



## SCQF level 5 Unit Specification

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### **Geography: Human Environments**

**SCQF:** level 5 (6 SCQF credit points)

**Unit code:** J2EH 75

#### **Unit outline**

The general aim of this unit is to develop the learner's geographical skills and techniques in the context of human environments. Learners will draw on knowledge and understanding of various aspects of the human environment through the comparative study of developed and developing countries drawn from a global context.

Learners who complete this unit will be able to:

- 1 Use a range of research skills applied to developed and developing countries
- 2 Draw on detailed knowledge and understanding of human environments in developed and developing countries

This unit is available as a free-standing unit. The unit specification should be read in conjunction with the unit support notes which provide advice and guidance on delivery, assessment approaches and development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work. Exemplification of the standards in this unit is given in the unit assessment support.

#### **Recommended entry**

Entry to this unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by one or more of the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ National 4 Geography course or relevant component units

## **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. For further information, please refer to the unit support notes.

# Standards

## Outcomes and assessment standards

### Outcome 1

The learner will:

- 1 Use a range of research skills applied to developed and developing countries by:**
  - 1.1 Collecting detailed geographical information effectively in at least two ways
  - 1.2 Interpreting geographical information from at least two sources of information in order to make detailed comparisons

### Outcome 2

The learner will:

- 2 Draw on detailed knowledge and understanding of human environments in developed and developing countries by:**
  - 2.1 Explaining, in detail, a human development issue in a developed and a developing country
  - 2.2 Explaining, in detail, the factors influencing population distribution and change in developed or developing countries
  - 2.3 Explaining, in detail, land use change in an urban area and a rural area in a developed or a developing country

## Evidence requirements for the unit

Assessors should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, and understanding of their learners, to determine the most appropriate ways to generate evidence and the conditions and contexts in which they are used.

Evidence is required to show that the learner has met the outcomes and assessment standards.

Where research skills are being assessed in the context of this unit, a range of research skills may be used in outcome 1 to collect information, such as the use of: fieldwork, field sketches, photographs, maps, graphs, secondary data, internet, questionnaires and field work surveys.

A limited range of human development issues should be studied which demonstrate a contrast between a developed and a developing country. However, learners need only demonstrate achievement of assessment standards in one context. Issues may be chosen from a range of social and human environment issues.

Evidence may be presented for individual outcomes or gathered for the unit. Exemplification of assessment is provided in the unit assessment support. Advice and guidance on possible approaches to assessment is provided in the unit support notes.

## Assessment standard thresholds

If a candidate successfully meets the requirements of the specified number of assessment standards they will be judged to have passed the unit overall and no further re-assessment will be required.

The specific requirements for this unit is as follows:

- ◆ Assessment standards 1.1, 1.2, 2.2 and 2.3 must be achieved.
- ◆ To ensure that outcome 2 can be achieved, both a developed and a developing country must be covered across the assessment standards, ie if a developed country is covered in assessment standard 2.2 then the evidence for assessment standard 2.3 must refer to a developing country and vice-versa.

It should be noted that there will still be the requirement for candidates to be given the opportunity to meet all assessment standards. The above threshold has been put in place to reduce the volume of re-assessment where that is required.

# Development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

It is expected that learners will develop broad, generic skills through this unit. The skills that learners will be expected to improve on and develop through the unit are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These must be built into the unit where there are appropriate opportunities.

## **1 Literacy**

1.1 Reading

## **2 Numeracy**

2.3 Information handling

## **4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship**

4.6 Citizenship

## **5 Thinking skills**

5.3 Applying

5.4 Analysing and evaluating

Amplification of these is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills should be at the same SCQF level of the unit and be consistent with the SCQF level descriptor. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work is given in the unit support notes.

# **Appendix: unit support notes**

## **Introduction**

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing this unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- ◆ the unit specification
- ◆ the unit assessment support packs

## **Developing skills, knowledge and understanding**

Teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

# Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

The aim of this section is to provide advice and guidance to centres on:

- ◆ opportunities to generate naturally occurring evidence through a range of teaching and learning approaches
- ◆ approaches to added value
- ◆ approaches to developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

This section provides suggestions and examples of the ways in which learning and teaching may be approached in the Geography: Human Environments unit.

The unit provides learners and teachers with the freedom to choose from a wide variety of case studies of developed and developing countries. Many opportunities exist for centres to engage learners in fieldwork relevant to the course. Opportunities exist for fieldwork in the local area or as part of an educational visit.

There are many different ways of delivering this unit and centres should structure their delivery in a manner appropriate to their individual needs.

## **Personalisation, choice and inclusion**

The unit requires a comparison between a developed and a developing country. This creates ideal opportunities for learner-led and teacher-led personalisation and choice.

Personalisation and choice are key components of Curriculum for Excellence. By giving learners the freedom to choose case study areas then enjoyment and enthusiasm for the subject can be maximised. By using learning and teaching techniques, such as cooperative learning, there is the potential for a single class cohort to investigate different case studies independently, then to engage in peer teaching. This style of approach would also support meaningful assessment of individuals' knowledge and understanding as well as embracing the four capacities.

## **Considerations for teaching and learning**

This section gives some factors which may be considered when planning the delivery of the Geography: Human Environments unit.

### **Choosing the case studies**

Centres should give real consideration of how best to identify the case study areas:

- 1 Choosing the developed country
- 2 Choosing the developing country

Centres should focus on case studies which are interesting and where resources are available.

With co-operative learning approaches it could be appropriate to have more than two case studies being investigated within a class cohort. Such an approach could maximise personalisation and choice as well as the learners' levels of enjoyment.

### **Issues of basic sustainability, citizenship and environmental awareness**

Sustainability, citizenship and environmental awareness are important issues running through this unit. Learners should be familiar with these terms and the overlap with work on Global Issues.

### **Fieldwork**

Fieldwork should be seen as a key element of geographical learning. It can be used to reinforce map skills, build independent research skills and expand the learner's understanding of geographical environments.

Fieldwork should be seen within the context of outdoor learning, a key component of Curriculum for Excellence. Teachers/lecturers might consider fieldwork at a range of levels; from the immediate school grounds which can be accessible within the normal teaching timetable, to local day trips and residential opportunities within Scotland, the United Kingdom and abroad.

Fieldwork opportunities, at any level, are a powerful way of building the four capacities into the curriculum. The [Education Scotland Outdoor Learning](#) (OL) resources are an excellent starting place to explore generic issues of learning and teaching outdoors. Every local authority will also have a nominated OL contact who will be able to give local advice or suggestions.

### **Suggestion of resources and organisations**

This section gives a limited list of organisations and sources of information which teachers/lecturers may find useful. This is far from being exhaustive. Hopefully it gives a few new avenues which may help to update and invigorate learning, teaching and assessment across Geography units and beyond.

- ◆ British Red Cross
- ◆ National Geographic
- ◆ BBC Learning Scotland

### **Other stakeholders who can reinforce Geography learning**

There are many organisations outwith schools and colleges that are enthusiastic to be involved in the delivery of education. The Human Environments unit outcomes give ideal opportunities for engaging with activities which support the curriculum. In some cases these organisations may also be interested in visiting schools and colleges.

This list suggests just some of the organisations who may be able to offer a real life perspective on issues of human development issues, population distribution and change, land use and change in urban areas and explanations of land use and change in rural areas:

- ◆ Oxfam UK
- ◆ UK Census Bureau/Scotland's Census Online
- ◆ Traidcraft



Other possible sources of information to support learning are:

- ◆ Education Scotland: Outdoor Learning
- ◆ Thinking through Geography (for thinking skills activities)
- ◆ The Geography Site (General resources)

The above lists are not exhaustive. Local agencies are often the most appropriate.

### **Enhancing the learning experience**

For all outcomes, use of the following may enhance the learning experience of this unit:

#### **Debates and discussion groups**

For example, while investigating changes in population in a developed or a developing country, learners may be given a 'character' to assume and represent their character in a discussion with other learners. This stimulates discussion and a deeper understanding of the issue at hand. Learners may also be expected to handle questions, while 'in character' to illustrate their understanding of an issue.

#### **Personal investigation and research**

For example, learners may be given a subject area to focus on and may make use of ICT and other research methods to investigate a particular issue. Learners may also use personal fieldwork to investigate a particular topic, such as changing land use in the local area. Opportunities exist for co-operative learning with each member of the group assigned a particular task in the investigation.

Contrasts in human development issues can be investigated as a class in a co-operative learning environment. Each group will be given an issue to investigate, such as regeneration in a developed country compared to a developing country and will have to work together to fully investigate their topic. Learners will be expected to present their findings to the class at the end of the investigation period, providing an ideal opportunity for peer assessment. Presentations can take the form of a digital presentation, a talk, a leaflet or a method familiar to the learner.

#### **Audio/visual presentations**

There are many clips available online to illustrate key points of the course, especially when studying issues in developing countries. Opportunities exist for co-operative learning while watching audio/visual presentations as each group may be assigned to note taking for a particular presentation. This could take the form of a 'research carousel,' with various groups watching various presentations, before sharing their findings. This form of research would allow for more than one case study to be investigated by a class and would be a good co-operative activity.

#### **Case study examples:**

*Transforming Industrial Heartland — Liverpool and Randstad*

This video programme features two case studies in Europe: *Liverpool: A Tale of Two Cities* and *Randstad: Preserving the Green Heart*. The city of Liverpool in England and the metropolitan region of the Randstad in the Netherlands are tied together by the common themes of modernisation, transportation and trade, as well as quality of life issues.

### *Urban and Rural Contrasts — Delhi and Dikhatpura*

This video program features two case studies on India in the region of South Asia: *Delhi: Bursting at the Seams* and *Dikhatpura: Help Through Irrigation*.

### **External visit/field trips**

Learners undoubtedly benefit from experiencing fieldwork for themselves. Where possible, visits to field centres in the UK provide a valuable ‘hands-on’ experience for learners. Learners also benefit from simple fieldwork in the school grounds, such as map reading in the local area. Fieldwork such as land use surveys, traffic surveys and questionnaires are valuable and easily accessible for learners. It also affords learners the opportunity to process the data they collect themselves, such as creating a sphere of influence for a particular shopping centre after a shopper survey.

There is also an exciting opportunity for innovative fieldwork, such as *Clone Towns*, which is an alternative urban study.

### **Recording pedestrian flow using mobile phones and Google Earth**

Learners can use grid references to locate predetermined points in an urban area. They then record pedestrian flows, and use their mobile phones to text their data back to a central location. The data is used to plot flows on Google Earth, or free online GIS can be used to create 3D field maps. This is another excellent opportunity for co-operative learning and peer assessment. The site ‘Geography Teaching Today’ provides extensive guidelines.

### **Guest speakers**

Many Universities have an outreach programme which allows learners to benefit from the additional experience of an external speaker, such as a university student.

Higher Geography students may also benefit from the opportunity of working with National 5 learners, cascading their skills and experiences of Geography.

### **Demonstrations of practical tasks**

Learners will benefit from practice of geographical techniques and frequent use of these techniques, such as map reading.

In the Human Environments unit, learners should be able to interpret and collect information from maps and a variety of other sources, such as constructing and processing population pyramids.

### **Use of ICT**

There are many useful sites on-line for learners and educators to use, for example: BBC Scotland Learning allows learners the opportunity to investigate at their own pace.

There are many interactive map programmes available which allow learners to explore Human Environments from the classroom, for example Google Earth.

Web sites such as those mentioned below are excellent for the investigation of differences and similarities in basic human development issues between developed and developing countries, for example BBC Education, Cyber School Bus, GCSE Bitesize, World Bank, Scotland’s Census.

## Thinking skills

There are many online resources with tried and tested methods of encouraging thinking skills in Geography. The following sites provide relevant 'Mysteries' activities for Human Environments: Staffordshire teachers of Geography, Geography Teaching Today.

Mysteries allow learners to focus on a particular question or scenario, with relevant and irrelevant information provided for them to decide on an answer or course of action. For example, in the Human Environment unit, learners may be given cards with facts about population distribution in a developing country and asked to explain the population distribution in that country. Some cards will have reasons explaining the distribution, others will have irrelevant facts. Learners need to work out which are valuable to them. This allows learners an opportunity, either alone or as part of a group, to develop their skills of reasoning and evaluating. This activity could be used for assessment purposes.

Living graphs afford learners the opportunity to create theoretical graphs, annotated with real life information. For example, a population pyramid of a developed and a developing country may be created. Comment cards with facts such as 'Grandparents are rare' will then be given to each learner, pair or group. Learners will then have to decide where to place their comments and on which pyramid, before justifying their choice. Again, this provides an opportunity for peer assessment and co-operative learning.

## Approaches to assessment and gathering evidence

Assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching in Curriculum for Excellence. Learners should have a clear understanding of the requirements of the unit. Learners should be encouraged to set their own learning objectives, assess the extent of their existing knowledge and be encouraged to review their own progress.

Learners learn best when they:

- ◆ understand clearly what they are trying to learn, and what is expected of them
- ◆ are given feedback about the quality of their work, and what they can do to make it better
- ◆ are given advice about how to make improvements and are fully involved in deciding what needs to be done next, and who can give them help if they need it

Teachers and lecturers should:

- ◆ share learning/assessment criteria
- ◆ provide effective feedback
- ◆ encourage peer and self-assessment
- ◆ question effectively using higher order questioning when appropriate

Tasks should be created that allow for personalisation and choice. Learners should be given the opportunity to choose a topic that has interested them. They should be encouraged to choose a variety of relevant sources to research and also a method of presentation that suits them.

Learner log books could be created in order to record pupil achievement in the Outcomes on a regular basis, in order to provide evidence which satisfies completely or partially a unit or units.

Teachers and lecturers should use inclusive approaches to assessment that take into account the specific needs of their learners. Teachers and lecturers should use appropriate content, resources and assessment materials that recognise the achievements and contributions of different groups.

A variety of methods of assessment should be used to gather evidence such as extended writing, source evaluation, pupil presentations, role play, investigation work and creation of various media that will allow learners and teachers to establish their next steps.

## **Combining assessment within units**

Assessment could be combined in this unit by holistically assessing all the outcomes of the unit in a single assessment. When assessment within the unit is holistic, teachers and lecturers should take particular care to track the evidence for each individual outcome.

# Administrative information

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**Superclass:** RF

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## History of changes to National Unit Specification

| Version | Description of change   | Date           |
|---------|---|----------------|
| 1.1     | Unit Support Notes added.<br>Assessment standard threshold added. | September 2018 |
| 2.0     | Unit code updated.  | July 2019      |
| 3.0     | Reference to units as part of the National 5 course removed.      | May 2024       |
|         |   |                |

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