BOARD OF STUDIES
NEW SOUTH WALES

Society and Culture

Stage 6 Syllabus

2013

Contents

1 The Higher School Certificate program of study

The purpose of the Higher School Certificate program of study is to:

- provide a curriculum structure which encourages students to complete secondary education
- foster the intellectual, social and moral development of students, in particular developing their:
    - knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes in the fields of study they choose
    - capacity to manage their own learning
    - desire to continue learning in formal or informal settings after school
    - capacity to work together with others
    - respect for the cultural diversity of Australian society
- provide a flexible structure within which students can prepare for:
    - further education and training
    - employment
    - full and active participation as citizens
- provide formal assessment and certification of students' achievements
- provide a context within which schools also have the opportunity to foster students' physical and spiritual development.

2 Rationale for Society and Culture in the Stage 6 curriculum

The central goal of Society and Culture Stage 6 is the development of social and cultural literacy and a clear understanding of the interaction of persons, societies, cultures, environments and time. The influence of other aspects of societies and cultures – including power, authority, identity, gender, technologies and globalisation – is also central to the course.

Society and Culture draws on cross-disciplinary concepts and social research methods from anthropology; communication; cultural and media studies; philosophy; social psychology; and sociology.

Society and Culture has direct relevance to the immediate needs of students and to their future lives by enabling them to develop understanding of:

- themselves
- their own society and culture
- the societies and cultures of others.

Students are provided with essential concepts, skills, competencies and knowledge to encourage a process of independent thinking that can be used to explain patterns of behaviour, solve problems, and engage in and actively contribute to all levels of society.

Society and Culture is a conceptually based course that promotes students' awareness of the cultural continuities and changes within societies and cultures. It provides them with skills to critically analyse social theories and complementary and contrasting viewpoints about people, societies and cultures. Society and Culture promotes an awareness of individuals, groups and institutions and facilitates intercultural understanding and communication.

Society and Culture encourages students to manage their own learning, including opportunities to experience working within teams. In allowing students to study in areas of direct relevance to their lives, Society and Culture contributes greatly to the promotion of lifelong learning, providing opportunities for students to acquire a range of skills to support such learning.

The study of Society and Culture prepares students for adult life by developing knowledge, understanding, skills and other qualities associated with effective citizenship at local, national, regional and global levels. In so doing, it forms a basis for moving towards a more just society through positive participation in community life and attaining social and cultural literacy.

3 Continuum of learning for Society and Culture Stage 6 students

Stages 1–3
HSIE K–6

Stages 4–5	**Stages 4–5**	**Stages 4–5**
Mandatory Geography	Elective HSIE subjects	Mandatory History

Stage 6
Society and Culture

Workplace University TAFE Community
Lifelong learning
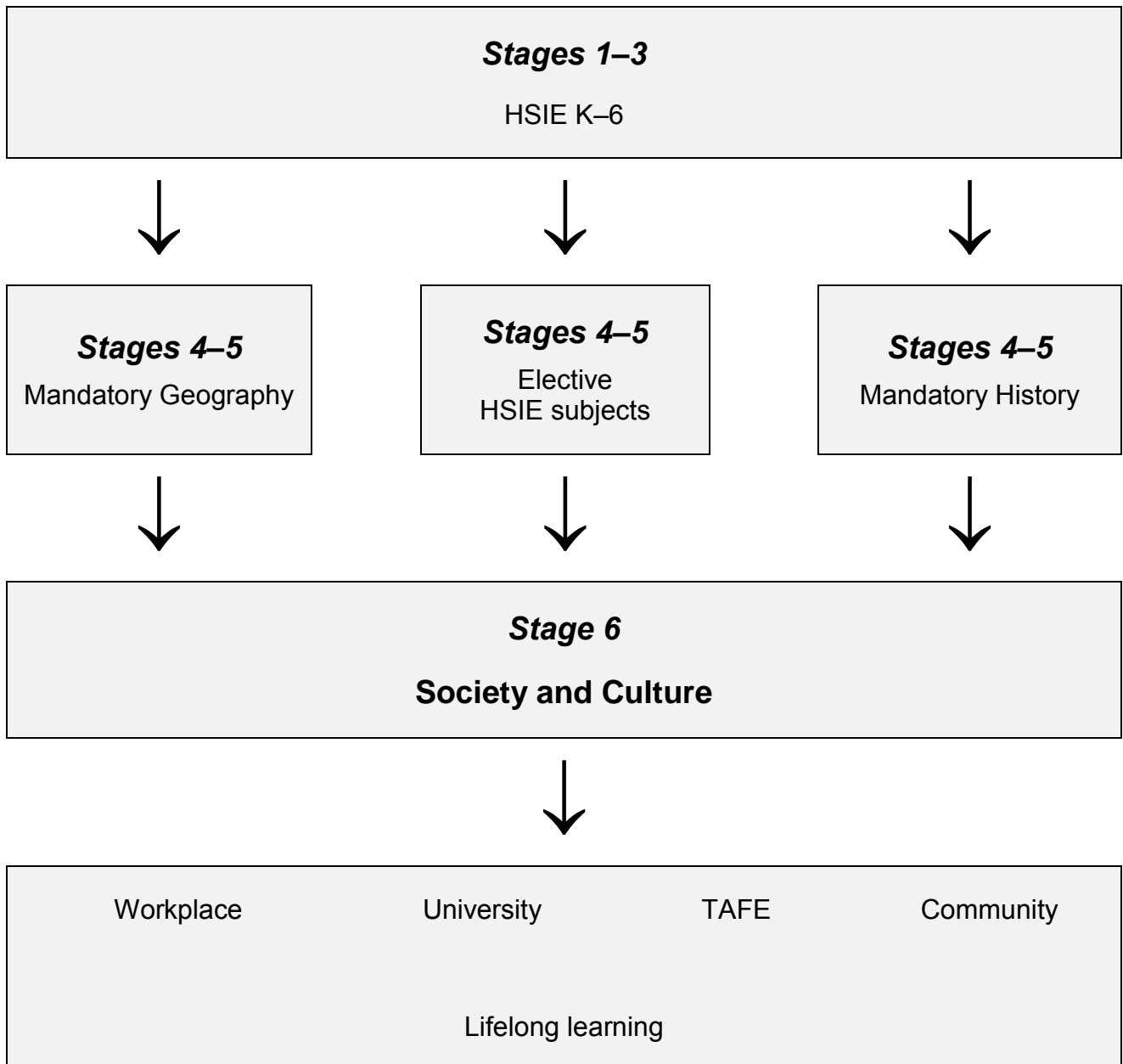
4 Aim

The aim of Society and Culture Stage 6 is for students to achieve social and cultural literacy by developing their knowledge and understanding about societies and cultures, developing their social and cultural research skills, and promoting positive values and attitudes essential to achieving social and cultural literacy.

5   Objectives

Through the study of Society and Culture Stage 6, students will develop:

- knowledge and understanding about:

    - social and cultural concepts and their application

    - personal, social and cultural identity and interactions within societies and cultures

    - how personal experience and public knowledge interact to develop social and cultural literacy

    - continuity and change, personal and social futures

    - social and cultural research methods

- skills to:

    - apply ethical social and cultural research to investigate and analyse information from a variety of sources

    - communicate information, ideas and issues in appropriate forms to different audiences and in a variety of contexts

- informed and responsible values and attitudes towards:

    - a just society

    - intercultural understanding

    - informed and active citizenship

    - ethical research practices

    - lifelong learning.

6   Course structure

There are two courses in the *Society and Culture Stage 6 Syllabus:*

Preliminary course
(120 indicative hours)

- *The Social and Cultural World*   (30% of course time)
- *Personal and Social Identity*   (40% of course time)
- *Intercultural Communication*   (30% of course time)

HSC course
(120 indicative hours)

Core

- Personal Interest Project   (30% of course time)
- *Social and Cultural Continuity and Change*   (30% of course time)

Depth studies   (40% of course time)

TWO to be chosen from the following:

- *Popular Culture*
- *Belief Systems and Ideologies*
- *Social Inclusion and Exclusion*
- *Social Conformity and Nonconformity*

6.1 Course overview

Preliminary course overview

Aim	Concepts	Preliminary course		
Social and cultural literacy	**Persons** The individual human; their relationships with other persons and with society, culture and the environment through time **Society** Human relationships from small groups to large systems **Culture** Knowledge shared by members of these groups and systems and reflected in their customs, values, laws, arts, technologies and artefacts; their way of life **Environment** Settings where people live and work, the interaction between people and their environment, people's perceptions of the environment, and their actions to improve their environment **Time** The continuous passage of existence; perceptions of the past, present and future **Power** The ability or capacity to influence or persuade others to a point of view or action to which they would not normally agree **Authority** The rights to make decisions and to determine, adjudicate or settle issues and disputes in society **Identity** The sense of self formed over time from a personal, social and cultural level **Gender** Socially constructed differences between females and males **Technologies** The tools that we use to assist our interactions in society **Globalisation** A process of integration and the sharing of goods, capital, services, knowledge, leisure, sport, ideas and culture between countries brought about by improved technologies	**Depth study:** ***The Social and Cultural World*** *(30% of course time)* **Outcomes** P1, P3, P6, P9, P10 **Content** • Integrated concepts • Contemporary context • The nature of the social and cultural world • Social and cultural research • Quantitative and qualitative research • Focus study	**Depth study:** ***Personal and Social Identity*** *(40% of course time)* **Outcomes** P1, P2, P3, P5, P8, P10 **Content** • Integrated concepts • Contemporary context • The nature of the development of personal and social identity • Focus study	**Depth study:** ***Intercultural Communication*** *(30% of course time)* **Outcomes** P1, P3, P4, P7, P8, P9 **Content** • Integrated concepts • Contemporary context • The nature of communication • Theories relating to intercultural communication • Focus study

HSC course overview

HSC course					
Core: Personal Interest Project *(30% of course time)*	**Core:** *Social and Cultural Continuity and Change* *(30% of course time)*	**Depth study:** *Popular Culture* *(20% of course time)*	**Depth study:** *Belief Systems and Ideologies* *(20% of course time)*	**Depth study:** *Social Inclusion and Exclusion* *(20% of course time)*	**Depth study:** *Social Conformity and Nonconformity* *(20% of course time)*
Outcomes H1, H4, H5, H6, H7, H8, H9, H10	**Outcomes** H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7, H9, H10	**Outcomes** H1, H2, H3, H5, H7, H9, H10	**Outcomes** H1, H2, H3, H5, H7, H9, H10	**Outcomes** H1, H2, H3, H5, H7, H9, H10	**Outcomes** H1, H2, H3, H5, H7, H9, H10
Components • Introduction • Log • Central material • Conclusion • Resource list	**Content** • Integrated concepts • Contemporary context • The nature of social and cultural research methods • The nature of social and cultural continuity and change • Focus study • The near future	**Content** • Integrated concepts • Contemporary context • The nature of popular culture • Focus study • The near future	**Content** • Integrated concepts • Contemporary context • The nature of belief systems and ideologies • Focus study • The near future	**Content** • Integrated concepts • Contemporary context • The nature of social inclusion and exclusion • Focus study • The near future	**Content** • Integrated concepts • Contemporary context • The nature of social conformity and nonconformity • Focus study • The near future

7 Objectives and outcomes

7.1 Table of objectives and outcomes

Objectives	Preliminary course outcomes	HSC course outcomes
Students will develop knowledge and understanding about:	*A student:*	*A student:*
• social and cultural concepts and their application	P1 identifies and applies social and cultural concepts	H1 evaluates and effectively applies social and cultural concepts
• personal, social and cultural identity and interactions within societies and cultures	P2 describes personal, social and cultural identity	H2 explains the development of personal, social and cultural identity
	P3 identifies and describes relationships and interactions within and between social and cultural groups	H3 analyses relationships and interactions within and between social and cultural groups
• how personal experience and public knowledge interact to develop social and cultural literacy	P4 identifies the features of social and cultural literacy and how it develops	H4 assesses the interaction of personal experience and public knowledge in the development of social and cultural literacy
• continuity and change, personal and social futures	P5 explains continuity and change and their implications for societies and cultures	H5 analyses continuity and change and their influence on personal and social futures
• social and cultural research methods	P6 differentiates between social and cultural research methods	H6 evaluates social and cultural research methods for appropriateness to specific research tasks

Objectives	Preliminary course outcomes	HSC course outcomes
Students will develop skills to:	*A student:*	*A student:*
• apply ethical social and cultural research to investigate and analyse information from a variety of sources	P7 selects, organises and considers information from a variety of sources for usefulness, validity and bias	H7 selects, organises, synthesises and analyses information from a variety of sources for usefulness, validity and bias
	P8 plans and conducts ethical social and cultural research	H8 uses planning and review strategies to conduct ethical social and cultural research that is appropriate for tasks ranging from the simple to the complex
• communicate information, ideas and issues in appropriate forms to different audiences and in a variety of contexts	P9 uses appropriate course language and concepts suitable for different audiences and contexts	H9 applies complex course language and concepts appropriate for a range of audiences and contexts
	P10 communicates information, ideas and issues using appropriate written, oral and graphic forms	H10 communicates complex information, ideas and issues using appropriate written, oral and graphic forms

8 Framework for the study of Society and Culture

Content from sections 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3 may be drawn upon for the HSC examination.

8.1 Features of Preliminary and HSC content
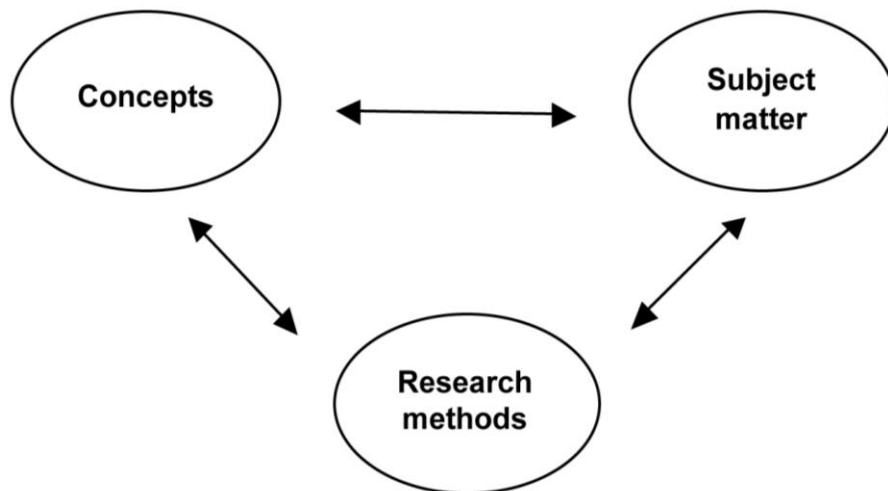
Society and Culture integrates concepts and applies methods to the subject matter.

The concepts are tools to organise and to further understand the subject matter. They spiral through the course and are classified as **fundamental**, **additional** and **related**.

The fundamental course concepts are:

- **persons**
- **society**
- **culture**
- **environment**
- **time**

The fundamental course concepts are central to understanding the interactions in society at the micro, meso and macro levels. To comprehend any group of people, it is important to understand that there is a two-way interaction between any combination of the fundamental course concepts.

Persons

Every person is a unique individual who develops in a social and environmental setting in which he or she is influenced by, and interacts with, other persons and groups. Communication, the sharing of values and beliefs, and cooperation are major interactions. The identity achieved by each individual is the result of interactions at the micro, meso and macro levels of society.

Society

Society is made up of people, groups, networks, institutions, organisations and systems. These aspects of society may include local, national, regional and international patterns of relationships and organisation. People belong to informal and formal groups, and within and between these groups there are patterns of interactions that contribute to unique cultures.

Culture

Culture refers to the shared knowledge, attitudes and behaviours that give each society its coherence, identity and distinctive way of life. Culture is demonstrated by the beliefs, customs, values, norms, rules, laws, governance, arts, technologies and artefacts that people generate and use as they interpret meaning from their world and solve present and future problems. Culture is dynamic and undergoes change, and is therefore not static.

Environment

Every society is located in a particular physical setting and interacts with its environment. The attitudes and values that people have in regard to their environment greatly affect interactions between persons, society, culture and the environment. Unique culture is generated from the interactions with the immediate environment. Different locations and their environments – including urban, rural, coastal, inland and isolated – present societies and their cultures with both opportunities and constraints.

Time

Every person, society, culture and environment is located in a period of time and is changing with time. Time can be examined as past, present and future. Our perceptions of time are drawn from past events and these influence our ideas about the present. These perceptions need not, however, determine possible ideas of a future. The concept of time is best studied in context – last century, this century, and pre- and post-events – or as a particular decade. Time is studied in relation to continuity and change.
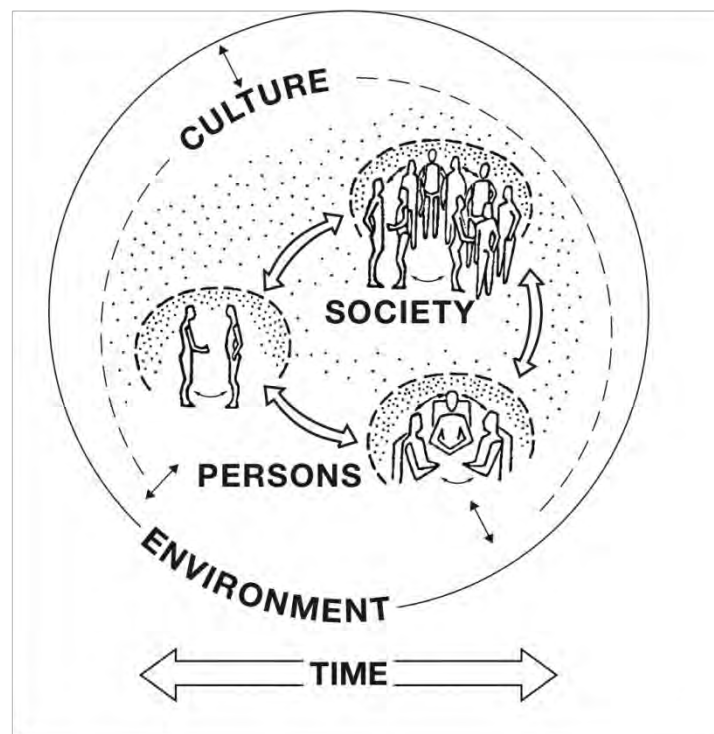
There is a dynamic interaction between the five fundamental concepts, as illustrated by the concepts diagram above.

The additional course concepts are:

- **power**
- **authority**
- **gender**
- **identity**
- **technologies**
- **globalisation**

The additional course concepts help us to understand and analyse the interactions between the fundamental course concepts. These additional course concepts are important when analysing and understanding the interactions of society at the micro, meso and macro levels.

Power

Power is the ability or capacity to influence or persuade others to a point of view or action to which they may not always agree. Exercising power is important in initiating or preventing change.

Authority

Authority is linked to power and the right to make decisions and to determine, adjudicate or settle issues and disputes in society. Authority is best understood as the legitimate use of power. The use of authority is important in the process of decision-making and in initiating change and maintaining continuity.

Gender

Gender refers to the socially constructed differences between females and males. Social life – including family life, roles, work, behaviour and other activities – is organised around the dimensions of this difference. Gender also refers to the cultural ideals, identities and stereotypes of masculinity and femininity and the sexual division of labour in institutions and organisations. Gender reflects the value a society places on these social constructs, which are particular and unique to a society.

Identity

Identity refers to the sense of self and can be viewed from a personal, social and cultural level. Identity is formed over a period of time and is the result of interactions at the micro, meso and macro levels of society. An identity has dimensions or layers that create a sense of inclusion in a group or culture. Contributing factors to one's identity may be gender, sexuality, family, class, ethnicity, beliefs, social status, group membership and national pride.

Technologies

The term 'technologies' refers to all the tools that we use to assist our interactions in society. Technologies can lead to innovation and can initiate change to micro, meso and macro operations in society. The value placed on technologies at any level of society influences the rate of change to society and culture. Technologies are constantly changing and adapting and their impact varies over time. Communication-based technologies facilitate the interaction between the micro, meso and macro levels of society.

Globalisation

Globalisation is the process of integration and sharing of goods, capital, labour, services, knowledge, leisure, sport, ideas and culture between countries. Globalisation is evidenced in the emergence of global patterns of consumption and consumerism; the growth of transnational corporations; global sport; the spread of world tourism; and the growth of global military and economic systems. Globalisation is assisted by technologies and media integration, resulting in an increasing consciousness of the world as a single place.

Note: There is continual interaction between the five fundamental course concepts and the six additional course concepts. None of these course concepts can be studied in isolation. An understanding of this interaction underpins the core and depth studies in both the Preliminary and the HSC courses.

8.2 Social and cultural research methods

During the study of both the Preliminary and the HSC courses, students are required to develop knowledge and understanding of a variety of the methods used to conduct research. Students will also need to develop skills in:

- planning research tasks, including developing appropriate research methods

- applying research methods ethically

- compiling and organising collected information

- analysing, synthesising and interpreting the findings

- writing up and editing their conclusions in ways appropriate to different audiences.

The term 'method' refers to the specific tools of the investigation, or the ways that data can be collected and analysed – for example, a questionnaire.

Two main approaches for research are quantitative and qualitative.

Quantitative methods enable the collection of very specific data from a sample of the relevant population. The findings may then be extrapolated for the whole population under study. With a quantitative method, information is collected by counting, and is able to be collated into percentages and then represented by tables and graphs.

While the ease of collating data gathered through quantitative methods has its advantages for the researcher, it must be remembered that quantitative methods:

- do not allow the researcher to interact closely or personally with those being questioned; the process is impersonal and as objective as possible

- rely heavily on the researcher's ability to develop a non-biased set of research questions or items in order to record data within the selected sample.

Qualitative methods rely on the researcher's interpretive skills to understand the often complex and detailed data gathered.

Qualitative research is useful:

- for studies at the individual or small group level

- for finding out, in depth, how and what people are thinking and feeling.

Analysis of qualitative data can be more challenging than analysis of the numbers collected through a quantitative method.

Analysis of qualitative data requires sorting responses to open-ended questions and interviews into broad themes or categories before the researcher is able to draw meaning or conclusions from the data.

Research methods such as questionnaire and interview can produce both quantitative and qualitative information, depending on how the questions are structured.

Closed questions that require only a 'yes' or 'no' answer, or questions that allow only a limited choice of responses, produce easily quantified and tabulated data.

Open-ended questions, on the other hand, produce descriptive responses that are qualitative in nature and therefore require categorising and analysing before any understanding can be gained.

It is important to remember that research methods exist on a continuum from quantitative to qualitative – that is, from methods that easily measure and quantify data to those that collect detailed and less measurable and, therefore, less quantifiable data. Many methods contain aspects of both – that is, they include quantitative and qualitative elements.

Distinguishing the two broad approaches to social research	**Quantitative methods** Researchers collect data that can be measured, counted or quantified, resulting in a statistical report. The focus of quantitative research is WHAT and HOW MANY.	**Qualitative methods** Researchers aim to gather an in-depth understanding of an issue by way of open-ended questioning, non-statistical research techniques, or value-based observations. A qualitative investigation focuses on WHY and HOW.
Main features	• Large and randomly selected sample of respondents who represent the particular population of interest • Structured data collection instrument, with closed-ended or rating-scale questions • Quantities and trends identified; comparisons can be made • Researcher is not necessarily known to the participants • Participant characteristics can be hidden from the research • Lack of direct contact with the sample assists detachment of the researcher; however, care still needs to be taken in construction of the instrument to ensure that the researcher is aware of potential bias that may be built into the questions • Quantifies the findings in numerical data, tables, graphs and diagrams	• Usually a small sample and not randomly selected • Interactive process • Participants' characteristics may be known to the researcher • Narrative report with conceptual description of behaviour, values, attitudes and beliefs • Contains direct quotations from research participants • Invaluable for the exploration of subjective experiences • Relies heavily on the researcher's interpretive skills to understand the complexities of findings • Direct quotations from documents and from participants can be utilised

Research methods

Quantitative methods of research	Qualitative methods of research
Questionnaire with closed-ended questions or rating scale questions where the findings can be counted and observed as statistics – the data collected can be quantified.	**Questionnaire** with open-ended questions gathers opinions and therefore is qualitative in nature.
Content analysis is used in quantitative research to detect and count, and the data collected in this way can be quantified.	**Content analysis** as a qualitative method is used to analyse and interpret themes, words and images from documents, film, art, music and other cultural artefacts and media. After coding the responses, the researcher analyses, interprets and makes qualitative judgements about meanings of the content.
Statistical analysis examines statistics to make generalisations and extrapolate trends.	**Interview** with open-ended questions is qualitative in nature.
Observation that detects and counts and where the data collected can be quantified.	**Focus group** entails the collection of data from an in-depth planned discussion of a defined topic held by a small group of people brought together by a moderator.
	Secondary research involves accessing data already produced by other researchers. The researcher makes a subjective judgement about what material is useful and what is not for the purpose of the research process. Summaries and syntheses are made of the research findings.
	Personal reflection is the use of, and evaluation of, personal experiences and values to demonstrate analysis and interpretation of data in the context of the research focus.
	Participant observation is where the researcher is immersed in the action being observed and his or her role as researcher is not obvious. Non-participant observation is where the researcher observes the interactions taking place without actively engaging in them. The researcher draws meaning from what is being observed, rather than simply counting specific actions as in a quantitative observational study. Both participant and non-participant observation can be covert or overt.
	Case study involves the in-depth study of a cultural group, which can be any group of individuals who share a common social experience and/or location. Case study is considered a methodology when it combines two or more research methods, such as 'observation, interview and documentary evidence', to gather the data.

Ethical research

Social and cultural researchers are expected to conduct research in an ethical manner.

Following the principles of ethical research is important because:

- this promotes trust that the information collected will be used responsibly and will be treated with respect and confidentiality

- if the respondents feel comfortable with the ethical research process, they are much more likely to offer replies to questions and therefore genuine knowledge can be gained by the researcher.

In practice, ethical research means that:

- any prospective research participants must be fully informed about the procedures and any possible risks involved in the research, and must give their consent to participate

- participants are not put in awkward situations or asked to talk about sensitive topics that may make them feel uncomfortable

- the ethical researcher is open and honest with participants about the topic and scope of the project and the nature of the participation or information expected from them

- the protection of participants' rights to confidentiality and privacy is ensured

- the researcher anticipates any negative effects on the research participants (including the researcher), such as personal danger, police intervention, social embarrassment or harassment – the researcher needs to prevent these

- the researcher is mindful of the special needs of any vulnerable groups, such as children

- there is nothing covert associated with the research.

Once data (information) is collected, the researcher begins the process of analysis, synthesis and deduction. At this point, the ethical researcher needs to be aware of any assumptions or biases that may underlie the research. It is critical that the researcher analyses the data without looking for evidence to support any preconceived ideas about what she or he may find.

Ethical research practices apply to both primary and secondary research – for example, in secondary research, the collection and use of information from books, magazines, the internet, communication technologies and so on. The protection of intellectual property in the writing-up process through the acknowledgement of all information used is critical, not only out of respect for the original author of the information but also to protect the researcher from breach of copyright law. With the availability of film clips, information, images and other content from the many sources accessible to researchers, discernment and care need to be taken in order to avoid material that might be inappropriate or potentially offensive for the audience of the final product.

Plagiarising other people's work is unethical, a breach of copyright law, a misuse of intellectual property, and an untruthful representation of other people's work as the researcher's own. Researchers must never plagiarise!

The process of research

The process of research is important to the core and depth studies, as well as to the Personal Interest Project. Below is a guide to assist with the process of research in Society and Culture.

1. Decide on the topic to be researched. This may require some preliminary reading on the part of the researcher to gather ideas. Curiosity or personal interest may inspire the topic choice.

2. Develop a focus question or hypothesis. The researcher may break this focus question or hypothesis into sub-questions and list them in logical order, so that the research process can develop in a coherent way.

3. Gather background information from all appropriate sources.

4. Design the research. Choose research methods that best support finding answers to the research question or sub-questions. One sub-question may require a different method from another. For example, background reading and information gathering would require the method of 'secondary research'. Gathering information from a section of the population could require a questionnaire. For example, researching how many times a gender-specific sporting event is covered by the mass media would require the method of 'content analysis'.

5. Develop the research methods to be used. The researcher needs to be aware of any biases that might exist and take care to be as detached as possible.

6. Apply the research methods ethically.

7. Once gathered, the information needs to be compiled and organised into manageable amounts so that the researcher can make sense of the findings.

8. These findings then need to be analysed and synthesised. Effective analysis of information (data) gathered through the research methods used is a critical step in any research process. It is not enough simply to state what has been found; the researcher must reflect on what the findings mean and how they relate to the research topic. Conclusions need to be drawn and any suggestions, new theories, recommendations or implications arising from the conclusions need to be established.

9. Writing up the researcher's conclusions is a critical part of the research process. How the researcher chooses to compile the findings and the analysis of these findings will depend on the nature of the topic and the individual preference of the researcher. Whatever format the researcher chooses, effective communication for the appropriate audience is the key to the success of this final stage of the research process. Consistent with ethical research practices, the researcher must acknowledge all sources of information gathered during the research process. This requires noting all bibliographical details of all reference materials used – including books, internet articles, personal interviews and other sources – in a comprehensive reference list. It is highly recommended that the researcher compile these bibliographical details as the materials are consulted, so that the information is readily available at the end of the process. Any information for which bibliographical details cannot be provided in the reference list should not be included in the final copy of the research report.

10. The writing-up process may take two or more drafts before the researcher is satisfied with the final product. Careful editing of language and construction is important so that the researcher's conclusions are made clear. Even if the report is delivered in an oral format, the writing-up process is necessary.

Diagrammatical representation of the process of research

1. **Decide on the topic to research**
   ↓
   - Curiosity
   - Own interest
   - Prior research
   - Topic may be given, eg school assignment

2. **Develop a focus question or hypothesis**
   ↓
   - Narrow or broaden the question
   - What is known or needs to be known?
   - Develop sub-questions in logical order so research can develop in a coherent way

   Note: The topic question or hypothesis may need to be further refined during the course of the research process.

3. **Gather background information**
   ↓
   - Reference books
   - Internet articles
   - Experts

4. **Design the research**
   ↓
   - Choose the research methods that best support finding answers to the research question(s) – different sub-questions may require different research methods, eg secondary research and questionnaire
   - Choose appropriate samples of the population (who, how many, etc) and plan how to access them

5. **Develop the research methods to be used**
   ↓
   - Questionnaire(s)
   - Interview questions, etc

6. **Apply the research methods ethically**
   ↓
   - Ethical research practices are especially important during this stage of the process

7. **Compile and organise collected information so that it is manageable**
   ↓
   - Primary data responses to questionnaire(s), interview questions, data from content analysis, etc
   - Secondary information

8. **Analyse, synthesise and interpret the findings**
   ↓
   - Develop new theories or suggestions depending on the nature of the topic

9. **Write up the conclusions in an appropriate format, considering the audience for the final product**
   ↓
   - Include findings, analysis and conclusions
   - Include recommendations or implications
   - Include complete reference list

10. **Check the final product for editing or typing mistakes and ensure that all bibliographical information is included and correct**
    - The writing-up process may take two or more drafts before the researcher is satisfied with the final product.
    - Careful editing of language and construction is important so that the researcher's conclusions are made clear. Even if the report is delivered in an oral format, the writing-up process is necessary.

8.3 Social and cultural literacy

Society and Culture is designed to facilitate the development of a student's social and cultural literacy. Achieving social and cultural literacy is a developmental process that requires the student to synthesise personal experience and public knowledge at the micro, meso and macro levels of society.

Social and cultural literacy refers to the idea that people should possess a body of knowledge, understanding and skills that allows them to share, communicate effectively, and respect themselves and others. The process of gaining social and cultural literacy is reflected in the diagram below.
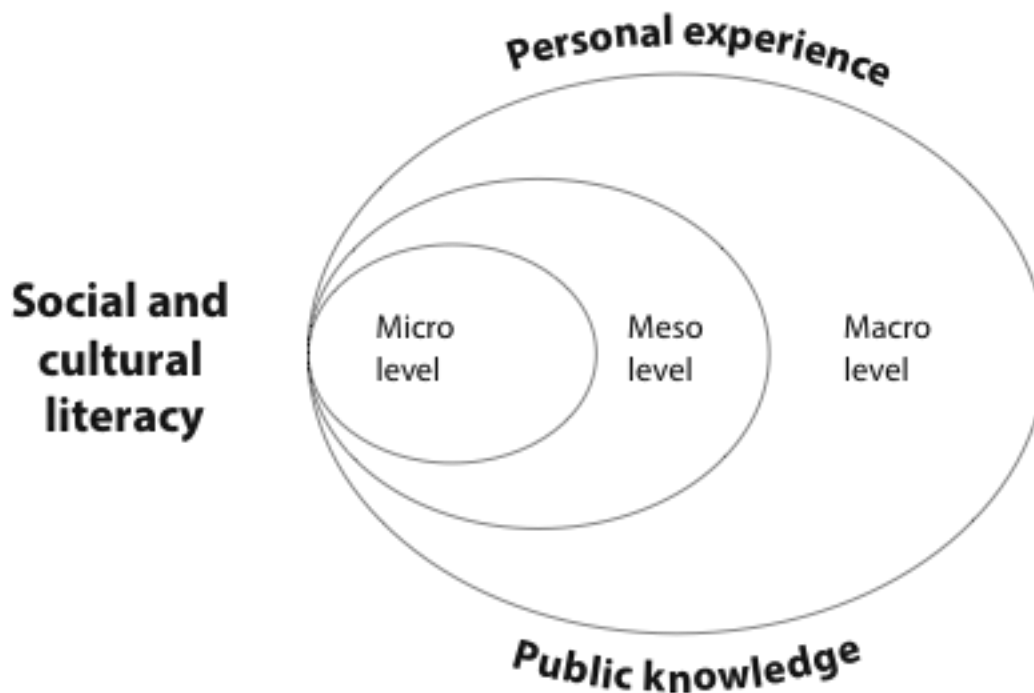
Personal experience refers to the knowledge gained from reflecting on individual experiences.

Public knowledge refers to general knowledge and the knowledge available to everyone.
The term also refers to all the knowledge found in the public domain that is the work or research of other people.

Micro-level interactions are personal and occur between individuals and their family, peers and individuals in the community.

Meso-level interactions occur between the micro and the macro levels of society. Meso-level structures are groups in the community, village, school, workplace, local interest club, branch, organisation and state. The meso level is also known as the middle level.

Macro-level interactions are impersonal and relate to large institutions, the media, law and government and are evident at a national and international level.

Interactions exist between micro and meso, micro and macro, and meso and macro levels. Interactions should be viewed as two-way.

Social and cultural literacy

A socially and culturally literate person demonstrates the following characteristics:

- Has a sense of personal, social and cultural identity and understands that culture underpins one's behaviour, beliefs and values

- Is interested in, observes and asks questions about the micro, meso and macro levels of society

- Empathises with and appreciates the diverse beliefs and values of different societies and cultures

- Researches effectively and ethically, showing critical discernment towards information and the media

- Communicates effectively with individuals and groups and works cooperatively in a cross-cultural setting

- Applies skills to achieve social inclusion and is aware of the issues of discrimination and prejudice

- Avoids making judgements of another culture's practices using the values of his or her own culture

- Has a sense of social responsibility and displays active citizenship by engaging critically with social issues, and takes considered action for the welfare, dignity, social justice and human rights of others at the local, national and global levels

- Is aware of, and sensitive to, major national and global issues such as poverty, disease and conflict, including armed conflict

- Considers the impact of globalisation, technologies and rapid change, as well as continuity and its implications for the future

8.4 Content: Society and Culture Preliminary course

Preliminary depth study: *The Social and Cultural World*

(30% of course time)

The focus of this study is the interactions occurring between persons and within and between groups, both in the contemporary world and in societies across time.

Outcomes

A student:

P1   identifies and applies social and cultural concepts

P3   identifies and describes relationships and interactions within and between social and cultural groups

P6   differentiates between social and cultural research methods

P9   uses appropriate course language and concepts suitable for different audiences and contexts

P10   communicates information, ideas and issues using appropriate written, oral and graphic forms

Content

Integrated concepts

The fundamental, additional and related concepts listed below are to be integrated across the study of *The Social and Cultural World.*

Fundamental course concepts:

- persons
- society
- culture
- environment
- time

Additional course concepts:

- power
- authority
- gender
- identity
- technologies
- globalisation

Related depth study concepts:

- social and cultural literacy
- community
- continuity and change
- social construct
- citizenship
- socialisation
- micro/meso/macro level
- social structure

Contemporary context

The following points are to be integrated across the study of *The Social and Cultural World*:

- use examples drawn from contemporary society
- assess the impact of technologies, including communication technologies, on individuals, groups and institutions.

The nature of the social and cultural world

Students will develop knowledge and understanding of the social and cultural world through the study of:

- an overview of the multicultural and hybrid nature of societies and cultures

- persons and their interactions with individuals, groups and the community within the contexts of micro-level, meso-level and macro-level society

- society as a construct that develops through time:

    - society is comprised of the interactions of its members at the micro, meso and macro levels

    - society influences the ways its members interact

    - how interactions between members of society cause change in the nature of society over time

- how individual behaviour towards others is socially constructed and influenced by social expectation

- the following groups and institutions of society – how they shape and are shaped by individuals:

    - family
    - school
    - peers

    - work
    - government
    - media

    - legal system.

Students will apply each of the fundamental concepts to TWO of the following:

- school

- family

- the media

- a group of which the student is a member.

Social and cultural research

Students will:

- outline the principles and practices of ethical research that underpin all social and cultural research

- examine the process of research using the steps briefly outlined below as a guide.

1. **Decide on the topic to be researched**

↓

2. **Develop a focus question or hypothesis**

↓

3. **Gather background information**

↓

4. **Design the research**

↓

5. **Develop the research methods to be used**

↓

6. **Apply the research methods ethically**

↓

7. **Compile and organise the collected information so that it is manageable**

↓

8. **Analyse, synthesise and interpret the findings**

↓

9. **Write up the conclusions in an appropriate format, considering the audience for the final product**

↓

10. **Check the final product for editing or typing mistakes and ensure that all bibliographical information is included and correct**

Quantitative and qualitative research

Students will:

- explore the differences between quantitative and qualitative research

- determine the strengths and weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative methods for different research situations

- overview the following methods of research:

  - content analysis
  - interview
  - observation
  - participant observation
  - questionnaire
  - secondary research
  - statistical analysis

- examine at least TWO contemporary issues within society, using ONE appropriate research method drawn from:

  - content analysis of the media
  - questionnaire (short)
  - secondary research.

Focus study

Looking in/Looking out: Exploring the Social and Cultural World

Students gain an understanding of the social and cultural world through:

- a study, from Australia or overseas, of a cultural group that is different from the student's own in relation to TWO of the following:

  - gender
  - identity
  - roles and status
  - conflict/cooperation
  - power, authority, influence and decision-making

- reflecting on their experience of their own society and culture and how this may be similar to, or different from, the cultural group in the focus study undertaken.

Preliminary depth study: *Personal and Social Identity*

(40% of course time)

The focus of this study is the process of socialisation, and the development of personal and social identity in individuals and groups in a variety of social and cultural settings.

Outcomes

A student:

P1 identifies and applies social and cultural concepts

P2 describes personal, social and cultural identity

P3 identifies and describes relationships and interactions within and between social and cultural groups

P5 explains continuity and change and their implications for societies and cultures

P8 plans and conducts ethical social and cultural research

P10 communicates information, ideas and issues using appropriate written, oral and graphic forms

Content

Integrated concepts

The fundamental, additional and related concepts listed below are to be integrated across the study of *Personal and Social Identity*.

Fundamental course concepts:

- persons
- society
- culture
- environment
- time

Additional course concepts:

- power
- authority
- gender
- identity
- technologies
- globalisation

Related depth study concepts:

- the self and self-concept
- socialisation
- social construct
- life stages and life course
- roles and status
- rights and responsibilities
- kinship
- class
- ethnicity

Contemporary context

The following points are to be integrated across the study of *Personal and Social Identity*:

- use examples drawn from contemporary society
- assess the impact of technologies, including communication technologies, on individuals, groups and institutions.

The nature of the development of personal and social identity

Students will develop knowledge and understanding of the nature of the development of personal and social identity through the study of:

- the development of personality, self-awareness and self-concept

- the development of identity and the social self

- the role of socialisation and the influence of agents of socialisation on the development of personal and social identity

- the influence of each of the following on the development of personal and social identity:

  – family and kinship

  – ethnicity and culture

  – gender

  – sexuality

  – beliefs

  – location, class and status

  – peers

  – school

  – media, including contemporary communication technologies

- the 'nature versus nurture' debate

- 'adolescence' as a social construct and its validity for different cultures

- theories that offer an explanation or understanding of the development of the physical and social self:

  TWO theorists to be studied from the following list:

  – David Elkind

  – Erik Erikson

  – Carol Gilligan

  – Robert Havighurst

  – Jane Loevinger

  – Jean Piaget

  – a theorist not listed above

- transitions through the life course:

  – changing rights and responsibilities

  – Theory of Generations: Karl Mannheim

    OR

    Generational Theory: Strauss–Howe.

Focus study

Looking in/Looking out: Exploring the Processes of Socialisation

Students are to:

- conduct a comparative cross-generational study of how the processes of socialisation have changed over time within the student's own cultural context, using the research method of questionnaire or focus group

- conduct a study of the transition through life stages in a cultural group different from the student's own – this may be a further development of the cultural group study undertaken in *The Social and Cultural World* depth study

- apply ethical research practices and follow the steps of the research process to:

    – develop and administer a questionnaire that contains both open and closed questions and that is suitable for people from different generations

    – compile, analyse and synthesise the results obtained

    – present the findings and conclusions about these findings in an appropriate format.

Preliminary depth study: *Intercultural Communication*

(30% of course time)

The focus of this study is to understand how people in different social, cultural and environmental settings behave, communicate and perceive the world around them so that they can better understand each other and their world.

Outcomes

A student:

P1   identifies and applies social and cultural concepts

P3   identifies and describes relationships and interactions within and between social and cultural groups

P4   identifies the features of social and cultural literacy and how it develops

P7   selects, organises and considers information from a variety of sources for usefulness, validity and bias

P8   plans and conducts ethical social and cultural research

P9   uses appropriate course language and concepts suitable for different audiences and contexts

Content

Integrated concepts

The fundamental, additional and related concepts listed below are to be integrated across the study of *Intercultural Communication*.

Fundamental course concepts:

- persons
- society
- culture
- environment
- time

Additional course concepts:

- power
- authority
- gender
- identity
- technologies
- globalisation

Related depth study concepts:

- acculturation
- continuity and change
- cultural heritage
- cultural relativism
- cultural transmission
- customs
- cultural diversity
- stereotypes
- values

Contemporary context

The following points are to be integrated across the study of *Intercultural Communication*:

- use examples drawn from contemporary society
- examine the impact of technologies, including communication technologies, on individuals, groups and institutions.

The nature of communication

Students will develop knowledge and understanding of the nature of communication through a study of:

- how culture determines the ways individuals encode messages, what mediums they choose for transmitting them, and the ways messages are interpreted

- verbal and non-verbal communication

- the role of communication in maintaining social relationships and social control

- the individual's rights and responsibilities in relation to communication, communication technologies and citizenship

- the impact of changing communication technologies on:

    – intra-generational interaction

    – language usage

    – cross-generational interaction

    – social interaction

    – cross-cultural interaction

    – globalisation.

Theories relating to intercultural communication

Examine ONE of the following theories and identify its strengths and weaknesses:

- Communication Accommodation Theory

- Cross-Cultural Adaptation Theory

- a school-selected contemporary intercultural communication theory.

Focus study

Looking in/Looking out: Exploring Intercultural Communication

- Choose a cultural group and examine:

    – aspects of society and culture that are similar to or different from the student's own cultural group through the research method of secondary research

    – the existence of group identity and commitment to cultural continuity

    – examples of potential intercultural misunderstanding

    – strategies for dealing with intercultural misunderstanding

    – the role of intercultural exchange in gaining cultural perception and values

    – the role of intercultural dialogue in effective intercultural communication.

- Apply ethical research practices and follow the steps of the research process to:

    – develop a set of interview questions that includes both open and closed questions and is suitable for a person from a culture different from the student's own

    – interview a person from a culture different from the student's own

    – analyse and synthesise the results

    – present the findings and conclusions about these findings in an appropriate format.

Note: Cultural difference may be based on gender, religion or ethnicity.

8.5 Content: Society and Culture HSC course

HSC core: Personal Interest Project

(30% of course time)

The Personal Interest Project is integrated across the whole HSC course and draws together the interests, research skills and personal experiences of the student.

Outcomes

A student:

H1   evaluates and effectively applies social and cultural concepts

H4   assesses the interaction of personal experience and public knowledge in the development of social and cultural literacy

H5   analyses continuity and change and their influence on personal and social futures

H6   evaluates social and cultural research methods for appropriateness to specific research tasks

H7   selects, organises, synthesises and analyses information from a variety of sources for usefulness, validity and bias

H8   uses planning and review strategies to conduct ethical social and cultural research that is appropriate for tasks ranging from the simple to the complex

H9   applies complex course language and concepts appropriate for a range of audiences and contexts

H10   communicates complex information, ideas and issues using appropriate written, oral and graphic forms

Content

Social and cultural research methods are to be applied through the process of completing the Personal Interest Project.

Students are to:

- develop a research proposal clearly outlining the topic, question or problem

- select appropriate concepts to ensure that the topic and the subsequent research relate to the Society and Culture course

- select methods appropriate to the research proposal and apply these to the topic

- gather and evaluate information and sources related to the topic

- draft and edit text that analyses and synthesises the findings of the research

- complete all formal requirements of the Personal Interest Project:

    – introduction

    – log

    – central material

    – conclusion

    – resource list

- achieve an appreciation of the ethical implications of social research and apply these to the Personal Interest Project (see page 21)

- communicate the findings of their research.

Note: See Assessment and Reporting in Society and Culture Stage 6 *for the requirements of the Personal Interest Project. This document and other resources and advice related to the Personal Interest Project are available on the* [Board's website](#) *(www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus_hsc).*

HSC core: *Social and Cultural Continuity and Change*

(30% of course time)

The focus of this study is to understand the nature of social and cultural continuity and change and to examine it, through the application of research methods and social theory, in relation to a selected country.

Outcomes

A student:

H1   evaluates and effectively applies social and cultural concepts

H2   explains the development of personal, social and cultural identity

H3   analyses relationships and interactions within and between social and cultural groups

H4   assesses the interaction of personal experience and public knowledge in the development of social and cultural literacy

H5   analyses continuity and change and their influence on personal and social futures

H6   evaluates social and cultural research methods for appropriateness to specific research tasks

H7   selects, organises, synthesises and analyses information from a variety of sources for usefulness, validity and bias

H9   applies complex course language and concepts appropriate for a range of audiences and contexts

H10 communicates complex information, ideas and issues using appropriate written, oral and graphic forms

Content

Integrated concepts

The fundamental, additional and related concepts listed below are to be integrated across the study of *Social and Cultural Continuity and Change.*

Fundamental course concepts:

- persons
- society
- culture
- environment
- time

Additional course concepts:

- power
- authority
- gender
- identity
- technologies
- globalisation

Related core study concepts:

- continuity and change
- modernisation
- sustainability
- tradition
- beliefs and values
- empowerment
- westernisation
- cooperation and conflict

Contemporary context

The following points are to be integrated across the study of *Social and Cultural Continuity and Change*:

- use examples drawn from contemporary society

- examine the impact of technologies, including communication technologies, on continuity and change

- apply a social theory to a selected country and assess its ability to explain both continuity and change

- assess the role and value of social and cultural research in the examination of contemporary societies and cultures.

The nature of social and cultural research methods

Students develop knowledge and understanding of research methods by examining:

- the features of primary and secondary research

- the nature and characteristics of quantitative and qualitative research

- the characteristics, strengths and weaknesses of the following research methods:

  - case study
  - focus group
  - observation
  - personal reflection
  - secondary research

  - content analysis
  - interview
  - participant observation
  - questionnaire
  - statistical analysis.

The nature of social and cultural continuity and change

Students develop knowledge and understanding of social and cultural continuity and change by examining:

- the nature of continuity and change:

  - change is a complex process
  - 'evolutionary' change
  - 'transformative' change
  - resistance to change

- the influence that continuity and change have on the development of society at the micro, meso and macro levels

- the impact of modernisation and westernisation on social and cultural continuity and change

- theories of social change as attempts to explain change, and resistance to change, within societies and cultures in relation to:

  - structural changes within society
  - the processes and agents of social change
  - the directions of change

- key features of each of the following theories:

  - conflict
  - evolutionary
  - functionalist
  - interactionist.

Focus study

Social and Cultural Continuity and Change in a Selected Country

Students will study in detail a country in order to:

- determine the nature of traditional society and culture

- analyse the nature of power and authority

- examine the impact of continuity and change upon the lives of individuals and groups in the micro, meso and macro levels of society.

Students will explore BOTH continuity AND change in the selected country through a detailed study of ONE of the following aspects:

- beliefs, values and lifestyles

- education

- family life and population changes

- gender roles and the status of men and women

- the legal system and political processes.

In relation to the selected country, students will examine:

- Is all change necessarily progress?

- Which groups benefit from change? Which do not?

- How has access to technologies impacted on the rate and direction of change?

Choose ONE social theory from the list below and apply it to the selected country:

- conflict

- evolutionary

- functionalist

- interactionist.

Assess the appropriateness of this social theory in explaining continuity and change for the selected country.

The near future (5 to 10 years)

Students are to:

- determine current trends and suggest probable future directions for the aspect of the country studied in the focus study

- evaluate the impact and implications for the aspect of the country studied of:

  – likely changes
  – probable continuities

- predict the importance of technologies to the country studied.

HSC depth study: *Popular Culture*

(20% of course time)

The focus of this study is the interaction between popular culture, society and the individual.

Outcomes

A student:

H1 evaluates and effectively applies social and cultural concepts

H2 explains the development of personal, social and cultural identity

H3 analyses relationships and interactions within and between social and cultural groups

H5 analyses continuity and change and their influence on personal and social futures

H7 selects, organises, synthesises and analyses information from a variety of sources for usefulness, validity and bias

H9 applies complex course language and concepts appropriate for a range of audiences and contexts

H10 communicates complex information, ideas and issues using appropriate written, oral and graphic forms

Content

Integrated concepts

The fundamental, additional and related concepts listed below are to be integrated across the study of *Popular Culture.*

Fundamental course concepts:

- persons
- society
- culture
- environment
- time

Additional course concepts:

- power
- authority
- gender
- identity
- technologies
- globalisation

Related depth study concepts:

- commercialisation
- consumption
- ideology
- commodification
- change
- institutional power
- continuity
- conflict
- values

Contemporary context

The following points are to be integrated across the study of *Popular Culture:*

- use examples drawn from contemporary society
- assess the impact of technologies, including communication technologies, on popular culture
- examine a contemporary issue in popular culture using the research method of content analysis.

The nature of popular culture

Students develop an understanding of the nature of popular culture by examining the FOUR distinguishing characteristics:

- *associated with commercial products and paraphernalia:*
  – demand develops and expands due to media, marketing and dissemination processes
- *develops from a local to a global level:*
  – experiences global acceptance with the progression and integration of technologies
- *achieves widespread consumer access:*
  – broad access is assisted by media and communication technologies
- *is constantly changing and evolving:*
  – experiences continuity and change – influences society while simultaneously society influences the popular culture.

Focus study

Students are to examine ONE popular culture that conforms to the distinguishing characteristics and has a global acceptance by examining:

- the creation and development of the popular culture:

  – the origins of the popular culture

  – the development of the popular culture from a local to a global level

  – the process of commodification for the popular culture

  – the role of mythology in the creation and perpetuation of the popular culture

  – continuities and changes to the popular culture

- the consumption of the popular culture:

  – the consumers of the popular culture and the nature of its consumption

  – the relationship of heroes and mythology to media and consumption

  – how globalisation and technologies have influenced consumption

  – the relationship of access and consumption to age, class, ethnicity, gender, location, sexuality

  – how consumption and ownership of paraphernalia influence a sense of identity

- the control of the popular culture:

  – the ownership of the popular culture and the tensions between consumers and producers

  – the stakeholders and how they influence the popular culture – family, peer groups, media, marketers, governments, global groups

  – the role and impact of official and unofficial censorship

  – the influence of power and authority at the micro, meso and macro levels

- the different perceptions of the popular culture:

  – groups that accept and reject the popular culture

  – changing perceptions and the value of the popular culture to groups in society

  – how the popular culture constructs or deconstructs gender

- the contribution of the popular culture to social change:

  – how the popular culture expresses contemporary social values

  – the positive and negative impact of the popular culture on wider society

  – the ways in which the popular culture has contributed to social change.

The popular culture studied must be drawn from a GENRE of ONE of the following:

- *comic book*
- *cyber culture*
- *fashion*
- *film*
- *leisure*
- *literature*
- *music*
- *sport*
- *television series*
- *toy.*

The near future (5 to 10 years)

Students are to:

- determine current trends and suggest probable future directions for the popular culture

- evaluate the impact and implications for the popular culture of:

  − likely changes

  − probable continuities

- predict the importance of the popular culture to society in the near future.

HSC depth study: *Belief Systems and Ideologies*

(20% of course time)

The focus of this study is the relationship of belief systems and ideologies to culture and identity.

Outcomes

A student:

H1   evaluates and effectively applies social and cultural concepts

H2   explains the development of personal, social and cultural identity

H3   analyses relationships and interactions within and between social and cultural groups

H5   analyses continuity and change and their influence on personal and social futures

H7   selects, organises, synthesises and analyses information from a variety of sources for usefulness, validity and bias

H9   applies complex course language and concepts appropriate for a range of audiences and contexts

H10 communicates complex information, ideas and issues using appropriate written, oral and graphic forms

Content

Integrated concepts

The fundamental, additional and related concepts listed below are to be integrated across the study of *Belief Systems and Ideologies.*

Fundamental course concepts:

- persons
- society
- culture
- environment
- time

Additional course concepts:

- power
- authority
- gender
- identity
- technologies
- globalisation

Related depth study concepts:

- values
- beliefs
- symbols
- customs
- worldview
- ritual
- philosophy
- secularisation
- institutional power

Contemporary context

The following points are to be integrated across the study of *Belief Systems and Ideologies:*

- use examples drawn from contemporary society

- assess the impact of technologies, including communication technologies, on the belief system or ideology

- examine a contemporary issue in a belief system or ideology using the research method of interview.

The nature of belief systems and ideologies

Students develop an understanding of the nature of belief systems and ideologies by examining:

- the similarities and differences between belief systems and ideologies

- the nature and role of shared values and understanding within belief systems and ideologies and how this creates meaning, purpose and an identity for individuals and groups

- how belief systems and ideologies express values and beliefs and ways of perceiving the world at the micro, meso and macro levels

- the nature and role of hierarchy and internal power structures within belief systems and ideologies

- the process of secularisation in the development and extent of belief systems and ideologies within Australia.

Focus study

Students are to develop knowledge and understanding of either one belief system OR one ideology that demonstrates a set of values and beliefs and a relationship to the wider society and culture by examining:

- the philosophy of the belief system or ideology:

    - the relationship between its historical development and its underlying principles

    - the beliefs and values expressed and the impact on personal and collective identity

    - the nature and extent of adherents in the world today

- traditions and culture in the belief system or ideology:

    - important places, texts and unique language and their significance

    - the role of symbols, rituals and customs

    - the importance of myths and stories

    - how the belief system or ideology defines gender and gender roles

- the internal structure in the belief system or ideology:

    - the role of important people and power structures

    - the role and impact of dissent

    - the nature and impact of change and resistance to change

    - the impact of technologies and globalisation on continuity and change

- the relationship of the belief system or ideology to wider society:

    - acceptance and rejection of the philosophy at the micro, meso and macro levels

    - the relationship of the belief system or ideology to ethical issues in society

    - the relationship of the belief system or ideology to peace and conflict in the world.

The focus study must be drawn from ONE of the following belief systems or ideologies:

Belief systems	Ideologies
- Baha'i - Buddhism - Christianity - Hinduism - Indigenous spiritualities - Islam - Jainism - Judaism - Shinto - Sikhism	- Capitalism - Confucianism - Democracy - Environmentalism - Feminism - Humanism - Socialism - Taoism - Totalitarianism

Note: The study must be of the whole belief system or ideology, not sectors within it.

The near future (5 to 10 years)

Students are to:

- determine current trends and suggest probable future directions for the belief system or ideology
- evaluate the impact and implications for the belief system or ideology of:
  - likely changes
  - probable continuities
- predict the importance of the belief system or ideology to society in the near future.

HSC depth study: *Social Inclusion and Exclusion*

(20% of course time)

The focus of this study is the nature of social inclusion and exclusion and the implications for individuals and groups in societies and cultures.

Outcomes

A student:

H1 evaluates and effectively applies social and cultural concepts

H2 explains the development of personal, social and cultural identity

H3 analyses relationships and interactions within and between social and cultural groups

H5 analyses continuity and change and their influence on personal and social futures

H7 selects, organises, synthesises and analyses information from a variety of sources for usefulness, validity and bias

H9 applies complex course language and concepts appropriate for a range of audiences and contexts

H10 communicates complex information, ideas and issues using appropriate written, oral and graphic forms

Content

Integrated concepts

The fundamental, additional and related concepts listed below are to be integrated across the study of *Social Inclusion and Exclusion*.

The fundamental course concepts:

- persons
- society
- culture
- environment
- time

The additional course concepts:

- power
- authority
- gender
- identity
- technologies
- globalisation

Related depth study concepts:

- social mobility
- social class
- socioeconomic status
- life course
- 'race' and ethnicity
- social differentiation
- equality
- human rights
- prejudice and discrimination

Contemporary context

The following points are to be integrated across the study of *Social Inclusion and Exclusion*:

- use examples drawn from contemporary society

- assess the impact of technologies, including communication technologies, on individuals, groups and institutions

- examine a contemporary issue related to social inclusion and/or exclusion using the research method of data analysis.

The nature of social inclusion and exclusion

Students develop an understanding of the nature of social inclusion and exclusion by examining:

- the pluralist nature of societies and cultures

- an overview of similarities and differences between individuals and groups in societies and cultures

- the concept of 'socially valued resources'

- how individuals and groups experience social exclusion within Australia at the micro, meso and macro levels.

Focus study

Within ONE country, students are to examine:

- inclusion and exclusion for ONE of the following groups:

  - a different 'racial' or ethnic group

  - those who follow different belief systems and cultural practices

  - people with a disability

  - those living in different environments – urban, rural, isolated

  - different ages

  - different genders

  in relation to access to EACH of the following socially valued resources:

– education	– employment	– technologies
– housing	– health care	– the justice system

- the implications of access for this group in relation to life chances for its members

- the perception of this group by other groups within the country:

  - influences on individuals' perceptions of others

  - how attitudes of group members towards other groups influence their behaviour towards those groups, including stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination

- the initiatives of governments and community organisations in implementing programs focused on social inclusion for the group.

In relation to the broad society of the country studied, students are to examine:

- the role and influence of historical, economic, political and legal forces in the generation and maintenance of social inclusion and exclusion

- emerging social exclusion resulting from limited access to modern technologies and communications, and its implications.

The near future (5 to 10 years)

Students are to:

- determine current trends and suggest probable future directions for the country studied in relation to social inclusion and exclusion

- evaluate the impact and implications for social inclusion and exclusion in the country studied of:

    – likely changes

    – probable continuities

- propose strategies that are likely to reduce prejudice and discrimination and lead to the achievement of social cohesion within the near future for the country studied.

HSC depth study: *Social Conformity and Nonconformity*

(20% of course time)

The focus of this study is the formation of, and influences on, attitudes and behaviours of groups and their members, including factors influencing conformity, and the role of, and responses to, nonconformity.

Outcomes

A student:

H1 evaluates and effectively applies social and cultural concepts

H2 explains the development of personal, social and cultural identity

H3 analyses relationships and interactions within and between social and cultural groups

H5 analyses continuity and change and their influence on personal and social futures

H7 selects, organises, synthesises and analyses information from a variety of sources for usefulness, validity and bias

H9 applies complex course language and concepts appropriate for a range of audiences and contexts

H10 communicates complex information, ideas and issues using appropriate written, oral and graphic forms

Content

Integrated concepts

The fundamental, additional and related concepts listed below are to be integrated across the study of *Social Conformity and Nonconformity*.

Fundamental course concepts:

- persons
- society
- culture
- environment
- time

Additional course concepts:

- power
- authority
- gender
- identity
- technologies
- globalisation

Related depth study concepts:

- deindividuation
- stereotype
- world view
- social cognition
- social cohesion
- deviance
- self-concept
- values

Contemporary context

The following points are to be integrated across the study of *Social Conformity and Nonconformity*:

- use examples drawn from contemporary society
- assess the impact of technologies, including communication technologies, on social conformity and nonconformity
- examine a contemporary issue associated with conformity and/or nonconformity using the research method of observation.

The nature of social conformity and nonconformity

Students develop an understanding of the nature of social conformity and nonconformity by examining:

- factors that influence conformity and obedience in individuals

- responses to social influence: acquiescence, internalisation and identification

- deindividuation: the impact of personal anonymity of individuals in groups

- how nonconformity determines the boundary between 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' behaviours and attitudes

- the social costs and benefits of nonconformity for both individuals and the wider society

- the impact of agenda setting, including the role of the media, on attitude formation in individuals and groups

- the ways the ideologies, values and behaviours of a subcultural group currently perceived as not conforming to the wider society may influence others and lead to social change.

Focus study

In relation to one group, students are to examine:

- the historical and social development of the group

- the role of status, authority, power, privilege and responsibility within the group

- how the concepts of cohesion and community operate to define the group's identity

- ways in which the group influences its individual members in order to achieve group cohesion:

  – the role of group values and norms

  – peer pressure

- attitudes of the group to nonconformity and the role of sanctions within the group

- positive and negative interactions with the wider society

- perceptions of the group by the wider society and the implications of these perceptions.

The group studied must be drawn from one of the following:

- *community*
- *cultural*
- *environmental*
- *interest*
- *non-government organisation*
- *political*
- *protest.*

The near future (5 to 10 years)

Students are to:

- determine current trends for interactions between the subcultural group studied and the wider society

- evaluate the impact and implications for the subcultural group of:

  – likely changes

  – probable continuities

- predict how the subcultural group may interact with and influence society in the near future.

9 Course requirements

For the Preliminary course:

- 120 indicative hours are required to complete this course.

For the HSC course:

- 120 indicative hours are required to complete this course
- completion of a Personal Interest Project is a prerequisite of completing this course.

9.1 Personal Interest Project requirements

Advice on the Personal Interest Project requirements is contained in *Assessment and Reporting in Society and Culture Stage 6*.

The document and other resources and advice related to the Personal Interest Project are available on the Board's website (www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus_hsc).

10 Post-school opportunities

The study of Society and Culture Stage 6 provides students with knowledge, understanding and skills that form a valuable foundation for a range of courses at university and other tertiary institutions. In addition, the study of Society and Culture Stage 6 assists students in preparing for employment and full and active participation as citizens.

11 Assessment and reporting

Advice on appropriate assessment practice in relation to the Society and Culture syllabus is contained in *Assessment and Reporting in Society and Culture Stage 6*. That document provides general advice on assessment in Stage 6, as well as the specific requirements for the Preliminary and HSC courses. The document contains:

- suggested components and weightings for the internal assessment of the Preliminary course
- mandatory components and weightings for the internal assessment of the HSC course
- the HSC examination specifications, which describe the format of the external HSC examination
- advice on the Personal Interest Project requirements.

The document and other resources and advice related to assessment in Stage 6 Society and Culture are available on the Board's website (www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus_hsc).

12 Glossary

All words contained in this glossary have a meaning specific to the context of the *Society and Culture Stage 6 Syllabus.* This glossary does not attempt to ascribe any absolute definition to terms. It is designed to assist teachers in interpreting this syllabus and to assist student learning.

acculturation	The process of contacts between different cultures and also the outcome of such contacts. Acculturation occurs when members of one cultural group adopt the beliefs and behaviours of another group. It may involve direct social interaction or exposure to other cultures through mass media.
agent of socialisation	A person or institution that shapes an individual's social development.
authority	Linked to power and the right to make decisions and to determine, adjudicate or settle issues and disputes in society. Authority is best understood as the legitimate use of power. The use of authority is important in the process of decision-making and in initiating change and maintaining continuity.
belief system	A system in which members of the group share a commitment to a set of beliefs and values that systematically defines a way of perceiving the social, cultural, physical and psychological world. Belief systems can be categorised as religious and non-religious. Both have rituals, symbols, stories, traditions and customs.
beliefs	A set of opinions or convictions; ideas we believe in as the truth. Beliefs can come from one's own experience and reflection, or from what one is told by others.
case study	The case study method involves the collection of data related to an individual or small group through one or more research methods – for example, observation, interviews and the collection of documentary evidence. Because case study can, and often does, include different methods to collect data, which are then combined with the purpose of illuminating the case from different angles, case study is considered as a methodology by many social researchers.
change	The alteration or modification of cultural elements in a society. Change to society can occur at the micro, meso and macro levels. It can be brought about by modernisation processes, including technological innovation. This force results in an alteration to culture.
commercialisation	The process of adding value to an idea, product or commodity with the aim of selling it and making a profit. Commercialisation is about preparing the item for sale and making money from it. The success of commercialisation often relies on marketing and advertising.
commodification	A social process by which an item is turned into a commodity in readiness to be traded. The process relies on marketing strategies with the aim of producing a perceived value in the item.
commodity	A marketable item or consumer object that can be supplied because there is a demand and that can be purchased through economic exchange.

communication technologies	Technologies used in transmitting information and entertainment between senders and receivers across various media, including newspapers, magazines, movies, broadcast, cable, satellite, radio and the internet.
community	A (usually local) social system with an implied sense of relationship and mutual identity among its members. As well as being locational, a community can be a group that shares a strong common interest and whose members communicate over space and through time using communication technologies.
conflict	A perceived incompatibility of goals or actions. Conflict can occur at all levels in society and its resolution can involve modification to what was previously in place.
conformity	When individuals behave in certain ways as a result of group pressure, whether real or imagined.
consumption	The process of selecting and using a product. Consumption involves a conscious decision to engage with a commodity.
content analysis	Used to investigate and interpret the content of the mass media and historical documents in order to discover how particular issues are (or were) presented. At its most basic, content analysis is a statistical exercise that involves counting, categorising and interpreting words and images from documents, film, art, music and other cultural products and media in relation to an aspect or quality of social life. When used as a qualitative method, content analysis helps the researcher to understand social life through analysis and interpretation of words and images from documents, film, art, music and other cultural artefacts and media.
continuity	The persistence or consistent existence of cultural elements in a society across time. Continuity can also be referred to as the maintenance of the traditions and social structures that bring stability to a society.
cooperation	The ability of individual members of a group to work together to achieve a common goal that is in the group's interests and that contributes to the continued existence of the group.
cultural diversity	Appears as a society becomes larger and more complex, immigrant groups join the dominant culture, and subcultures form within the society. The more complex the society, the more likely it is that its culture will become internally varied and diverse. Cultural diversity implies a two-way sharing of ideas, customs and values among the various cultural groups that comprise the society.
cultural heritage	The practices, traditions, customs and knowledge that define who we are socially and personally. Cultural heritage is an expression of the values that help us to understand our past, make sense of the present, and express a continuity of culture for the future. Cultural heritage can be analysed at the micro, meso and macro levels in society.
cultural relativism	The idea that concepts are socially constructed and vary across cultures. Therefore, individuals and groups must always view other cultures objectively and not judge them using the values and norms of their own culture as a measure of right or wrong.

cultural transmission	The transmission of culture – such as traditions, values, language, symbols, cultural traits, beliefs and normative behaviour – across and between generations in society.
customs	Established ways of acting or cultural practices that are unique to groups in society. Customs have important links to the heritage, values and traditions of people.
deindividuation	When individuals lose self-awareness and self-restraint when acting within a group that allows more anonymity. When deindividuation occurs, individuals feel less responsible for their actions and will do things in groups that they otherwise would not do.
discrimination	Treating a person or group differently, often in a negative manner, usually as a result of prejudice. Discrimination may also be positive, designed to redress perceived injustice.
empowerment	A social process that gives power or authority to people at a micro level, to groups at a meso level, and to institutions at a macro level, allowing them to think, behave, take action, control and make decisions.
equality	Occurs when individuals and groups within a society have the same chances of access to education, wealth, power, equal rights under the law, and so on. True social equality occurs when there is social mobility and access to opportunities and resources that are socially valued. True equality is often thought of as an ideal, rather than an achievable reality.
ethical	Ethics refers to moral issues of what is right or wrong. Ethical behaviour follows understood codes of what is morally right when undertaking any study of people or society. In terms of social research, this means informed consent, confidentiality and privacy, consideration of the possible effects on research participants and on the researcher herself or himself, consideration of vulnerable groups, such as children, and the avoidance of any covert research, which would mean that no informed consent from research participants was given. Ethical research also means that any material from sources other than the researcher's own work is clearly acknowledged.
ethnicity (ethnic identity)	An individual's identification with, or sense of belonging to, an ethnic group. This is based on perceived common origins that people share, such as a specific ancestry and culture, that mark them as different from others.
evolutionary change	The process of structural change that creates a slow alteration in the institutions or social roles of a society that are then integrated into that society. Evolutionary change, like all social change, can occur as a result of internal sources, such as ideological and/or cultural shifts or technological innovation, or external sources, such as environmental conditions, acculturation or cultural diffusion.
family	A social group characterised by (usually) common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction.

focus group　　A research method used to collect data from an in-depth planned discussion of a defined topic held by a small group of people brought together by a moderator. An interview schedule, time and place are organised. The recording of responses increases the success of this method. The techniques of conducting the focus group are similar to those of conducting an in-depth interview. However, the researcher needs to be able to manage the discussion.

gender　　The socially constructed differences between females and males. Social life – including family life, roles, work, behaviour and other activities – is organised around the dimensions of this difference. Gender also refers to the cultural ideals, identity and stereotypes of masculinity and femininity and the sexual division of labour in institutions and organisations. Gender reflects the values a society places on these social constructs, which are particular and unique to a society.

globalisation　　A process of integration and the sharing of goods, capital, services, knowledge, leisure, sport, ideas and culture between countries. It has been brought about by improved technologies. Globalisation is evidenced in the emergence of global patterns of consumption and consumerism; the growth of transnational corporations; the emergence of global sport; the spread of world tourism; and the growth of global military and economic systems. Globalisation has created a consciousness of the world as a single place.

hybrid society　　A society that comprises a range of social and cultural influences and components, rather than having a homogenous identity.

identity　　The sense of self. This can be viewed from the personal, social and cultural levels. Identity is formed over a period of time and is the result of interactions at the micro, meso and macro levels of society. An identity has dimensions or layers that create a sense of inclusion in a group or culture. Contributing factors to one's identity may include gender, sexuality, family, class, ethnicity, beliefs, social status, group membership and national pride.

ideology　　An organised collection or body of ideas that reflects the beliefs, values and interests of a group, system, institution or nation. In general use, the term refers to the body of doctrine, myth and symbols held by the group that guides individual and group actions.

institutional power　　The power that exists in institutions and how it is used to control aspects of society. Institutions such as the family, school, law and government use inherent power to control, change and maintain continuity of interactions.

institutions　　The structural components of a society through which its main concerns and activities are organised – for example, the church, the law, the government and the family. These structures provide stability and continuity for society.

interview　　An interview may be tightly structured, semi-structured, unstructured, in-depth or conversational. This method involves the researcher and the interviewee in a one-to-one situation and may be quite time consuming. The researcher may interview several people at different times using the same interview questions.

kinship　　Established relationships between individuals and groups on the basis of socially recognised biological relationships or marital links.

life chances	The relative level of opportunity that an individual has to acquire material, social and cultural rewards such as education, possessions and status. To a significant extent, an individual's position in the stratification system will have important implications for many other areas of their lives. It will affect their access to those things defined by society as desirable, and their ability to avoid those things defined as undesirable. A person's life chances are also influenced by other aspects of stratification, such as gender and ethnicity.
life course	A culturally defined sequence of age categories through which people are usually expected to pass as they progress from birth to death.
localisation	Where communities or societies respond to globalisation by adopting and adapting introduced ideas and practices to suit people's needs in their local context.
macro-level society	The 'big picture' – the wider social structure, social processes and their interrelationships. Macro-level society includes those social institutions – such as the media, the law, the workplace and the government – that help to shape the social and cultural world. The macro level examines how these collective groups relate to the wider society of which they are a part (as a whole).
meso-level society	The middle ground where individuals interact within groups such as schools, communities, church groups and neighbourhoods. The meso level consists of larger groups that interact directly with the individual. It focuses on relationships between middle-level social structures and the individual. Meso-level society is also known as middle-level society.
micro-level society	Where individuals' everyday actions and social interactions occur – for example, within families and small-scale social groups. The micro level focuses on patterns of social interaction at the individual level.
modernisation	A process of dynamic social change resulting from the diffusion and adoption of the characteristics of apparently more advanced societies by other societies that are apparently less advanced. It involves social transformation whereby the society becomes technologically advanced and updates cultural life.
multiculturalism	An approach to cultural diversity in society that promotes the view that cultural difference should be respected and even encouraged and supported. Multiculturalism is premised on the belief that different cultural groups can live together harmoniously, each contributing to an enriching of the whole society.
mythology	A set of stories or traditions that serves to support a worldview or is associated with a group or historical event. Myths may have arisen naturally from truth, or they may be fabricated or deliberately fostered to rationalise, support or explain ideas. Mythologies and their narratives provide a framework for societies to explain or support a belief or practice.

non-participant observation	The researcher observes the action taking place without actively engaging in it or interacting with the participants. The researcher draws meaning from what is being observed, rather than simply counting specific actions as in a quantitative observational study. Non-participant observation can be covert (participants not aware of the researcher) or overt (participants aware of the researcher and his or her purpose). A criticism of overt non-participant observation is that the very presence of the researcher alters the behaviours and interactions of those being observed (the Hawthorne effect). A criticism of covert research is that it raises ethical concerns.
norms	Shared expectations of behaviour that are considered to be culturally and socially desirable and appropriate. Norms are prescriptive, but lack the formal status of rules. They vary across groups, cultures and societies.
observation	Involves watching and recording behaviours within a clearly defined area.
participant observation	The researcher is immersed in the action being observed and his or her role as researcher is not obvious. An example of participant observation occurs when the researcher joins a group in order to study it. Researchers using participant observation must be aware of the ethical implications of this method.
personal reflection	The use and evaluation of personal experiences and values to demonstrate analysis and interpretation of data in the context of the research focus.
philosophy	The underlying principle or set of ideas that contains a way of thinking and behaving that makes up a broad field of knowledge or doctrine of thought. This mixture of ideas, values and beliefs governs the system or ideology and helps us to make sense of our life and the world and beyond. The philosophy of the system is reflected in the unique rituals, stories, texts, symbols and customs of the group.
popular culture	A shared set of practices and beliefs that have attained global acceptance and that can usually be characterised by being associated with commercial products, paraphernalia and making money; developing from a local to a global acceptance; allowing consumers to have widespread access to the products that create the popular culture; and constantly changing and evolving to maintain interest and market share.
power	The ability or capacity to influence or persuade others to a point of view or action to which they would not normally agree. Exercising power is important in initiating or preventing change.
prejudice	The attitude, usually negative, that involves prejudgements or preconceived ideas, negative feelings and stereotyped beliefs held towards a whole group or its individual members.
primary research	Original information or research data collected first-hand by the person doing the research. This new information is collected using the methods of social research.

questionnaire	A set of questions that can be closed-ended and/or open-ended that allows for the collection of information from a large sample or number of people. It is an impersonal instrument for collecting information and must, therefore, contain clear questions that have been worded as simply as possible to avoid any confusion or ambiguity. The questionnaire should be designed to fulfil a specific research objective; it should be brief and the sequence of questions should be logical.
race	A social construction, the members of which are treated as distinct or different on the basis of certain characteristics, some biological, that have been assigned a social value by others – for example, skin colour or other physical characteristics.
racism	An individual's or group's prejudice or discriminatory behaviours towards those from another ethnic or 'racial' background. Social practices that discriminate against others on the basis of 'race' can be institutionalised within the organisational structures of society.
research design	The way that the researcher develops and sequences the research methods, and the ways in which these are applied to collect the research data, according to the principles elaborated through the choice of underpinning methodology.
research method	The term 'method' refers to the specific tools of the investigation, or the ways that data can be collected and analysed – for example, content analysis, focus group, interview, observation, participant observation, personal reflection, questionnaire, secondary research and statistical analysis.
rights	The social, civil and political rights accorded to individuals. These include human rights – the fundamental rights that individuals should have as humans, such as the right to life, equality before the law, education and freedom of belief.
ritual	A series of actions or rites performed according to a prescribed order. Rituals range in significance. Some are sacred to institutions and others can be important to people for maintaining tradition and cultural heritage. Some rituals can be referred to as part of an established routine.
secondary research	The researcher collects and collates existing information or other people's research on a topic to be investigated. This information is then synthesised as a whole by the researcher. Secondary research is a qualitative method because the researcher makes subjective judgements about what material is useful, and therefore used, for the purposes of the research. Secondary research information can be derived from formal reports, journals, newspapers, magazines and other publications.
secularisation	A process whereby religion loses its influence over the various spheres of social life. Secular society has emerged from the modernisation process whereby the rise of scientific knowledge and technological advancements have shaped ideas about spiritual thinking in society.
self-concept	Composed of the various identities, attitudes, beliefs and values that an individual holds about himself or herself and by which the individual defines himself or herself as a specific objective identity: the 'self'.

social class	Those members of a society who occupy a similar position in the economic system of production. The different social classes experience wide variations in wealth, status, material possessions, education, power and authority. The hierarchical nature of the class system is expressed in labels such as 'upper class', 'middle class', 'lower middle class' and 'working class'. While the division of society into a series of social classes is a form of social stratification, social mobility is possible.
social cognition	The encoding, storage, retrieval and processing of information in an individual's mind.
social construct	A socially created aspect of social life. Social constructionists argue that society is actively and creatively produced by human beings rather than being merely given or taken for granted.
social differentiation	As society becomes more complex, differences between groups are used to distinguish between them. These differences may be based on biological or physiological differences, such as gender or ethnicity, or sociocultural differences, such as class and status. These criteria divide society into social groups on the basis of perceived differences between groups.
social exclusion	The failure of society to provide individuals and groups with access to those rights that are normally extended to its members, such as the right to work, education, health care, technologies and adequate housing. Social exclusion reflects inadequate social cohesion and integration; at the individual level, it reflects the lack of capacity to participate in what is normally expected in the society or to develop meaningful social relationships.
social mobility	The ability of individuals and groups to move vertically within a social hierarchy with changes in income, occupation and so on.
social stratification	A systematic way in which people or groups of people are ranked in society. A stratified or hierarchical arrangement of status can be formed on the basis of age, gender, class, caste, ethnicity, religion, sexuality or income. An open system of stratification is where increased status can be gained through merit and effort. A closed system of stratification is where there is no opportunity for social mobility.
socialisation	The process by which individuals learn to become functioning members of society by internalising the roles, norms and values of that society. Socialisation occurs as a result of the individual's interaction with the agents of socialisation, through which he or she learns to perform social roles.
socioeconomic status	A measure of an individual's class standing, typically indicated by income, occupational prestige, educational attainment and wealth.
statistical analysis (data analysis)	Examining data to interpret meaning, make generalisations and extrapolate trends. Often the data is in graphical form. Because data is expressed in the language of mathematics, they should be evaluated and interpreted by means of appropriate mathematical or statistical procedures.
stereotype	The preconceived view of the characteristics of a group held by individuals who are not members of that group. These views are usually negative, generalised and inflexible, and ignore differences that exist between the members of the stereotyped group.

subculture

A social or cultural group within a broader culture. Members of a subcultural group share beliefs, social and cultural interests, and patterns of behaviour that tend to unify them and distinguish them from the broader culture in which they live. Subcultural groups exist at the micro, meso and macro levels of society.

sustainability

The required development to meet current human needs, whether economic, social or environmental, without jeopardising the needs of future generations or the health of the planet for all species depending on it for their existence. Sustainability implies deliberate, responsible and proactive decision-making from the local to the global level about a more equitable distribution of resources and the minimisation of negative impacts of humans on the planet.

symbol

Symbols have the ability to culturally unify a group of people through their representation and meaning. Symbols such as places, actions, words, people and rituals are layered with meaning and valuable information for different groups in society.

technologies

The tools that we use to assist our interactions in society. Technologies can be referred to as innovation and can initiate change to micro, meso and macro operations in society. The value placed on technologies at any level of society influences the rate of change to society and culture. Technologies are constantly changing and adapting and their impacts vary over time.

tradition

The body of cultural practices and beliefs that are passed down from generation to generation, often by word of mouth and behavioural modelling, that are integral to the socialisation process and that represent stability and continuity of the society or culture.

transformative change

A process whereby personal and social structures and systems work to create broad-based social change that completely alters existing structures within society. To be transformative, change needs to occur at multiple levels that combine shifts in people's values, aspirations and behaviours with wider shifts in processes, strategies, practices and systems of the society. Transformative change is profound and permanent.

values

Deeply held ideas and beliefs that guide our thinking, language and behaviour. Differences in values exist among groups of people in society and are a part of one's culture. Values can be challenged.

westernisation

A social process where the values, customs and practices of Western industrial capitalism are adopted to form the basis of cultural change.

worldview

A particular philosophy of life or conception of the world that is characterised by an organised and accepted set of ideas that attempts to explain the social, cultural, physical and psychological world.