

**Unit 1**

**Human Lifespan Development**

**Unit 1: Human Lifespan Development**

Level: **3**

Unit type: **External**

Guided learning hours: **90**

**Unit in brief**

Learners cover physical, intellectual, emotional and social development across the human lifespan, and the factors affecting development and the effects of ageing.

**Unit introduction**

Health and social care practitioners need to develop a knowledge base for working with people in every stage of their lives, and they need to know how their own experiences relate to health and wellbeing. Although it is generally accepted that there may be deterioration in health with age following adulthood, medical intervention means people are living longer and have better life prospects.

This unit will develop your knowledge and understanding of patterns of human growth and development. You will explore the key aspects of growth and development, and the experience of health and wellbeing. You will learn about factors that can influence human growth, development and human health. Some of these are inherited and some are acquired through environmental, social or financial factors during our lifespan. You will learn about a number of theories and models to explain and interpret behaviour through the human lifespan. In this unit, you will explore the

impact of both predictable and unpredictable life events, and recognise how they impact on individuals. You will study the interaction between the physical and psychological factors of the ageing process, and how this affects confidence and self-esteem, which in turn may determine how individuals will view their remaining years.

This unit is externally assessed. It covers aspects of human growth and development through the different life stages. This content will serve as an introduction to health and social care needs and so will sit at the heart of the qualification.

**Summary of assessment**

The unit will be assessed through one examination of 90 marks lasting 1 hour and 30 minutes.

Learners will be assessed through a number of short- and long-answer questions. Learners will need to explore and relate to contexts and data presented. The questions will assess understanding of growth and development through the human lifespan, the factors that affect growth and development and the effects of ageing.

The assessment availability is twice a year in January and May/June.

**Key terms typically used in assessment**

The following table shows the key terms that will be used consistently in assessments you need to use them to demonstrate your understanding.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Command or term** | **Definition** |
| **Describe** | Learners give a clear, objective account in their own words showing recall, and in some cases application, of the relevant features and information about a subject.  *For example, ’describe gross and fine motor skills in relation to ….’.* |
| **Discuss** | Learners consider different aspects of a topic, how they interrelate and the extent to which they are important.  *For example, ‘Discuss how* ***both*** *the environment* ***and*** *genetic factors may account for…’.* |
| **Evaluate** | Learners draw on varied information, themes or concepts to consider aspects such as strengths or weaknesses, advantages or disadvantages, alternative actions, and relevance or significance.  For example, ‘Evaluate possible explanations for the development of…’. |
| **Explain** | Learners show they understand the origins, functions and objectives of a subject and its suitability for purpose. They give reasons to support an opinion, view or argument, with clear details.  *For example, ‘Explain two possible features of the development of…’.* |
| **Identify** | Learners indicate the main features or purpose of something, and/or are able to discern and understand facts or qualities.  *For example, ‘Identify the services that might be available to…’.* |
| **Justify** | Learners give reasons or evidence to support an opinion or prove something right or reasonable.  *For example, ‘Justify how overcoming…’.* |
| **Outline** | Learners provide a summary or overview or a brief description of something.  *For example, ‘Outline ways in which this might affect their physical health.’* |
| **To what extent** | Learners show clear details and give reasons and/or evidence to support an opinion, view or argument. It could show how conclusions are drawn (arrived at).  *For example, ‘To what extent might recent…’.* |
| **Which** | Learners specify one or more items from a definite set.  *For example, ‘Which body part…’.* |

**UNIT 1: HUMAN LIFESPAN DEVELOPMENT**

**Aim A: Human growth and development through the life stages**

**A1 Physical development across the life stages**

• Growth and development are different concepts:

* Principles of growth – growth is variable across different parts of the body

and is measured using height, weight and dimensions

* Principles of development – development follows an orderly sequence and is the acquisition of skills and abilities.

• In infancy (0–2 years), the individual develops gross and fine motor skills:

* the development of gross motor skills
* the development of fine motor skills
* milestones set for the development of the infant – sitting up, standing, cruising, walking.

• In early childhood (3–8 years), the individual further develops gross and fine

motor skills:

* riding a tricycle, running forwards and backwards, walking on a line, hopping on one foot, hops, skips and jumps confidently
  + turns pages of a book, buttons and unbuttons clothing, writes own name, joins up writing.

• In adolescence (9–18 years), the changes surrounding puberty:

* + development of primary and secondary sexual characteristics
  + the role of hormones in sexual maturity.

• In early adulthood (19–45 years), the individual reaches physical maturity:

* physical strength peaks, pregnancy and lactation occur
* perimenopause – oestrogen levels decrease, causing the ovaries to stop producing an egg each month. The reduction in oestrogen causes physical and emotional symptoms, to include hot flushes, night sweats, mood swings, loss of libido and vaginal dryness.

• In middle adulthood (46–65 years), the female enters menopause:

* causes and effects of female menopause and the role of hormones in this
* effects of the ageing process in middle adulthood.

• In later adulthood (65+ years), there are many effects of ageing:

* health and intellectual abilities can deteriorate.

**A2: Intellectual development across the life stages**

• In infancy and early childhood there is rapid growth in intellectual and

language skills:

* Piaget’s model of how children’s logic and reasoning develops – stages of cognitive development, the development of schemas, his tests of conservation, egocentrism and how his model may explain children’s thoughts and actions
* Chomsky’s model in relation to how children acquire language – Language Acquisition Device (LAD), the concept of a critical period during which children may learn language, which may explain how children seem to instinctively gain language.

• In early adulthood, thinking becomes realistic and pragmatic, with expert

knowledge about the practical aspects of life that permits judgement about

important matters.

• The effects of age on the functions of memory:

* + memory loss in later adulthood.

**A3: Emotional development across the life stages**

• Attachment to care-giver in infancy and early childhood:

* + theories of attachment, to include types of attachment and disruptions to attachment.

• The development and importance of self-concept:

* + definitions and factors involved in the development of a positive or negative self-esteem
  + definitions and factors involved in the development of a positive or negative self-image.

**A4: Social development across the life stages**

• The stages of play in infancy and early childhood:

* solo play, parallel play and co-operative play.

• The importance of friendships and friendship groups:

* + the social benefits of friendships
  + the effects of peer pressure on social development.

• The development of relationships with others.

• The development of independence through the life stages:

* + peer influence in adolescence, starting employment, leaving home, starting a family.

**Aim B: Factors affecting human growth and development**

**B1: The nature/nurture debate related to factors**

• Development across the lifespan is a result of genetic or inherited factors –

Gesell’s maturation theory.

• Development across the lifespan is a result of environmental factors –

Bandura’s social learning theory.

• Both factors may play a part – stress-diathesis model.

**B2: Genetic factors that affect development**

• Genetic predispositions to particular conditions – cystic fibrosis, brittle bone

disease, phenylketonuria (PKU), Huntington’s disease, Klinefelter’s

syndrome, Down’s syndrome, colour blindness, Duchenne muscular

dystrophy, susceptibility to diseases such as cancer, high blood cholesterol

and diabetes.

• Biological factors that affect development – foetal alcohol syndrome, effects

of maternal infections and lifestyle/diet during pregnancy, congenital defects.

**B3: Environmental factors that affect development**

• Exposure to pollution – respiratory disorders, cardiovascular problems,

allergies.

• Poor housing conditions – respiratory disorders, cardio vascular problems,

hypothermia, and anxiety and depression.

• Access to health and social care services – availability of transport, opening

hours of services, ability to understand the needs and requirements of

particular services.

**B4: Social factors that affect development**

• Family dysfunction – parental divorce or separation, sibling rivalry, parenting

style.

• Bullying – effects of bullying on self-esteem, self-harm, suicide.

• Effects of culture, religion and belief – beliefs that may prevent medical

intervention, dietary restrictions.

**B5: Economic factors that affect development**

• Income and expenditure.

• Employment status.

• Education.

• Lifestyle.

**B6: Major life events that affect development**

• Predictable events:

* + these are events that are expected to happen at a particular time. While expected, they may still have an effect on a person’s health and wellbeing. This effect can be positive or negative, regardless of the event.

• Unpredictable events:

* + these are events that happen unexpectedly and can have serious physical and psychological effects on an individual. These effects can be positive or negative, regardless of the event.

• Many events can be either predictable or unpredictable depending on the life

course of the individual. They can include:

* + starting school/nursery
  + moving house
  + marriage and divorce
  + starting a family
  + beginning employment
  + retirement
  + death of a relative/partner/friend
  + accidents or injury
  + changing employment
  + leaving home
  + promotion or redundancy
  + serious illness.

• The effects of life events on health.

• Holmes-Rahe social readjustment rating scale and the effects of life events

on a person’s stress levels and health.

**Aim C: Effects of ageing**

**C1: The physical changes of ageing**

• Cardiovascular disease – age can increase the risks of cardiovascular disease.

This can be exacerbated by lifestyle choices.

• The degeneration of the nervous tissue.

• Osteoarthritis.

• Degeneration of the sense organs.

• The reduced absorption of nutrients.

• Dementia, to include Alzheimer’s disease.

• Effects of illnesses that are common in ageing.

**C2: The psychological changes of ageing**

• Effects on confidence and self-esteem.

• Effects of social change:

* + role changes
  + loss of a partner
  + loss of friends
  + increase in leisure time.

• Financial concerns.

• Effects of culture religion and beliefs.

• Social disengagement theory.

• Activity theory.

**C3: The societal effects of an ageing population**

• Health and social care provision for the aged.

• Economic effects of an ageing population.