

NZQA Assessment Support Material

Unit standard	9006				
Title	Conduct a guided qualitative sociological enquiry				
Level	2	Credits	6	Version	3

Note

The following guidelines are supplied to enable teachers to carry out valid and consistent assessment using this internal assessment resource. In time, as quality examples of assessment activities become available naturally through the moderation process, these materials may be modified to include a variety of assessment activities and assessment schedules.

Teachers must manage authenticity for any assessment from a public source, because students may have access to the assessment schedule or to student exemplar material.

This assessment resource will need to be modified before it is used. The teacher needs to ensure that the assessment materials given to the student state the unit standard number, the title and the version of the standard being assessed, and the conditions under which the assessment is to take place (for example, as an in-class test or as a homework activity). The teacher may need to set an appropriate context, select relevant resources and modify tasks. The teacher will need to develop an appropriate assessment schedule by adding evidence and judgement statements.

Teacher guidelines

Context/setting

Students undertaking an assessment activity for this standard will require an understanding of the various methods of collecting quantitative data and their relative advantages and limitations. In particular, students should have an understanding of the Scientific Method and be able to conduct research using the Scientific Method. Students also need to consider the ethics involved in conducting sociological research. This should be part of the teaching and learning prior to the assessment.

In this activity students will conduct a guided qualitative sociological enquiry. This unit standard is one of a series of three standards concerned with conducting qualitative sociological research. The three standards are differentiated principally by the level of student/researcher independence in the enquiry process. A qualitative enquiry includes the entire process from identifying the research question to the final reporting and conclusions.

A qualitative sociological enquiry requires the collection and analysis of essentially non-statistical data. Qualitative data collection methods could include but are not limited to: non-participant observation, participant observation, and unstructured interviews.

At level 2, the teacher/supervisor provides guidance in helping the student to decide on the area of enquiry and the research question and methods, and helps guide the student during the research process. Students must be actively involved in planning their own enquiry. A 'guided' qualitative enquiry means the teacher:

- Approves the area of investigation, as well as the research question and methods.
- Checks student progress during each phase of the research and advises them about possible changes needed to meet the requirements of the standard or improvements that could be made.

THIS UNIT STANDARD CAN BE AWARDED WITH AN ACHIEVED, MERIT, OR EXCELLENCE GRADE

AWARD OF GRADES

- For award with **Achieved**, students are able to conduct a guided qualitative sociological enquiry. This requires that: planning identifies a research question and a methodology; data collection and analysis are appropriate to the enquiry; findings and conclusion(s) are relevant to the enquiry; conclusion(s) use sociological concepts; and limitations of the research are identified.
- For award with **Merit**, the findings will be in detail, the conclusions will be supported by evidence from the enquiry data and will use sociological ideas and concepts.
- For award with **Excellence**, the findings will be in depth, the conclusions will be comprehensive and supported by evidence from the enquiry data, and will use sociological ideas and concepts.

Conditions of assessment

The timeframe and conditions for assessment will be set by the teacher.

Assessment activity

This assessment activity has five tasks related to the research process and scientific method.

Task One

With the teacher's approval, students should select a topic to be investigated and come up with questions in need of answers about that topic. These questions may be of a general or specific nature, depending on what the student/researcher wants to find out. After exploring what they know about this topic and perhaps doing some background research on it, students should develop a research question(s) and if appropriate, a hypothesis(es) as a focus for their research.

Task Two

The teacher will help the student determine the research methods to be used to collect the data. The most common forms of qualitative research methods are interviews (either highly-, semi- or unstructured) and observation (participant and non-participant). The student should plan how, when and where they are going to carry out their research, and with whom. Teachers should help students select an appropriate sample and make students aware of relevant ethical issues. Relevant considerations for students include:

- Who are you going to question or observe?
- How many people will you observe or interview?
- When and where will you conduct your observations or interviews?
- How will you record your data?

Students write a research proposal which specifies their topic, their research question(s) and hypothesis(es), the research methods to be used, the size of the sample and a timeframe showing when each stage of the research will be completed. This should be approved by the teacher before the student undertakes the research.

Task Three

Using their chosen methods and guided by their research questions, the students collect and record their data. The teacher provides guidance for this task.

Task Four

Students analyse their data and 'write up' their findings and conclusion(s) in a research report. These conclusion(s) should be relevant to the enquiry and use sociological concepts. The research report may include the following:

1. Title page with the title of the research and an abstract (a short paragraph summarising what the research is about)
2. Table of contents
3. Research question(s)/Hypothesis(es)
4. Research Methods
5. Statement of Findings
6. Limitations of the Research Process: the student outlines any problems or limitations they encountered and how these affected the research process and data collection.
7. Bibliography (if appropriate)
8. Appendices: (may include any or all of) copy of the research proposal, copy of field notes (observations), interview questions, photographs or illustrations.

Task Five

Students must reflect on their enquiry and identify the limitations of their research activity. Limitations might include reference to the small size of their sample, the reliability of respondents' answers, the difficulty of recording and understanding what they were observing, the validity of their data, and the need for further research. These limitations should be discussed in their research report.

Resource requirements

When considering the ethics involved in sociological research, teachers and students may find the Code of Ethics developed by the *Sociological Association of Aotearoa (New Zealand)* to be useful. The ethics can be accessed at: <http://ethics.iit.edu/ecodes/node/3219>.

Possible topics

Teachers may choose to keep the research activity within the school and have students observe or interview their peers.

Some possible topics for a qualitative enquiry may be:

- Behaviour of students (the behaviour of boys compared to girls) in a classroom
- Interactions between teacher/students in a particular class
- Non-participant observation of small children in the playground / in a playgroup / at a kindergarten / etc.
- Behaviour of onlookers at a sports event.

Additional information

Teaching and learning guidelines that inform sociology as it is taught in New Zealand can be found at www.nzqa.govt.nz/sociology.

Assessment Schedule

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Teachers will need to develop an assessment schedule that is appropriate to the assessment activity and the context, by adding evidence and judgement statements. Evidence is examples of acceptable student responses to the various tasks being assessed; judgements indicate the quality and/or quantity of the student response needed to meet the requirements of the unit standard.

It may be convenient (but it is not compulsory) to format an assessment schedule as a table.

Judgements and evidence for Achievement	Judgements and evidence for achievement with Merit	Judgements and evidence for achievement with Excellence
[Teacher to insert judgement and evidence statements.]	[Teacher to insert judgement and evidence statements.]	[Teacher to insert judgement and evidence statements.]
Examples of acceptable student responses:	Examples of acceptable student responses:	Examples of acceptable student responses:

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Student Instructions Sheet

Introduction

This assessment activity requires you to conduct a guided qualitative sociological enquiry.

A qualitative sociological enquiry requires essentially non-statistical data to be collected and analysed. Qualitative data collection methods could include, but are not limited to: non-participant observation, participant observation, and unstructured interviews.

Your teacher will help you decide on the area of enquiry and the research question(s) and methods, and help guide you during the research process.

THIS UNIT STANDARD CAN BE AWARDED WITH AN ACHIEVED, MERIT, OR EXCELLENCE GRADE

AWARD OF GRADES

- For award with **Achieved**, you must be able to conduct a guided qualitative sociological enquiry. This requires that you:
 - Plan your enquiry, identify a research question and choose a methodology.
 - Collect and analyse data that are appropriate to the enquiry.
 - Present findings and conclusion(s) relevant to the enquiry.
 - Use sociological concepts in your conclusion(s).
 - Identify the limitations of your research.
- For award with **Merit**, the findings will be in detail, the conclusions will be supported by evidence from the enquiry data and will use sociological ideas and concepts.
- For award with **Excellence**, the findings will be in depth, the conclusions will be comprehensive and supported by evidence from the enquiry data, and will use sociological ideas and concepts.

Conditions of assessment

The timeframe and conditions for assessment will be set by your teacher.

Assessment activity

This assessment activity has five tasks related to the research process and the scientific method.

Task One

With your teacher's approval, select a topic to be investigated and come up with questions in need of answers about that topic. These questions may be of a general or specific nature, depending on what you want to find out. After exploring what you know about this topic and perhaps doing some background research on it, you should develop several questions to investigate and if appropriate, one or more hypotheses about how the topic can be explained.

Task Two

With your teacher's help determine the research methods to be used to collect the data. The most common forms of qualitative research methods are unstructured (or semi-unstructured) interviews and observation (participant and non-participant). You plan how, when and where you are going to carry out your research. Your teacher may help you select an appropriate sample and will make you aware of relevant ethical issues. Relevant considerations for you include:

- Who are you going to question?
- How many people will you observe or interview?
- When and where will you conduct your observations or interviews?
- How will you record your data?

Write a research proposal which specifies your topic, your research question(s) and hypotheses, the research methods to be used, the size of the sample and a timeframe showing when each stage of the research will be completed. This needs to be approved by your teacher before you undertake the research.

Task Three

Collect and record your data. The recording can be done in writing, or through a combination of writing, sound and/or video recording.

Task Four

Analyse your data and 'write up' your findings and conclusion(s) in a research report. These conclusion(s) should be relevant to the enquiry and use sociological concepts.

Task Five

Reflect on (think about) your enquiry and identify the limitations of your research activity. These limitations should be discussed in your report.

Your research report should include the following:

1. Title page with the title of the research and an abstract (a short paragraph summarising what the research is about)
2. Table of contents
3. Research question(s) / hypothesis(es)
4. Research Methods
5. Statement of Findings
6. Limitations of the Research Process: outline any problems or limitations you encountered and how these affected the research process and data collection.
7. Bibliography (if appropriate)
8. Appendices: (may include any or all of) copy of field notes (observations), interview questions, photos or illustrations.