

-SQA-SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

HIGHER NATIONAL UNIT SPECIFICATION

GENERAL INFORMATION

-Unit number-	D3AA 04
-Unit title-	SUPPORT FLEXIBLE LEARNING
-Superclass category-	GA
-Date of publication- (month and year)	AUGUST 2000
-Originating centre for unit-	SQA

-DESCRIPTION-

GENERAL COMPETENCE FOR UNIT: Preparing and managing a range of flexible learning activities and materials, and supporting learners in a flexible learning environment which might include resource-based, online, distance, open or distributed learning.

This unit can only be offered in a centre recognised as suitable by the Further Education Professional Development Forum.

OUTCOMES:

1. prepare materials and activities for use in a flexible learning environment;
2. support learners in a flexible learning environment;
3. review and evaluate flexible learning materials and activities.

CREDIT VALUE: 2 HN Units

ACCESS STATEMENT: Access to this unit is at the discretion of the centre.

Additional copies of this unit can be obtained from:

The Committee and Administration Unit, SQA, Hanover House, 24 Douglas Street, Glasgow G2 7NQ, (Tel: 0141-242 2168).

At the time of publication the cost is £2.50 per unit (minimum order £5.00).

HIGHER NATIONAL UNIT SPECIFICATION**STATEMENT OF STANDARDS**

Unit number: D3AA 04

Unit title: SUPPORT FLEXIBLE LEARNING

Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

OUTCOME

1. PREPARE MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES FOR USE IN A FLEXIBLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) The specific aims and objectives of the learning materials and activities are clearly identified.
- (b) Existing materials are adapted and used within the constraints of copyright law.
- (c) The language, style and format of the material is appropriate to the learning needs of users and promotes equality of opportunity.
- (d) Guidance and instructions on the correct use of the materials are precise and clear.
- (e) The materials and activities meet all learning requirements and conform to required quality standards.

RANGE STATEMENT

The range statement for this outcome is specified within the performance criteria.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Performance and documentary or digital evidence that the candidate has produced materials and/or activities for use in a flexible learning environment, which might include resource-based, online distance, open or distributed learning, covering all the performance criteria.

OUTCOME**2. SUPPORT LEARNERS IN A FLEXIBLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT****PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

- (a) The support given to the learner encourages active learning and personal responsibility for his/her own learning.
- (b) The learner's progress is monitored in accordance with his/her needs and the requirements specified in materials.
- (c) Feedback on progress is given in a positive and encouraging manner.
- (d) The support given to the learner is adjusted to match his/her progress.

RANGE STATEMENT

The range statement for this outcome is specified within the performance criteria.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Performance and documentary evidence that the candidate has supported three learners in a flexible learning environment covering all the performance criteria.

OUTCOME**3. REVIEW AND EVALUATE FLEXIBLE LEARNING MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES****PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

- (a) Information on the effectiveness of the materials and activities is collected using valid methods.
- (b) Information is analysed and evaluated correctly.
- (c) Modifications are made to improve the effectiveness of the materials and activities.
- (d) Modified materials and activities are produced within agreed time scales and resources

RANGE STATEMENT

The range statement for this outcome is specified within the performance criteria.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Performance and documentary evidence that the candidate has reviewed and evaluated flexible learning materials and/or activities which meets all the performance criteria.

ASSESSMENT

In order to achieve this unit, candidates are required to present sufficient evidence that they have met all the performance criteria for each outcome within the range specified. Details of these requirements are given for each outcome. The assessment instruments used should follow the general guidance offered by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) assessment model and an integrative approach to assessment is encouraged. (See references at the end of support notes).

Accurate records should be made of the assessment instruments used showing how evidence is generated for each outcome and giving marking schemes and/or checklists, etc. Records of candidates' achievements should be kept. These records will be available for external moderation.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Proposals to modify outcomes, range statements or agreed assessment arrangements should be discussed in the first place with the external moderator.

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HIGHER NATIONAL UNIT SPECIFICATION**SUPPORT NOTES**

Unit number: D3AA 04

Unit title: SUPPORT FLEXIBLE LEARNING

SUPPORT NOTES: This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. None of the sections of the support notes is mandatory.

NOTIONAL DESIGN LENGTH: SQA allocates a notional design length to a unit on the basis of time estimated for achievement of the stated standards by a candidate whose starting point is as described in the access statement. The notional design length for this unit is 80 hours. The use of notional design length for programme design and timetabling is advisory only.

PURPOSE This unit has been designed to enable candidates to develop skills in preparing, reviewing and evaluating a range of flexible learning activities and materials and supporting learners in a flexible learning environment which might include resource-based, online, distance, open or distributed learning.

CONTENT/CONTEXT The principal context will be the training/teaching environment. The candidate should have access to a workplace where evidence to meet the performance criteria can be generated. A flexible learning environment might include resource-based, online, distance, open or distributed learning.

The following list of topics gives a suggested content for a taught programme. The list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive and should be used as a guide only.

Outcome 1

- principles of design
- examples of good design
- costs and timescale for design
- the availability of resources and how this affects the choice of flexible learning environment.
- economics of flexible learning production and use
- characteristics of flexible learning materials and activities
- the range of flexible learning approaches in use and their purposes
- how to assess which learning materials, activities and environment are best suited to particular learners' needs and the learning activity
- how to adapt existing materials to flexible learning format
- copyright requirements
- how to develop flexible learning materials and activities
- how to effectively use written, visual and digital media to promote learning
- methods of differentiating materials to promote achievement of objectives (e.g. language, layout, presentation)
- developments in information technology and how these can be used to promote learning

- specialist equipment and its uses in supporting learning
- how to select and organise information effectively
- ways of structuring materials to support learning
- ways of consolidating and reinforcing learning
- ways of presenting information and ideas
- the appropriate forms of registers of language
- principles of non-discriminatory language
- the conventions of grammar and spelling
- college mechanisms for flexible learning materials development
- sources of information about resources designed to support students working on their own and how to access these
- methods of testing flexible learning materials and activities
- capabilities of IT e.g. computer hardware, software, CD-ROM, multimedia, hypertext, graphics, interfaces
- equal opportunities legislation and good practice
- current relevant debates concerning legal and ethical issues
- college quality assurance procedures.

Outcome 2

- college procedures for delivery of flexible learning
- the range of communications media used to support learners
- processes of developing an effective interactive relationship with a learner on a flexible learning programme and establishing parameters for support
- motivating learners in a flexible learning environment and maintaining participation
- study skills and how to foster these
- methods of enabling learners to work effectively on their own
- factors which can impact on the individual's ability to manage their own learning
- how to establish needs for advice, guidance and support
- how to give advice in a constructive way which promotes individual autonomy and encourages self development
- developments in information technology and how these can be used to support learning
- the learning support needs of learners when using technology-based or distance-learning approaches
- monitoring progress and carrying out formative assessments
- how to give constructive feedback.

Outcome 3

- college quality assurance procedures
- methods of collecting information e.g. questionnaires, individual interviews, desk research.
- the criteria by which to evaluate the effectiveness of flexible learning materials e.g. in content, language, style and format, media
- the contribution that learners make to evaluation of flexible learning materials and activities
- the criteria by which to evaluate the effectiveness of flexible learning materials and activities
- evaluation strategies and methods
- resources for evaluation
- planning and preparation of evaluation activities
- questioning techniques
- questionnaire design and analysis

- how to analyse and interpret information and extract what is relevant to modify learning materials and activities
- report writing
- security and confidentiality
- methods to monitor the effects of improvement
- equal opportunities

APPROACHES TO GENERATING EVIDENCE The achievement of the skills and underpinning knowledge required for this unit would be facilitated by orientation of delivery towards the candidate's own experience, with opportunities for candidate-centre discussions on topics relating to the outcomes. Case studies would also provide illustrative examples.

Line managers and employers should be encouraged, where possible, to assist the candidates in generating real performance evidence from the workplace into a portfolio of evidence. This portfolio should be generated from all available sources and where direct evidence is not available, use should be made of the types of supplementary evidence identified in the assessment procedures.

The evidence in the candidate's portfolio could provide evidence towards a qualification based on occupational competence in lecturing in further education, e.g. TQFE.

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES Evidence gathered from the workplace, i.e. natural performance, would be the primary method of assessing the candidate's competence although a variety of other methods may be used either to supplement this or to provide evidence across the full range of performance criteria. The following forms of evidence would be appropriate to this unit:

Documentation, e.g. reports, flexible learning materials, records of progress, audio tape, digital media, computer printouts.

Direct observation by the assessor of the candidate supporting learners using a flexible learning environment.

Evidence given by those who have witnessed the candidate's performance.

The candidate's own description of his/her performance – written or oral – the candidate could keep a reflective diary/log of support given to learners. This form of record would need to be substantiated by an authorised source.

Oral questioning, where competence cannot be inferred from direct performance evidence and supporting evidence of performance. This could include answers given by the candidate to questions about his/her actual performance and what the candidate would do and why to prepare materials and activities and how to support learners in different flexible learning environments – particularly appropriate for evidence of the candidate's ability to meet the demands of special situations and for consideration of organisational policy observance.

REFERENCES

1. Guide to unit writing, SQA, 1993 (Code: A018).
2. Guide to assessment, SQA, 1993 (Code: B005).
3. Guide to certification, SQA, 1996 (Code: F025).
4. Notes for unit writers, SQA, 1995 (Code: A041).

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