

-SQA-SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

HIGHER NATIONAL UNIT SPECIFICATION

GENERAL INFORMATION

-Unit number-	D3AE 04		
-Unit title-	SUPPORT IMPROVEMENT	CONTINUOUS	QUALITY
-Superclass category-	GA		
-Date of publication- (month and year)	AUGUST 2000		
-Originating centre for unit-	SQA		

-DESCRIPTION-

GENERAL COMPETENCE FOR UNIT: Contributing effectively to the continuous improvement of the quality of the services provided in colleges of further education.

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

OUTCOMES:

1. explain the FE environment and factors influencing change;
2. explain the tutor's role in quality improvement processes;
3. contribute to the planning and development of a programme;
4. contribute to effective quality assurance, self-evaluation and quality improvement;
5. demonstrate customer care.

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: D3AE 04

Unit title: SUPPORT CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

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. EXPLAIN THE FE ENVIRONMENT AND FACTORS INFLUENCING CHANGE

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) The explanation of the role, structure and funding of the FE sector in Scotland is correct.
- (b) The explanation of changes in the FE environment is correct with respect to external and internal factors
- (c) The explanation of national standards and initiatives is correct.

RANGE STATEMENT

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

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Written evidence to cover all the performance criteria.

OUTCOME

2. EXPLAIN THE TUTOR'S ROLE IN QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROCESSES

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) The explanation of the function and form of college development planning is correct.
- (b) The description of the relationship of team planning to the overall corporate development plan is accurate and specific.
- (c) The explanation of the basis on which external and internal resources are allocated is accurate.
- (d) The identification of opportunities for tutors to contribute to development planning is realistic and accurate.

- (e) The explanation of the link between corporate goals for quality improvement and quality development plans at programme level is correct.

RANGE STATEMENT

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

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Written evidence of the explanation of the tutor's role in self-evaluation and development planning and its relationship to quality improvement covering all performance criteria.

OUTCOME

- 3. CONTRIBUTE TO THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF A PROGRAMME

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) The explanation of the roles and responsibilities of the individual members of the development team is correct.
- (b) The participation in design and planning teams contributes effectively to the development of the programme.
- (c) The contribution reaches the prescribed quality standards for the programme being developed.

RANGE STATEMENT

Quality standards: awarding body requirements; organisational quality assurance requirements.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Performance criterion (a). Written with supplementary oral evidence as appropriate.

Performance criteria (b) and (c). Documentary and performance evidence of the candidate's competence in contributing to the planning and development of a programme.

OUTCOME**4. CONTRIBUTE TO EFFECTIVE QUALITY ASSURANCE, SELF-EVALUATION AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT****PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

- (a) The outline of quality assurance policies and procedures is accurate.
- (b) The explanation of the role of the tutor in quality assurance, self-evaluation and quality improvement is correct.
- (c) The action taken to implement quality assurance procedures in own work area is in accordance with college policy and procedures.

RANGE STATEMENT

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

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Performance criteria (a) and (b). Written evidence outlining quality assurance policies and procedures and the explanation of the role of the tutor with supplementary oral evidence as appropriate.

Performance criterion (c). Documentary and performance evidence that the candidate has implemented quality assurance procedures and has effected improvement in his or her area of work.

OUTCOME**5. DEMONSTRATE CUSTOMER CARE****PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

- (a) The care given to internal and external customers is appropriate to the situation.
- (b) The identification of the needs of different customers is clear and correct.
- (c) Communication with customers is conducted in a professional manner using the most appropriate means.
- (d) The range of actions taken following a meeting with a customer is correct.

RANGE STATEMENT

Types of customer: internal and external; employers/stakeholders.

Types of communication: face-to-face; written; telephone.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Documentary and performance evidence that the candidate has identified and cared for customers in a professional manner. This must cover at least two types of customer and two types of communication.

Written with supplementary oral evidence, as appropriate, to ensure full coverage of the range.

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: D3AE 04

Unit title: SUPPORT CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

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 for candidates to develop skills in providing a quality service in further education. The experience of contributing to the continuous improvement of the quality of the services provided in colleges of further education will enable candidates to contribute effectively to development planning, to customer care and in providing quality assurance.

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.

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

- the place of FE within the wider context
- the nature and role of FE within current vocational and educational structure and within the wider community
- current national initiatives and how they are interpreted within the strategic plan of the college
- sources of funding
- the different quality assurance and performance indicators used by the organisation, awarding bodies, SFEFC funding and inspection regimes and external service users e.g. SQMS, IIP, Chartermark, SQA quality criteria, HMI quality framework, ISO 9000, internal audit, self-evaluation

Outcome 2

- development planning requirements
- college planning procedures
- college funding and resource allocation
- the purpose of the methods used to respond to change and ensure quality development
- self-evaluation and planning for quality improvement

Outcome 3

- awarding body requirements
- college quality assurance arrangements
- functions of programme teams and their roles and responsibilities
- principles of programme design and implementation
- college mechanisms for curriculum development
- collaborative and collegiate styles of working
- ways of integrating one's own teaching with that of others within a team
- the required outcomes of learning programmes and related assessment
- college procedures and operating practice for the acquisition of resources
- planning, scheduling and feedback mechanisms
- the availability of resources and how this affects learning
- specialist equipment and its uses in supporting learning
- sources of information about resources designed to support candidates working on their own and how to assess these

Outcome 4

- the purpose of quality-assurance systems, internal audit and self-evaluation and their role within FE and within the organisation
- how to be active within FE culture of self-evaluation for quality improvement
- procedures for gathering and assessing relevant information
- internal and external criteria by which to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the course or programme and the organisation
- the relevance of performance indicators and target setting to continuous improvement
- resource constraints and allocation procedures
- concept of continuous quality improvement
- college quality assurance procedures
- ways of using new technologies to monitor, evaluate and improve quality of delivery

Outcome 5

- mission statement
- students' charter
- internal customers e.g. other tutors, staff in support sections (finance, text processing etc) and external customers e.g. prospective learners, learners, sponsors, employers
- customer care techniques
- customer perceptions and needs
- types of information which customers need
- how to build customer relationships
- different ways of offering advice and help and how to match them with individual customer's needs

- appropriate sources of support for dealing with difficult customers
- how to judge when to seek advice in dealing with customers
- factors which impact on the manner of communication and interaction, including cultural, and own values and beliefs
- issues of equality of opportunity and non-discriminatory practice

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-centred discussions on topics relating to the outcomes. Case studies and role plays would also provide illustrative examples for outcome 5.

Line managers and employers should be encouraged, wherever possible, to assist the candidate 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, information/support materials, audio or video tape.

Direct observation by the assessor of the candidate carrying out customer care.

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 contacts with customers.

Oral questioning, where competence across the full range 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 with different customers – 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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