

NZQA Assessment Support Material

Unit standard	8989				
Title	Explain a sociological theory				
Level	1	Credits	4	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

A sociological theory is a body of ideas that attempts to explain the structure of groups, organisations, and societies, and how people interact in these contexts. The purpose of social theory is to study and interpret social phenomena based on empirical evidence. In this activity students will demonstrate a basic understanding of sociological theory.

Students undertaking an assessment activity for this standard will require an understanding of the characteristics and purposes of scientific theories, in general, and of sociological theory in particular. This should be part of the teaching and learning prior to the assessment.

The student will identify and explain a sociological theory. This will involve identifying key concepts for the theory and explaining how the theory can be applied to an aspect(s) of society (such as inequality or crime).

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

AWARD OF GRADES

- For award with **Achieved**, students must be able to identify and explain an appropriate sociological theory using at least two key concepts and applying the theory to an explanation of an aspect(s) of society.
- For award with **Merit**, students must be able to support their explanation with relevant detail, which may include consideration of: the groups and/or institutions involved; particular facts, events or processes; and one key concept in detail, or two or more key concepts in less detail.
- For award with **Excellence**, students comprehensively explain a sociological theory, using key concepts. Learners support their explanation with appropriate evidence and examples.

Conditions of assessment

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

Assessment activity

The teacher selects an appropriate sociological theory and determines which aspect(s) of society is to be explained. It may be practicable to allow students some choice in which theory they will explain and to what aspect of society they will apply that theory.

This assessment activity has two tasks.

Task One

Students identify the key concepts and explain how they apply to the chosen theory.

Task Two

Students apply the theory to an explanation of an aspect(s) of society.

Resource requirements

There are no specific resources required for this assessment.

Possible topics

At level 1, the sociological theory to be explained can be a broad theoretical perspective such as 'consensus theory', 'conflict theory' or 'interpretive theory'. While this may be rather simplistic, it is sufficient for the purposes of assessing this standard.

Recommended resources

Clear explanations of sociological theory can be found in the following sociology textbooks. At level 1, these texts are more appropriate as teacher references, than as student resources.

Giddens, Anthony. 2013. *Sociology*. 7th edition. Cambridge, UK. Polity Press.

Ritzer, George. 2013. *Introduction to sociology*. Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage Publications.

Furze, B., Savy, P., et al (eds.) 2012. *Sociology in today's world*. 2nd edition. Melbourne. Centage Learning.

McLennan, G., McManus, R., Spoonley, P. 2010. *Exploring Society: sociology for New Zealand students*. 3rd edition. Auckland. Pearson Education New Zealand.

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

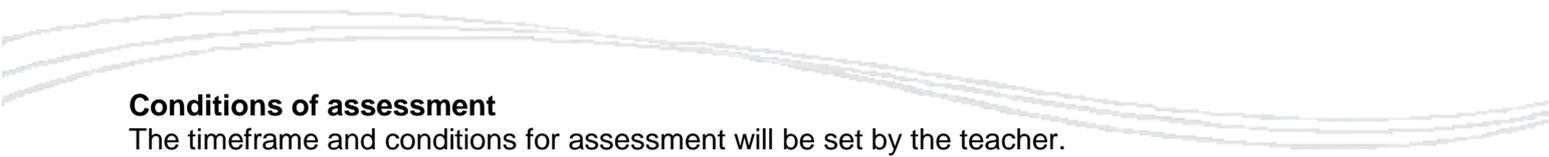
A sociological theory is a body of ideas that attempts to explain the structure of groups, organisations, and societies, and how people interact in these contexts. The purpose of social theory is to study and interpret social phenomena based on empirical evidence.

Your teacher will select a sociological theory that you will apply to an explanation of an aspect(s) of society. You will be assessed on your ability to explain the characteristics of the sociological theory, using key concepts and relevant examples.

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 explain a sociological theory using at least two key concepts and applying the theory to an explanation of an aspect(s) of society.
- For award with **Merit**, you must be able to support your explanation with relevant detail, such as: the groups and/or institutions involved; particular facts, events or processes; and at least two key concepts identified and defined in detail, or more than two key concepts in less detail.
- For award with **Excellence**, you will comprehensively explain a sociological theory, using key concepts. The theory will be used to explain an aspect(s) of society (as for *Merit*). Your explanation will include appropriate evidence and examples.

**Conditions of assessment**

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

Assessment activity

This assessment activity has two tasks.

Task One

Identify and define the key concepts (ideas) in the sociological theory, and explain how they apply to the chosen theory.

Task Two

Use the selected sociological theory to explain some aspect of society.