

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Employment Experience 1

Unit code: D7HJ 34

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to enable the candidate to demonstrate that s/he can, in his/her normal work environment, work with others to complete a task. It is intended for candidates who are in employment and who are undertaking a course of study relevant to their occupational role with the support of their employer or who may wish to develop their career prospects. On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

1. Analyse and plan a workplace task in co-operation with others
2. Implement a workplace task in co-operation with others
3. Evaluate own contribution to the completion of a workplace task

Credit value: 1 HN Credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7)

SCQF (the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework) brings Scottish qualifications into a single framework of 12 levels ranging from SQA Access 1 to doctorates. The SCQF includes degrees; HNC/Ds; SQA National Qualifications; and SVQs. Each SQA Unit is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at a specific level. 1 SCQF point = 10 hours of learning

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Candidates should have good interpersonal skills. These may be demonstrated by the achievement of the core skill Working with Others at Intermediate 1 or by possession of a suitable HN Unit at SCQF level 7 involving oral communication or equivalent. Candidates should have some work experience and should be in employment at the time the Unit is undertaken.

Core skills: The core skill of Working with Others at Intermediate 2 is embedded in this Unit.

Context for delivery: This Unit is included in the framework of a number of Higher National Certificates and Higher National Diplomas. It is recommended that it should be delivered and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes.

Assessment: The Unit could be assessed holistically by a portfolio of evidence generated by the candidate at his/her place of work. Much of the evidence should arise naturally out of the task which the candidate chooses for the Unit but it will also include reflective statements by the candidate on his/her experience. These statements should be confirmed by others involved who could also provide other witness testimony to support the candidate's performance. Since the core skill component of Working with Others is embedded in this Unit, it is strongly recommended that you follow the assessment guidelines given. If you

wish to use a different assessment model you should seek prior moderation of the assessment instrument(s) you intend to use to ensure that the core skill component is still covered.

An Assessment Exemplar, and Guidelines on the Assessment and Delivery of the Unit have been produced to indicate the national standards of achievement required at SCQF level 7.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Employment Experience 1

Unit code: D7HJ34

The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and evidence requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for an Outcome is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Analyse and plan a workplace task in co-operation with others

Knowledge and/or skills

- how to set objectives which are SMART (ie specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound)
- distinction between internal and external customers
- importance of agreeing customer needs
- stages of planning
- importance of defining and allocating roles to group members

Evidence requirements

All the evidence for this Unit must relate to the candidate's involvement in a task where there is a clear overall goal, although the components of the task may not be obvious or specified. The task must be an actual workplace task at the candidate's place of work and must involve the candidate in working with others.

Each candidate will need evidence to show that s/he can analyse and plan a workplace task in conjunction with others. The evidence must show that s/he can share responsibilities with others for the analysis and planning of the task in terms of identifying the components of the task, defining and allocating the roles of those involved and deciding the procedures by which those involved will work.

The evidence provided should demonstrate that the candidate played an active and constructive role in analysing and planning the workplace task by clearly indicating the candidate's precise contribution. Evidence should include:

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

1. A statement of the workplace task undertaken by the candidate including an explanation of the context of the task, eg:
 - why it was undertaken
 - at whose instigation
 - the nature of the candidate's role
 - others involved in the task

2. A personal report by the candidate explaining his/her contribution to the analysis and planning of the task. The personal report must cover each of the knowledge and/or skills items. To do this it must show that the candidate is able to, in conjunction with others:
 - determine objectives for the task which meet the SMART criteria
 - agree with relevant customers (internal and/or external) that the task meets their needs
 - use his/her knowledge of the stages of planning to analyse the components of the task and prepare a schedule for the task which will enable all components of the task to be completed, the objectives of the task to be met, and elicit an appropriate contribution from all those involved
 - define the roles of those who will be involved in the completion of the task so that they are consistent with the components of the task, its objectives and the needs of customers
 - allocate roles to all those who will be involved in the task in a way that is consistent with the definition of roles and that will ensure that the objectives of the task will be met and that all components of it will be carried out.

Assessment guidelines

The assessment for this Outcome can be combined with Outcomes 2 and 3 as part of a single assessment instrument for the Unit, details of which are given under Outcome 3 below.

Outcome 2

Implement a workplace task in co-operation with others

Knowledge and/or skills

- building and maintaining interpersonal relationships
- group decision making
- the process of monitoring and control
- importance of meeting legal and organisational requirements

Evidence requirements

These should be read in conjunction with the evidence requirements for Outcome 1 which set out the requirements of the task. It should be the same task which the candidate helped to plan in Outcome 1.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Each candidate will need evidence to show that s/he can implement a workplace task by working co-operatively with others. The evidence must show that s/he can anticipate the needs of others and contribute to group decisions as well as keeping others informed of progress and any difficulties that may arise and their implications.

The evidence provided should demonstrate that the candidate played an active and constructive role in supporting co-operative working during the implementation of the workplace task by clearly indicating the candidate's precise contribution. The evidence should include:

1. A personal report by the candidate explaining his/her contribution to the implementation of the task and how this involved working co-operatively with others. The personal report must cover each of the knowledge and/or skills items and must show that the candidate is able to, in conjunction with others:
 - anticipate the needs of others by recognising those who may be affected by any development and/or changes in the implementation of the task and alerting them in good time.
 - keep others informed timeously of his/her contribution to the progress of the task and of any difficulties that may arise and the implications of these.
 - make an effective contribution to decisions made by the group involved in the implementation of the task.
 - complete his/her contribution to the implementation of the task in accordance with legal and organisational requirements such as health and safety.
2. Confirmation that the personal report is a true record of what took place. This must be given by someone with responsibility and knowledge of the candidate's contribution and will take the form of a signed statement.
3. Relevant workplace documentation to support the personal report. This can include any material arising from the implementation of the task which can illustrate the contribution of the candidate. Examples might be notes of team briefings, minutes of meetings, memos, notes or e-mails to and from others, progress reports, work in progress dockets, print-outs, etc. This portfolio of evidence should be signed as authentic by the person with responsibility for the candidate's work.

Assessment guidelines

The assessment of this Outcome can be combined with Outcomes 1 and 3 as part of a single assessment instrument for the Unit, details of which are given under Outcome 3 below.

Outcome 3

Evaluate own contribution to the completion of a workplace task

Knowledge and/or skills

- importance of analysing personal strengths and weaknesses
- value of identifying personal lessons for the future
- methods of obtaining feedback from others

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Evidence requirements

These should be read in conjunction with the evidence requirements for Outcomes 1 and 2 which set out the requirements of the task. The workplace task should be the same task which the candidate helped to analyse, plan and implement in Outcomes 1 and 2.

Each candidate will need evidence to show that s/he can evaluate his/her contribution of the completion of a workplace task. The evidence must show that s/he can evaluate areas of strength and weakness in his/her own contribution to co-operative working during the analysis, planning and implementation of the workplace task. The evidence should consist of:

1. A personal report by the candidate evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of his/her contribution to the analysis, planning and implementation of the task and drawing conclusions on how s/he could have acted to improve overall group performance. The evidence provided must cover each of the knowledge and/or skills items and must show that the candidate is able to:
 - identify his/her strengths and weaknesses with respect to the contribution that s/he made to the planning and implementation of the task. The emphasis should be on how well the candidate worked with others and each candidate should consider this in the light of the planning and implementation of the task and the extent to which the objectives of the task were met
 - identify lessons for her/his future performance in similar situations. These should be based on ways in which, with hindsight, s/he could have acted to improve overall group performance through the way in which s/he worked with others
 - make reference to specific feedback gained from others to support the evaluation of her/his own contribution to the planning and implementation of the task

Assessment guidelines

The assessment of this Outcome can be combined with Outcomes 1 and 2 as part of a single assessment of the Unit. The workplace task may be one with which the candidate is involved as part of their normal working environment on a regular or an occasional basis. It could, however, be one in which the candidate participates for the purposes of this Unit. It could involve improving workplace performance in some way, for example, by investigating a particular situation or designing or inventing a new approach to work procedures. Alternatively, it could involve organising a particular event, eg a work experience programme for school pupils.

Each candidate could prepare a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate that s/he can fulfil the requirements of the Unit. To meet the evidence requirements, it could be laid out in the following sections:

1. A statement of the workplace task undertaken by the candidate.
2. The two personal reports by the candidate explaining his/her contribution to:
 - a) analysis and planning
 - b) implementation of the workplace task.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

3. Witness testimonies to confirm that the personal reports are a true record of what took place.
4. A personal report by the candidate outlining her/his evaluation of her/his contribution to the planning and implementation of the workplace task.
5. Relevant workplace documentation to support the personal reports.

Administrative Information

Unit code: D7HJ34

Unit title: Employment Experience 1

Superclass category: HB

Date of publication: August 2001

Source: SQA

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2000

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged.

Additional copies of this Unit specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. The cost for each Unit specification is £2.50 (minimum order £5.00). Additional copies of the Assessment Exemplar, and Guidelines on the Delivery of the Units can also be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. The cost is £15.00

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Employment Experience 1

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

The Unit is intended for candidates who are in employment and who are taking a qualification at Higher National level in conjunction with their occupational role and with the support of their employer. It may also be taken by candidates in employment wishing to develop and/or enhance their employment skills. It provides an opportunity to attain the core skill Working with Others at Intermediate 2. Most of the evidence required will be generated by candidates as part of their normal course of employment. They will need the co-operation of their employer and the Unit is not suitable for candidates who are unable or unwilling to seek their assistance.

The Unit is expressed in generic terms but it should be related to a context which is familiar to candidates. As a result, the task selected should be one which is related to the candidate's normal occupational role. Tasks concerned with improving performance are likely to be particularly suitable, although tasks requiring organisation of an event may also be appropriate. It is likely to be easier for candidates if the task is related to a specific activity, eg arranging the installation of new equipment; piloting new work procedures; investigating the cause of operational difficulties; looking into a complaint from a customer; benchmarking a process; evaluating the potential of new hardware or software; organising training in new procedures; arranging a workplace social event.

A further key element is that the task chosen must involve others. It would be acceptable, therefore, for the tasks to be one assigned to a group which includes the candidate such as a project team, a working party or a committee. It is not necessary for the candidate to have a managerial role in the group but s/he must be able to make a realistic and significant contribution to the analysis, planning and implementation of the task.

Ideally, the task should be one in which the candidate would participate during the normal course of events at work. However, in order to get a meaningful task, it may be necessary to deliberately co-opt the candidate onto a group or to institute a specific activity with which the candidate can be involved.

The task should be one where the overall objective is clear, eg find the cause of a quality problem; arrange work experience for local school pupils. However, the possible components of the task are not specified and, indeed may not be immediately obvious. Thus, the task will have to be analysed by the candidate in conjunction with others.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

In broad terms, the Unit covers the planning and implementation of the task. There are no requirements as to how these stages are conducted. Finally, the candidate is required to evaluate his/her own contribution to the planning and control of the task from the perspective of working with others.

The following notes give some additional information on each Outcome:

Outcome 1: stages of planning include define objectives; generate and evaluate options; identify components/activities; sequence components/activities, eg by using methods such as a Gantt chart; identify resources; review the plan; monitor and control.

Outcome 2: group decisions could be by consensus, majority, negotiation or by authority; the process of monitoring and control involves setting standards, measuring performance; comparing it with the standards and taking any corrective action deemed necessary. Legal and organisational requirements are likely to revolve around health and safety obligations.

Outcome 3: methods of obtaining feedback may be formal, (eg appraisal; customer feedback questionnaires as part of a quality system) or informal, (eg comments from others). They may be written or oral and may be solicited or unsolicited.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

Candidates will require guidance from a centre to ensure that they adopt a suitable approach to the Unit. Centres will also have to allow time to monitor the progress of candidates and for assessment of the candidate portfolios. The number of formal time-tabled hours for candidates, however, is likely to be small. The Unit is particularly suitable, therefore, in situations where there is little leeway between the recommended number of teaching hours for a qualification and the maximum number of hours during which candidates can attend.

Centres may find it advisable to appoint a mentor for the candidate. This should be someone at the candidate's place of work who can monitor progress and who can confirm the authenticity of the personal reports submitted by candidates. Mentors may also be able to suggest suitable tasks for candidates. If centres do take this approach, it may be helpful to arrange some induction training for mentors prior to the commencement of the Unit. In these circumstances, mentors could be given training to help them keep a watching on portfolios. This may help to reduce the burden of portfolio assessment for the centre by ensuring, for example, that portfolios contain all the requisite evidence.

It may also be possible to combine this Unit with others, eg if candidates have to undertake a work project in which others are involved.

Open learning

This Unit is well suited to delivery by distance learning. It may be helpful to confirm beforehand with the candidate that s/he has chosen a suitable workplace task for the Unit. The portfolio, once completed, could be sent directly to the assessor.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

For information on normal open learning arrangements, please refer to the SQA guide *Assessment and Quality Assurance of Open and Distance Learning* (SQA, 2000).

Special needs

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering special alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment and Certification Arrangements for Candidates with Special Needs/Candidates for whom English is an additional language* (SQA, 2000).

General information for candidates

Unit title: Employment Experience: 1

This Unit is designed to enable you to make use of your experience at work and to overtake the core skill of Working with Others at Intermediate 2. To complete the Unit you must participate in a workplace task involving others and keep records of the analysis, planning and the implementation of the task.

It will be up to you to choose a suitable task, although the centre and your work will help you to do this. In deciding what task to pick, you should bear three main things in mind:

1. The task must be one that involves others, eg a project team, a working party. You do not have to be the leader of the group but you do have to play an active role in it. You can, if you wish, choose a task for which you are responsible, but, if you do, it must be one that requires you to work co-operatively with others.
2. The task must be one that has a clear objective, (eg investigating a quality problem; organising a training event). However, the exact components that make up the task will not be clear and it will be up to those involved, including yourself, to decide what the actual components of the task ought to be.
3. The task may be part of your normal working role or it can be a 'one-off' task in which you participate purely for the purpose of completing this Unit.

Overall, the task is an opportunity for you to use your experience at work for your personal development. You may wish to discuss the best type to choose with your line manager or with someone else at work.

As noted already, the main focus of the Unit is working with others during the analysis, planning and implementation stages of a task. However, you must also evaluate your experience. This means that you must reflect on what happened and draw conclusions about how well you have worked with others on this task and about how you would work more effectively with other people on future occasions.

In order to complete this Unit successfully, you must provide evidence to prove that you can work co-operatively with others. The evidence required is:

1. A statement of the workplace task in which you participated. It should include an explanation of the context of the task, (eg why it was undertaken; at whose instigation, etc), the nature of your role in the task and the others involved in it.
2. Two personal reports written by yourself which explain your contribution to a) the analysis and planning and b) the implementation of the workplace task and how this involved co-operatively with others. Both these reports must be confirmed as a true record of what took place by someone who is responsible for your work or the chosen task, eg the leader of your group; your line manager. Normally, the person will make a signed statement which should be included in your portfolio.
3. A personal report evaluating your contribution to the analysis, planning and implementation of the workplace task.

General information for candidates (cont)

4. Relevant workplace documentation to support your personal reports. This can include any appropriate material arising from the various stages of the task which can illustrate the contribution that you made. Examples might be as notes of team briefings, minutes of meetings, memos, notes or e-mails to and from others, progress reports, written instructions, etc. You could include statements from others involved in the task, eg to say what feedback they gave to you.

All the evidence can be presented together at the end of the Unit, (eg in a portfolio). This means there is only a single instrument of assessment for this Unit.