**Higher National Unit specification**

**General information**

**Unit title:** Care in Contemporary Society (SCQF level 7)

**Unit code:** H8MN 34

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| **Superclass:** | EE |
| **Publication date:** | December 2014 |
| **Source:** | Scottish Qualifications Authority |
| **Version:** | 01 |

**Unit purpose:**

The Unit aims to develop learners' sociological imagination this is a way of explaining sociology and its relevance to society today. This understanding will enable them to recognise the contribution sociology makes to professional practice across the range of care and education settings. Using this as a foundation learner's will go on to explore the importance of adopting a human rights approach to practice. They will evaluate a range of influences on policy and legislation that underpin practice in care and education settings.

## Outcomes

On successful completion of the Unit the learner will be able to:

1 Develop a sociological imagination approach to understanding society.
2 Explain the relevance of adopting a Human Rights Approach to care and education practice.
3 Analyse the role of the family in today's society.

## Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

## Recommended entry to the Unit

Learners for this award should have effective communication and interpersonal skills and be able to use these skills to give an account of their experiences, reflect on them, make valid conclusions and express strengths and development needs, both personal and organisational.

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This may be demonstrated by relevant qualifications at SCQF level 5 or above with relevant experience in a social services or other relevant setting as a student or a care worker, or SVQ level 3 in Health and Social Care, Early Education or one of their predecessor qualifications.

## Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes for this Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

## Context for delivery

If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this Unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable assessment.

Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard. A list of existing ASPs is available to download from SQA's website **(http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46233.2769.html)**.

## Equality and inclusion

This Unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website **www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements**.

**Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards**

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Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

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

# Outcome 1

Develop a sociological imagination approach to understanding society.

### Knowledge and/or Skills

♦ sociological perspectives
♦ current legislation and policy frameworks related to care and education
♦ social democracy
♦ public issues and challenges

# Outcome 2

Explain the relevance of adopting a Human Rights Approach to care and education practice.

### Knowledge and/or Skills

♦ development of Human Rights
♦ human Rights Approach
♦ national and international human rights legislation
♦ rights promotion

# Outcome 3

Evaluate the role of the family in today's society.

### Knowledge and/or Skills

♦ family structures and roles
♦ changing patterns of family
♦ ethical issues
♦ socialisation of children
♦ disengagement in older adults

# Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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## Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

1    Identify and describe two sociological perspectives.
2    Describe and evaluate two pieces of legislation and policy frameworks related to a care or education provision.
3    Research and evaluate one public issue from a care or educational context in terms of social democracy.
4    Provide a timeline of significant developments in Human Rights legislation.
5    Explain the importance of adopting a Human Rights Approach to care/education practice.
6    Explain the underlying principles in the application of a Human Rights approach.
7    Illustrate providing two examples how a human rights approach has informed your practice.
8    Explain three factors that have shaped the development of family structures and roles.
9    Analyse two similarities and two significant differences between contemporary ideas of family with traditional ideas of family using sociological perspectives.
10   Identify and explain one ethical issue facing practitioners in modern society.
11   Critically evaluate three sociological concepts related to the role of the family.

## Assessment for this Unit

Assessment may be carried out through a research project. Centres may also consider giving learners the opportunity to present a piece of learning to a group. Centres must ensure that all of the knowledge and skills identified are assessed for each Outcome.

# Higher National Unit Support Notes

## Unit title:   Care in Contemporary Society (SCQF level 7)

Unit Support Notes are offered as guidance and are not mandatory.

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

## Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

### Outcome 1

To assist learners to begin to develop a sociological imagination, they should be introduced to the notion of personal troubles transcending into public issues.
Anthony Giddens explains: Learning to think sociologically-looking, in other words, at the broader view-means cultivating our imagination.

Studying sociology is not just a routine process of acquiring knowledge. A sociologist is someone who is able to break free from the immediacy of personal circumstances and put things into a wider context. Adopting a sociological imagination allows us to see that many events which appear to concern only the individual actually reflect larger issues (2009).

Dominelli provides a timely reflection over why developing a sociological imagination is a valuable skill in contemporary care practice by linking it to an emancipatory approach. Whilst contrasting: maintenance, therapeutic and emancipatory approaches to social work she concludes: 'The emancipatory approach, especially in its holistic variant, seeks to address individual and structural problems because it views dealing with both as integral to enhancing individual and community well-being' (2010).

Learners should think about social democracy defined as 'a political philosophy that spans a range of ideas and approaches'. They could consider the reformist socialists of the late 19th century and the influence on life chances. This develops into socioeconomic influences for example deprivation, and health and education, including access to provision in affluent areas and for those living in deprived areas. This could serve as an introduction to research skills.

The ability to think sociologically is important for anyone working within social care and early education particularly in contemporary society 'Personalisation sees service users as the experts on their own situation'. This is equally applicable to working with individuals and families. In order to develop their sociological imagination learners will need to consider at least three appropriate sociological concepts.

# Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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The following list provides some examples of areas they might consider:

Socialisation, stereotyping, scapegoating, social exclusion, stratification, marginalisation Ability/disability, ageing in society, patriarchy, stigma (Poverty may be approached as a concept as an alternative to a public issue or theme as explored above.) Labelling, prejudice cultural capital, social capital, underclass, social control.

Learners should learn how to interpret a public issue as the bigger picture of individuals in receipt of care or education. They should understand how the social dimensions of the circumstances they face link what happens in individuals' lives, and how these can link to the social structures of the wider world. This Outcome further develops the links with legislative change in two areas firstly in the area related to society as a whole and secondly to the regulation of care and education provision and their respective workforces.

In looking at other factors, the underlying theme is the diversity of influences contributing to legislation. Examples of influences for learners to explore are:

♦ Demography
♦ Financial/Economic contexts
♦ Political
♦ Ideological
♦ Media campaigns
♦ Lobby groups

The thrust here is to provide learners with the opportunity to develop their knowledge of the diverse factors that can influence policy, response, and legislation.

Consider the public service reform the Scottish Government document available at **http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/PublicServiceReform**

This provides an example of ideology or accountability influencing legislation. The document the following illustration, a visit to the page expands upon:

♦ Prevention — Reduce future demand by preventing problems arising or dealing with them early on. To promote a bias towards prevention, help people understand why this is the right thing to do, the choices it implies as well as the benefits it can bring.
♦ Performance — To demonstrate a sharp focus on continuous improvement of the national Outcomes, applying reliable improvement methods to ensure that services are consistently well designed based on the best evidence and are delivered by the right people to the right people at the right time.
♦ People — We need to unlock the full creativity and potential of people at all levels of public service, empowering them to work together in innovative ways. We need to help create ways for people and communities to co-produce services around their skills and networks.
♦ Partnership — We need to develop local partnership and collaboration, bringing public, third and private sector partners together with communities to deliver shared Outcomes that really matter to people.

**(http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/PublicServiceReform)**

# Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Possible perspectives included here could be taken from Marxism, Functionalism, Radical Feminism, Post-modernism, Symbolic Interactionism among others.

Whilst the first three provide grand narratives of structural considerations, the latter two can also contribute to awareness of public issues through such concepts as roles, personal identity, fragmentation, diversity and local interpretations. For example, the shift from people using support as 'service users' to becoming 'employers' who control their own budgets, and commission services through self-directed support, can be viewed as, the epitome of post-modernist thought within a contemporary care context. 'A universal 'one size fits all' model of welfare delivery failed to acknowledge or meet the particular needs of particular welfare users, the shift towards self-organisation and self-advocacy among different groups of service users, should be celebrated' Cunningham & Cunningham (2008,).

**Outcome 2**

This Outcome looks at the development of Human Rights through recent history to the present day. In order to understand this development learner's need to consider major influences: impact of war, changes in understanding regarding marriage, the development of cities creating urban sprawl are some of the issues they could consider.

Poverty is one example of a public issue, for example, learners could explore socialisation: in terms of it being viewed as a traditional example of gender roles, the domestic division of labour and the value placed upon self-sufficiency.

Learners should begin to be able to see how 'Our sense of self emerges from a number of interactive elements of our social experiences. The primary components of the life course are an individual's interactions with 'others' in the external world, our sense of self will be mediated by the structural nature of social roles' (2004). They should become able to illustrate how one sociological perspective, deepens understanding of a public issue. They should also begin to gain understanding of a range of perspectives both as an introduction to sociology and then to the use of sociology in care contexts. Learners will need to draw on two perspectives later in the Unit when considering the family.

This Outcome provides for links to relevant legislation both national and international that may have a bearing on the individual's perception of their rights. Consideration of asylum seekers would be one area to explore for this, another could be the principle of `normalisation` where the question is the position of people who have a learning disability better now than in the 1930's and if so why?

Learning for this Outcome could be supported through use of the online training pack 'Care About Rights' provided by the Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC). The full pack can be accessed at: **http://scottishhumanrights.com/careaboutrights/introduction**

This provides comprehensive and appropriate support for this Outcome.

A timeline is provided at:
**http://scottishhumanrights.com/careaboutrights/section1-page02**

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The importance of adopting a human rights approach explained as: 'empowering people to know and claim their rights and increasing the ability and accountability of individuals and institutions responsible for respecting, protecting and fulfilling rights.' means giving people greater opportunities to participate in shaping the decisions that impact on their human rights. It also means increasing the ability of those with responsibility for fulfilling rights to recognise and know how to respect those rights, and ensure they can be held to account.

A human rights based approach is about ensuring that both the standards and the principles of human rights are integrated into policymaking as well as the day to day running of organisations'
**http://scottishhumanrights.com/careaboutrights/whatisahumanrightsbasedapproach**

The SHRC provide the acronym PANEL as a template towards explaining the principles in applying a human rights approach:

♦ Participation
♦ Accountability
♦ Non-discrimination and equality
♦ Empowerment
♦ Legality

The distinction between absolute and qualified is an important one to reassure learners of the fundamental principles of respect for life and protection. Whilst learners are only asked to identify the differences they ought to be encouraged to put into context thus providing the opportunity to begin exploring policies and protocols upon protection.

The analysis of the rights of a specific group of individuals provides the opportunity for learners to explore the context of the person or people supported and their placement setting.

The SHRC provides an additional acronym, FAIR, to support an analysis. FAIR stands for:

♦ Facts
♦ Analysis of rights at stake
♦ Identification of shared responsibilities
♦ Review actions

**http://scottishhumanrights.com/careaboutrights/flowchart**

In addition, the SHRC provide both narrative and video case studies to assist learners explore a variety of scenarios. Many learners will require guidance on this, as they may tend to seek the spectacular for analysis. A crisp focus on day-to-day living will achieve the Evidence Requirements and be more likely to nurture practice positively. Campaigns such as See Me and Zero Tolerance are appropriate for learners to evaluate.

# Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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When outlining the integration of human rights into legislation, learners could focus on human rights becoming enshrined in law. Examples in Scotland would be Scotland Act (1998), the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Patient Rights (Scotland) Act 2011. For further information on the latter visit
**http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/Policy/Patients-Rights**

Learners should also consider their own professional area in relation to other legislative contributions such as Codes of Practice, National Care Standards or their underlying principles, charters, mission statements, and or the role of inspection and regulatory bodies.

The impact of organisations on practice will vary dependent upon the setting. The organisation could be the provider itself, while other communities of practice, which support the care provision may include:

♦ Voluntary/third sector bodies
♦ Advocacy services
♦ Rights and welfare advisors
♦ Religious organisations

**http://www.iriss.org.uk/resources/delivering-integrated-care-and-support-insight**
**OUTCOMES/Strategy doc**

**Outcome 3**

Socialisation is as defined by Haralambos as 'The process by which individuals learn the culture of their society. Primary socialisation… takes place during infancy usually within the family...the child learns...the basic behaviour patterns' he later expands 'Socialisation is not, however, confined to childhood. It is a lifelong process which continues as people change jobs or roles and as society itself changes.' (2008)

Learners should be encouraged to grasp the concept of socialisation as fully as they can. Whilst all the concepts are important, arguably, socialisation is the most important and is fundamental in developing a sociological imagination. Socialisation helps us understand why many people supported with care packages have developed learned helplessness whilst others have maintained their fight for autonomy and right to self-determination.

Socialisation helps us to reflect over our own value base and attitudes and to recognise the contribution from family, friends, fictional worlds and or organisations that have helped shape and form our personal value base. Drawing upon socialisation helps us to consider how prejudice and negative attitudes towards others have developed in some people within society.

The worlds of social care, childcare, and education provide for the exploration of personal troubles and public issues: Learners should be encouraged to reflect over the setting they are working in to identify public issues. These issues do not occur within a vacuum and learners should be encouraged to identify themes within an issue for further exploration. This Outcome is asking learners to show their understanding of the contribution from perspectives towards the understanding of family within the wider context of care. Drawing upon sociological perspectives may help learners explore the increasing fragmentation and diversity of family structures.

# Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Bearing a human rights approach in mind, recognising the importance of family for individuals receiving support, and liaising with their family, if appropriate is an area that requires a professional and sensitive approach. Wellbeing literature adds a deeper understanding of other factors that make up a valued life for individuals, families and communities. These include a sense of meaning and purpose, opportunities to contribute, respect and dignity, feeling valued, family life and relationships, security, political voice, sense of belonging and affiliation.

This focus on the importance of values and relationships is part of a wider view that 'wellbeing does not depend solely upon economic assets' learners could be asked to undertake a comparative study of our society and a society in another country as this is a valid method of highlighting the positive and negative influences of the way we live.

Research evidence on social determinants demonstrates both the impact of the material circumstances of people's lives (eg living in poverty, struggling on a low income, fuel poverty) and the impact of inequalities in income and wealth, ie the gap between rich and poor.

An example of one study carried out in Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom to investigate these issues can be found at:
**http://www.abdn.ac.uk/sociold/socbriefingpaper.pdf**

The SSSC Codes of Practice reminds social services workers about 'Working openly and co-operatively with colleagues and treating them with respect' (6.5). Meanwhile the British Education Research Association 'Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research' which can be viewed as a PDF file via **http://www.bera.ac.uk** and or the British Sociological Association's 'Statement of Ethical Practice' which can be accessed at
**http://www.britsoc.co.uk/media/27107/StatementofEthicalPractice.pdf** provides information and contexts to inform learners' discussions.
**http://irissfm.iriss.org.uk/episode/075**

Bond and Corner explore 'structured dependency' when reviewing theories of ageing and succinctly connect public issues and socialisation. They explain the process of disengagement from paid work, associated reduction in earnings and gender variables in poverty as all contributing to this structured dependency. This can be understood as the socialisation process-people are socialised into increasing dependency, before illness or physical deterioration demands it. This, they argue, directly impacts upon notions of self.

Learners should be able to define different family structures alongside their prevalence in contemporary society. Structures include: nuclear family, reconstituted family, extended family, lone parent family, single households, clan families and same sex families.
**http://www.crfr.ac.uk/publications/research-briefings/**
**http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/files2/stats/annual-review-2012/rgar-2012.pdf**
Sociology.org

Learners should also consider contemporary society's experience of 'family' as one of fragmentation and diversity. Many commentators prefer to discuss the sociology of the family in terms of families rather than of family, recognising the number of different family structures, which produce different experiences and Outcomes.

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Factors, which have shaped the development of family, in contemporary Scotland, include such things as the rise of cohabitation, rise in divorce and separation, marriage and relationship breakdown occurring in the relationship, people postponing child rearing to later in life and of having fewer children. Other factors may include the rise of single child families along with the diversity of living arrangements now accepted by society.

Similarities between contemporary and traditional families include: living in families is still a popular choice, family provides a sense of identity and security. Reconstituted families appear similar to nuclear families.

Useful research on children, young people, families and health, ethnicity and health, evaluating the health effects of social interventions, gender and health, measuring health, neighbourhoods and health, sexual health, social patterning of health over life course, and understands and uses of public health research contained in the following link **http://www.sphsu.mrc.ac.uk/research-programmes/cyp/**

## Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

This Unit is designed to be delivered across the period of the Group Award for direct entry learners. It can also be used for workers as continuous professional development. It provides evidence of knowledge and understanding that can be used to evidence Units from the SVQ level 3 Health and Social Services and the SVQ level 3 Social Services Children and Young People.

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only there may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

It is recommended that learners work through this Unit in class groups and small groups in order to be able to give and receive feedback. Group and individual presentations provide opportunities for each learner to demonstrate their learning and increase their self-awareness.

Some self-directed learning and research are also encouraged in order that learners recognise the importance of their own self-development.

The recommended assessment for this Unit is:

A directed research project in three sections as identified by the Unit Outcomes, and in which the learner addresses each of the Evidence Requirements.

Each section should include:
♦ an introduction to the topic area
♦ a clear explanation of the area
♦ findings of the research
♦ explanation of the relevant sociological methodology
♦ summary of the Outcome

# Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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The project presentation should contain no more than 10% externally generated materials.

In order to achieve this Unit, learners are required to present sufficient evidence that they have met all the Knowledge and Skills requirements for each Outcome.

An understanding of both theory and its relation to practice are required for all Outcomes, hence assessment must include both the requirement to discuss various issues and the opportunity to relate these to practice. Where learners are already working they should, write about real work situations.

Only in exceptional circumstances should a centre-devised assessment be used, learners are expected to produce evidence relating to undertaking responsibilities as a practitioner wherever possible.

Evidence related to rights relevant to the aspects of the mandatory SVQ Units may be provided from the learner responses to assessment.

## Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at **www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment**.

## Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

Learners will have the opportunity to develop the following Core Skills:

*Communication*: Written communications will be developed through learners producing written work in a variety of formats: oral communication will be developed through discussion, debate and evidence of engagement with other learners, professionals and key people.

*Working with Others*: Will be developed as learners will be required to work collaboratively with colleagues from their own and other service areas in the preparation and research for their assignments.

*Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*: Learners will develop their ICT skills through research and the presentation of written assignments.

## History of changes to Unit

| Version | Description of change | Date |
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# General information for learners

## Unit title: Care in Contemporary Society (SCQF level 7)

This section will help you decide whether this is the Unit for you by explaining what the Unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the Unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

The Unit is about our society, how it has changed and developed over time. You will begin by learning about sociology and how to develop a sociological imagination, this will help you to stand back from the world around you and consider it in term of historical developments and changes in how we live and the rules and laws that govern our lives. An important area of this is the notion of personal troubles transcending into public issues.

A sociologist is someone who is able to break free from the immediacy of personal circumstances and put things into a wider context and you will look at some important studies undertaken in relation to the work role you have or aspire to achieve.

You will consider the development of a human rights approach to working with people, as a principle and a way of ensuring all individuals remain at the centre of the work you do in whichever setting you work in.

You will study the family as it once was and how it is in contemporary society investigating what has changed and how these changes have altered the society we live in.

You will consider legislation and practice by examining your own workplace or placement organisation and have the opportunity to compare experiences with your class group.

Through your learning, you will develop your Core Skills in communication, working with others and information communication technology by:

♦ producing written work in a variety of formats: discussion, debate and evidence of engagement with other learners, professionals and key people.
♦ working collaboratively with colleagues from your own and other service areas in preparation and research for their assignments
♦ research, and presentation of written assignments

Your assessment will allow you to complete a research project in three parts each part providing evidence of your knowledge and understanding of one of the Outcomes in the Unit, which are:

1 Develop a sociological imagination approach to understanding society.
2 Explain the relevance of adopting a Human Rights Approach to care and education practice.
3 Analyse the role of the family in today's society.