your discretion; however, you should consider all outcomes together when you deliver this unit. The overall unit delivery time is a notional 80 hours of contact time for delivery and assessment. We expect learners to commit to a further 80 hours of self-directed study.

Additional guidance

The guidance in this section is not mandatory.

Content and context for this unit

The unit aims to provide an interesting and engaging introduction to studying the way people in different societies perceive the human body, and the way they decorate and modify their bodies to express aspects of each of those societies or their position in society. The unit provides an overview of the anthropology of the human body that can be considered in relation to other animals or just between humans.

The unit helps learners to develop some of the learning they may have acquired studying Social Anthropology A: Anthropological Approaches to Understanding Society, which considers kinship, ritual and symbolism as ways of gaining an insight into the broader workings of any society.

Social Anthropology B: The Body focuses in on the body as a blank canvas, which the owner can decorate and modify to define their place in society. These actions often take place as part of rites of passage when people achieve full personhood in that society.

Learners should be introduced to the idea of virtual bodies, that is to say real and imagined technological creations, such as robots, avatars and computer game characters. Learners may be familiar with characters they have seen in animated films or created in computer games. They can best analyse virtual bodies once they have some understanding of anthropological theory and concepts.

Approaches to delivery

You should structure the teaching programme to allow time for learners to develop meta-skills, and academic and other transferable skills. You should also allow for assessment practice within the notional hours suggested.

You can shape delivery and assessment to support learners to develop their academic skills, such as time management, multi-tasking, digital skills, essay-writing skills, and questioning ability. You can design formative and summative activities and assessments that encourage learners to practise the skills that they need to progress to the next level of study.

Learners can benefit from a varied and active learning approach, where they engage in supported, independent and collaborative learning. You should encourage learners to take a participative and practical approach. Delivery methods could include:

- ◆ demonstration
- ◆ tutorial question and answer sessions
- ◆ debate
- ◆ individual and group research tasks
- ◆ presenting findings
- ◆ VLE

- ◆ digital tools and social media
- ◆ film and visual images
- ◆ close reading of sources

It would be useful for learners to have access to a laptop or other digital device.

The section on meta-skills provides further guidance on incorporating different skills into delivery and evidence.

You should deliver the unit in a learner-centred manner and always encourage a questioning approach. In doing so, you engage learners and encourage them to think like social scientists and be analytical and enquiring, rather than passively accepting facts. Developing essential transferable skills also helps learners access further study and employment.

You could start with the concept of personhood and compare or explore what constitutes a 'person' in different societies. You could then explore how people in different societies perceive gender and sexuality, and how they use the human body to denote or depict passage through life, or indicate transition through various life stages.

Learners could discuss how personhood relates to virtual bodies; how virtual bodies are created, decorated, and presented; and how we can apply anthropological ideas, such as those of Terence Turner or Laura Mulvey, to virtual bodies.

Approaches to assessment

You can generate evidence using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable for learners.

Learners can choose to submit their assessment evidence in any format that meets each outcome. We recommend that you assess the unit holistically, as that is best to reduce the learners' assessment burden. You can decide to use a portfolio approach with two or more assessment tasks issued at different times in the unit delivery, if that is better for your learners.

The assessment could take the form of an open-book essay or a set of structured questions; or it could take the form of a portfolio of evidence in various formats gathered during the unit. Learners must provide a response of approximately 2,000 words, or an individual oral response or poster exhibition of 12 to 15 minutes in duration, or any other method that appropriately meets the evidence requirements. For example, learners could provide evidence in the form of an individual blog or website, consisting of approximately 2,000 words. Learners can produce their responses over an extended period, if required.

If learners choose an oral method, we recommend that you record this in some form or provide assessor notes on the presentation for external verification purposes. Learners must show evidence of meeting all evidence requirements. Ideally, they would complete oral presentations or poster exhibitions individually. If a group presentation is used, individual learners must show coverage of all evidence requirements. To do this, they may need to provide an essay or additional responses to structured questions. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.

Although it is not an evidence requirement, you could encourage learners to keep an unassessed diary or blog of their learning, which they could refer to when they come to write (or recount) their assessed piece of work. These diaries or blogs can include photographs and/or videos to illustrate body decoration and other kinds of modification. Learners could submit edited elements of the diaries or blogs within a portfolio assessment.

Learners can combine a poster exhibition with an oral presentation. For example, a learner could produce a detailed poster illustrating different modifications and information on virtual bodies. They could then cover the anthropological concepts and ideas of anthropologists on personhood, virtual bodies, gender and sexuality difference, and an explanation of how social anthropologists work with the people they are researching. In this case, the time across all outcomes and all evidence requirements would be 12 to 15 minutes. So, the learner would spend 12 to 15 minutes orally presenting the poster content.

Whichever method learners choose, they must be able to access notes, textbooks and other materials, as it is an open-book assessment.

You should make learners aware of the importance of good judgement in selecting appropriate academic sources. You should encourage them to choose academic sources rather than generic search engines, to enable them to be more confident of information and better equipped to progress to SCQF level 8 units.

If learners are creating a blog or website for their assessment, it should not be in the public domain. Rather, it should be on an intranet or private area of your VLE to reduce the likelihood of plagiarism.

Authenticating learners' work is essential. You could collect notes or visual presentation materials from learners as further evidence of meeting SCQF level 7. You should monitor learners' progress throughout to authenticate submitted work. Where possible, you should use plagiarism-detection software.

It is important that learners' responses to the assessment are at SCQF level 7.

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 your centre wants 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.

Equality and inclusion

This unit is 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:

www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Information for learners

Social Anthropology B: The Body (SCQF level 7)

This information explains:

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

Unit information

This unit introduces you to some of the work done by social anthropologists on the cultural variety and common features of the human body, and how it is used to mark progress through life in different societies. While human beings share biological features, they define and describe them in many different ways. The body provides a canvas for expressing social differences such as age, status and wealth within a society, and cultural differences between groups.

Before you start the unit, you should have good communication skills and an interest in social anthropology, or more generally in cultural diversity. It would also be helpful to have some basic digital skills.

During the unit you learn about anthropological approaches to gender and sexuality, personhood, and concepts used to analyse virtual human bodies, such as robots and avatars.

On completion of this unit you are able to:

- 1 describe ways in which different societies perceive the idea of the body
- 2 explain anthropological accounts of body modifications in different societies
- 3 explain what is meant by personhood and how this varies between different societies
- 4 apply anthropological concepts to virtual bodies

You are assessed using an open-book assessment covering all unit outcomes. This means that you have access to materials such as textbooks, notes and your VLE. You can give your assessment response in writing or orally. If your assessment response is written, it must be approximately 2,000 words long, and if it is oral, it must be 12 to 15 minutes long.

During the unit, you develop academic skills such as time management, multi-tasking ability, digital skills, essay-writing skills and questioning ability.

You also develop key literacies such as communication. You learn to convey complex ideas in a well-structured and coherent way, with references where appropriate. Your lecturer may also use oral presentations and discussions to help you improve your communication skills. You develop digital skills and computer literacy by using digital packages to complete

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assessments, and internet sources to research information on different societies and cultures.

This unit can support learning in other related units, such as Social Anthropology A: Anthropological Approaches to Understanding Society. You may be able to study HND Social Sciences or a degree programme in a related subject if you study this unit as part HNC Social Sciences.

Meta-skills

Throughout the unit, you can 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 responses. Improving meta-skills, such as organising your time (self-management) and communicating ideas clearly (social intelligence) is useful for current and future study, and employment.

Administrative information

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Superclass: EE

History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date
2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Removed reference to the requirement to use holistic assessment in 'Evidence requirements', and in 'Information for learners'.◆ In 'Approaches to assessment' additional words that a holistic of portfolio approach can be used were added. Also, additional information allowing group presentations was added.	May 2024

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