



COMMUNICATION
SCQF Level 4
SQA Unit Code
F426 04

WORKPLACE CORE SKILLS UNIT

What are Core Skills?

Core Skills are skills and abilities that everyone needs in their work. This is true for every job in every workplace.

The Core Skills are:

- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Numeracy
- ◆ Information and Communication Technology
- ◆ Problem Solving
- ◆ Working with Others

Employers look for Core Skills when they are appointing new staff. They also expect their existing staff to have these skills.

Core Skills are important because they help you work effectively in your present job and also prepare you for jobs that you will do in future. Developing your Core Skills helps you deal with today's rapidly changing world and improve your career prospects.

What is this Core Skills Unit about?

This Unit is about using your skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening in straightforward workplace situations.

Your assessor will explain anything in this Unit that you do not understand.

What should I know or be able to do before I start this Unit?

You should either:

- ◆ have achieved the Core Skills Unit in Communication at SCQF level 3 or an equivalent qualification

or

- ◆ be able to show that you have some experience of communicating in the workplace, for example writing e-mails, reading magazine articles, giving instructions to workmates

What do I need to do?

You will need to carry out each of the following three tasks.

Task 1: Reading and understanding

Read, understand, and evaluate a straightforward document related to your work, for example a detailed letter, e-mail, short report, or leaflet. The document should have simple sentences and words that you are familiar with. To do this you will have to:

- ◆ work out the purpose of the document, for example:
 - ◆ giving instructions
 - ◆ presenting information
 - ◆ explaining a point of view
- ◆ pick out important ideas and key points in the document
- ◆ evaluate the document and provide evidence as to how well it met its purpose, for example:
 - ◆ is it clear and easy to read
 - ◆ does it contain all the information a reader needs
 - ◆ does it present both sides of an issue?

Task 2: Writing

Produce a document or related documents that convey several items of information, opinions, or ideas. To do this you will have to:

- ◆ decide who will read your document and your reason for producing it
- ◆ choose a format that is appropriate to your readers and the subject matter, for example an e-mail or a letter
- ◆ choose layout, order, words, and graphics (if appropriate) that make your piece of writing clear
- ◆ select and include relevant information or ideas
- ◆ present the information/ideas with some supporting detail in a logical order
- ◆ use vocabulary, sentence structure, and punctuation to make your piece of writing clear at first reading
- ◆ spell straightforward words correctly and use a dictionary, spellchecker, or thesaurus for words you are unsure of

Task 3: Speaking and listening

Either take part in either a straightforward discussion on a topic related to your work or give a short presentation on a work-related topic to one or more people. To do this you will have to:

- ◆ express several pieces of information, opinions, or ideas clearly when speaking, for example:
 - ◆ giving sufficient information
 - ◆ ordering and linking the information, opinions, or ideas in a logical way when speaking
- ◆ speak in a way that helps your listeners understand you easily, for example speaking loudly enough and at an appropriate speed or varying your tone
- ◆ choose words that fit the topic and that your listeners can understand
- ◆ use your body language to improve your spoken communication, for example smiling, using gestures, making eye contact
- ◆ listen carefully to any questions from listeners and respond accordingly, for example by giving extra information or explaining a specialist word
- ◆ pick out the main points another speaker is making
- ◆ interpret the way other speakers use their voices and body language to help get their message across, for example the tone of voice that they use
- ◆ listen carefully to what others say and ask questions to clarify anything that you do not understand

How will I show that I have achieved this Unit?

You will need to evidence to show that you have achieved all three tasks in this Unit.

For Task 1 Reading and understanding: you might have written evidence such as a short report, blog or wiki, or your assessor may ask you questions, watch what you do, and make notes or a recording of what was said and/or done.

For Task 2 Writing: you may be able to use the document you have produced for Task 1 as evidence. Your document(s) may total 300 words or more.

For Task 3 Speaking and listening: your assessor will observe you and make notes or a recording of the activity, which should last a minimum of three minutes, including time for questions. You should also keep a brief note explaining the situation, for example:

- ◆ who was present
- ◆ what was being discussed
- ◆ what was the purpose of the discussion

You must show that you can do the whole of each individual task at one time. You are not allowed to gather evidence from different situations for different parts of the task.

What might be involved?

This Unit may be achieved in many ways. Examples of tasks you might do are:

- ◆ identify the main issues in an e-mail about a new work policy; respond to each point; comment on how clearly the e-mail conveyed its message
- ◆ follow written instructions for using a piece of equipment; comment on how clear the instructions were
- ◆ complete an accident report supported by maps or diagrams
- ◆ produce a letter asking for information about facilities for a workplace seminar
- ◆ discuss in some detail a customer's complaint about the service received from your organisation
- ◆ give a short talk to workmates on some aspect of your work and answer their questions

What can I do next?

You could move on to the Communication Core Skills Unit at SCQF level 5.

You could consider doing other Core Skills Units in:

- ◆ Numeracy
- ◆ Information and Communication Technology
- ◆ Problem Solving
- ◆ Working with Others

Your assessor can advise you about this.

Guidance for assessors

Further information about delivery, assessment, and evidence requirements for this Unit can be found in the corresponding Assessment Support Pack. In addition, the *Guide to Assessing Workplace Core Skills* provides further information on assessment.

Disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative competence standards for Units.

Additional advice and guidance for learners with disabilities and/or additional support needs should initially be discussed with the centre where the learner is registered.

If the centre is unable to offer a satisfactory solution then the learner, usually in conjunction with the centre, should contact the External Verifier of the Awarding Body where the learner is registered for certification.

Information on Awarding Body requirements to become an 'approved' Awarding Body is published in the SQA Accreditation *Awarding Body Criteria (2007)*.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/AccreditationAwardingBodyCriteria.pdf

ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Credit value

6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 4



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