

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Editing and Proof-reading

Unit code: D7XK 35

Unit purpose: This Unit develops skills in editing and proof-reading copy in accordance with professionally recognised standards. It also introduces the standard proof-reading symbols and promotes the skills required to correct the candidate's and third parties' scripts to ensure grammatical, syntactic and orthographical accuracy.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

1. Correct errors in given copy
2. Edit copy to meet given specifications

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

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. HN candidates are normally expected to input a further number of hours, matched to the credit value of the Unit, of non-contact time or candidate-led effort to consolidate and reinforce learning.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, it would be beneficial if the candidate had achieved at least one of the following:

HN Unit D7LN 34: *Business Communication: Writing Skills*

National Unit EE3T 12 (7110055) *Communication (NC)*

Higher *English and Communication* or its component Units

Core skills: There may be opportunities to gather evidence towards core skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components.

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of a group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes.

Higher National Unit specification: General information for centres (cont)

Unit title: Editing and Proof-reading

Assessment: There are two practical written assessments in this Unit. The first will involve the correction of a piece of copy using the standard proof-reading symbols. The second will involve the production of a short piece of copy using several longer pieces as source material. It is desirable that the assessments be done in the order in which they appear in the Unit, so that the candidate is able to proof-read his or her assignment for Outcome 2.

An Assessment Exemplar pack for this Unit has been produced to indicate the national standard of achievement required at SCQF level 8.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Editing and Proof-reading

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

Where evidence for Outcomes 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

Correct errors in given copy

Knowledge and/or skills

- Basic spelling rules and exceptions
- How to check and correct spelling
- Limitations of computerised spell check
- Accurate punctuation
- Grammatical rules and common grammatical errors
- Understanding of appropriacy of style
- Application of the BSI proof-correction symbols

Evidence requirements

The candidate will need evidence to demonstrate his/her knowledge and/or skills by showing he/she can:

- correct a piece of unseen text of approximately 750 words, containing a minimum of 50 errors. The errors should cover typographical errors; errors of punctuation, syntax and spelling. A small number (three at the most) of stylistic infelicities should also be corrected. The candidate should use the BSI proof-correction symbols to correct the given text.

The corrected piece should:

- have a minimum of 47 of the 50 errors identified
- have a minimum of 47 of the 50 errors accurately marked up
- introduce no unnecessary modifications
- be concise, grammatically correct and stylistically appropriate.

The assessment should be undertaken in open-book, supervised conditions. The candidate should be provided with a dictionary and a copy of the BSI proof-correction symbols, and should have access to any background material which he/she has been given in the form of handouts or notes in the course of the Unit.

The assessment should be timed, with a maximum of two hours allowed.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Editing and Proof-reading

Assessment guidelines

The candidate should be provided with a piece of unseen text which has had introduced into it 50 errors in total which include: typographical errors; errors of punctuation, syntax and spelling; and stylistic infelicities, for example, the use of the split infinitive, jargon or outworn metaphors. The text should be of sufficient complexity to allow a range of syntactical errors to be introduced. The text should be corrected using the BSI proof-correction symbols.

Outcome 2

Edit copy to meet given specifications

Knowledge and/or skills

- Organising content
- Cutting copy to retain the essential meaning
- Maintaining a constant style
- Recognising writing in a variety of styles

Evidence requirements

The candidate will need evidence to demonstrate his/her knowledge and/or skills by showing that he/she can create a single piece of text of a minimum of 300 words in a specified style from three or four pieces in different styles on the same general subject and within 5% of the specified length. The created text must be free from errors of punctuation, syntax and spelling.

Assessment guidelines

The candidate should be provided with three or four pieces on the same general subject, totalling approximately 1000 words. Current newspaper articles may be appropriate, provided that they come from a variety of types of newspaper. Alternatively, there may be texts linked to another Unit which may be edited to create a suitable text. There should be a clear statement of the number of words required (300, or 350, not 'about 300'), and the audience and purpose of the completed piece. The candidate should be encouraged to re-write using his/her own words, and not merely to cut and paste.

The assessment of this Outcome does not require to be time bound, nor carried out in supervised conditions, but should be conducted in conditions where arrangements have been put in place to assure the authenticity of the candidate's work.

Administrative Information

Unit code: D7XK 35

Unit title: Editing and Proof-reading

Superclass category: KH

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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Editing and Proof-reading

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

This Unit is intended to equip candidates with the skills necessary to produce work which is accurate and written in a style appropriate to its purpose. It is hoped that candidates who have mastered these skills will be able to use them to produce accurate and appropriate work in the contexts of other Units, and indeed in the context of any other written work which they are asked to produce. It is suggested, therefore, that candidates are encouraged to make use of their knowledge of grammar and punctuation to look critically at published texts, and to assess their own work and that of their peers. The Unit should enable candidates to enter the working environment with an appreciation of how publishers' proofs are corrected.

It may be necessary to teach the basics of grammar and punctuation, and to make candidates aware of the importance of checking the accuracy of their spelling. In particular, it may be necessary to disabuse candidates of the idea that spell checks and grammar checks on word processors will invariably produce the correct result.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

Although this Unit has been developed as part of the HNC/D Communication with Media group awards, it might prove useful as a free-standing Unit for those returning to Further or Higher Education who feel insecure about their abilities to write accurately and appropriately. If it is delivered as part of the group awards, the assessment of Outcome 2 may be integrated with any Unit which has a knowledge-based component, by asking candidates to write an appropriate piece, making use of given texts.

In view of the requirement for a high degree of accuracy in proof-reading, it is important that the candidate be given a new passage to correct if he/she is to be re-assessed for Outcome 1.

It is acknowledged that the number of errors appearing in the piece for correction in the assessment for Outcome 1 would not be found normally. It is desirable, however, that candidates be required to identify and correct a wide variety of errors, and impracticable to have them read the quantities of text which would naturally generate such errors. It will consequently be necessary to produce a text specifically for the purposes of the assessment.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Editing and Proof-reading

For Outcome 2 a number of texts on a subject dealt within another Unit may be used. For example, texts on interview technique might be edited to provide a short guide for school leavers to be published in the 'Education' section of a specific newspaper.

Where Outcome 2 requires to be re-assessed, it may be possible to allow the candidate to correct the text he/she has produced. If, however, there are more than five technical errors, or if the style is generally inconsistent, a new task is required.

Where this Unit is being linked with other Units in the group award, eg Journalism and/or Advertising Units, the importance of deadlines must be stressed.

Open learning

This Unit is particularly suited to open or distance learning. All of the underpinning knowledge can be text-based, and there is no occasion where face-to-face contact is required. Outcome 1 should be supervised and timed, and Outcomes 1 and 2 must be conducted in conditions where arrangements have been put in place to assure the authenticity of the candidate's work.

For further information and advice, please see *Assessment and Quality Assurance for Open and Distance Learning* (SQA, February 2001 – publication code A1030).

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 and Candidates for whom English is an Additional Language* (SQA, 2000).

General information for candidates

Unit title: Editing and Proof-reading

This Unit should give you confidence in your ability to write, spell and punctuate, and to make sure that all work which you present to anyone will be of a professional standard. It will also make you familiar with the standard method of correcting publishers' proofs. You will also learn how to combine material from a variety of sources into a piece aimed at a particular audience.

There are two Outcomes. In the first you will be expected to use the standard symbols to correct a piece of copy which has a number of errors of various sorts. In the second, you will be given a number of pieces of writing on the same subject and be asked to write a piece of your own, on that subject, for a particular audience, making use of the material in the given pieces.

In the course of the Unit, you will be making sure that your spelling, punctuation and grammar are correct, and learning the rules which apply to these. You will also be learning about style, and about writing in different styles for different purposes.

On completion of the Unit you should be able to:

1. Correct errors in given copy
2. Edit copy to meet given specifications