

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Online Learning Materials: Selection and Use

Unit code: DA3V 34

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to enable candidates to recognise the main issues that affect the selection and use of learning materials through an online medium.

On completion of the Unit, candidates should be able to:

- select appropriate learning materials for delivery online
- prepare to use learning materials delivered online

Credit value: 0.5 HN Credit at SCQF level 7 (4 SCOTCAT credit points at SCQF level 7*).

**SCOTCAT points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCOTCAT points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Candidates for this Unit should have current or recent experience of selecting learning materials for use in training or education programmes.

Core skills: Not applicable

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.

Assessment: This Unit could be assessed by a single instrument of assessment that would require a candidate to report on his/her own practice. Appropriate source evidence should support a report.

**SCQF (the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework) brings all Scottish qualifications into a single framework of 12 levels. 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.*

SCQF level 1 = SQA Access 1 and SCQF level 12 = Doctorates; 1 SCQF point = 10 hours of learning

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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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

Select appropriate learning materials for delivery online

Outcome 2

Prepare to use learning materials delivered online

Knowledge and/or skills for the Unit

- learning objectives that can be achieved through the use of online learning materials
- range of materials available
- select material or materials appropriate to the learning objectives identified
- select material or materials appropriate to the facilities available for online delivery
- select material or materials appropriate to learners' abilities
- select material or materials that can be used in ways that are inclusive and non-discriminatory
- evaluation criteria for online learning materials
- appropriate learning strategies and delivery methods

Evidence requirements for the Unit

Candidates will need evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

The candidate should prepare a case study that reports the candidate's selection and use of learning materials delivered online. The case study must address each of the knowledge and/or skills elements. The report must include both direct evidence of the candidate's practice and a discussion of the context of that practice and the choices made.

The report can be presented as either a written report, an illustrated oral presentation or through a guided professional interview.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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The written report must not exceed 750 words, excluding transcript of the assessment. The written report should include the critical apparatus of a professional paper in a style appropriate to the candidate's field of expertise, ie bibliographical references, footnotes, etc.

The oral presentation must not exceed 20 minutes in duration. The oral presentation must be accompanied by overhead slides and handouts summarising the main points of the presentation. The transcript must be presented in written or recorded form at the time of the oral presentation. The candidate making an oral presentation should be prepared to answer questions from the audience/assessor/moderator at the close of the presentation.

The guided professional interview must allow the demonstration of knowledge and understanding by use of open and probing questions that do not lead the candidate. The interview must last from 30 to 45 minutes.

This technique can also be used to ensure sufficiency of evidence by supplementing the report or presentation. In this case the interview will last less than 30 minutes.

Learning objectives that can be achieved through the use of online learning materials: the report must:

- identify the learning objectives the achievement of which is to be facilitated by the use of online materials
- explain why the online delivery of learning materials is appropriate to these learning objectives

The candidate should document the range of available materials identified that address the learning objectives identified. The report or reports should indicate what sources were used to identify suitable materials. In identifying the range of materials available for online delivery the candidate should demonstrate that his/her proposed use would comply with relevant laws, regulations, codes of conduct, procedures, etc.

Select material or materials appropriate to the learning objectives identified: the report must:

- explain how the material selected will address the learning objectives identified
- indicate the criteria used to select the chosen material, eg price, availability, quality, etc. and how the factors were weighted in the decision making process

Select material or materials appropriate to the facilities available for online delivery: the report must:

- demonstrate that the candidate has accurately established the availability of facilities to support the use of learning materials online in his/her instructional context
- explain how the nature of the facilities available influenced the selection and delivery of the chosen learning materials

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Online Learning Materials: Selection and Use

Select material or materials appropriate to learners' abilities: the report must:

- indicate the level of ability his/her learners had attained in the use of information technology in general and online learning in particular
- identify the learning styles and expectations of the candidate's learners that would enable them to benefit from the use of learning material delivery online
- identify those learning styles and expectations that might create barriers for some learners in their use of online learning material
- describe how the candidate acquired this information on the characteristics of his/her learners
- explain how this information on learner abilities, learning styles, and expectations influenced the selection of learning material and its delivery online

Select material or materials that can be used in ways that are inclusive and non-discriminatory: the report must:

- identify the criteria used to assess whether materials under consideration were capable of being used in ways that are inclusive and non-discriminatory
- relate these criteria to current best practice in the use of the inclusive and non-discriminatory use of online learning materials

Evaluation criteria for online learning materials: the report must:

- present the evaluation criteria used to select materials
- relate the chosen evaluation criteria to current best practice
- demonstrate that appropriate technical criteria are included
- demonstrate that appropriate pedagogical criteria are included
- demonstrate that appropriate environmental criteria are included
- demonstrate that the criteria were used to select the materials chosen
- discuss the appropriateness and effectiveness of the criteria in the current context

The report must describe how the chosen learning material or materials will be used with learners. The report must identify the learning strategies and delivery methods necessary to ensure that learners can achieve the identified learning objectives. The report must describe:

- how the chosen material or materials will be delivered to learners
- the tutor input required for learners to make effective use of the material or materials
- preparations required for delivery and the contingency planning required to ensure that learning objectives could be met in the event of technical failure, learner difficulties, etc.

Assessment guidelines for the Unit

The assessment must be based on a report of the candidate's selection of online learning material to meet defined learning objectives and the candidate's specification of the manner in which the material should be used with learners.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Online Learning Materials: Selection and Use

The learning material or materials reported in the case study must:

- have been selected principally by the candidate, within the constraints of the institutional context in which the candidate operates
- be selected for a defined group of learners who could take advantage of the materials
- be selected for a defined group of learners to support their learning

This requirement for the candidate to take responsibility for selecting the learning material or materials does not preclude the candidate from seeking expert guidance or technical assistance. In evaluating potential materials the candidate should seek guidance from Information and Learning Technologies (ILT) specialists where available. The candidate should also seek technical guidance on the specification of materials appropriate for the IT facilities available.

The selected online learning material must be made available to the assessor/moderator. If this is impossible due to licence restrictions or similar, the candidate should provide evidence of the restrictions.

Administrative Information

Unit code: DA3V 34

Unit title: Online Learning Materials: Selection and Use

Superclass category: GB

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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Online Learning Materials: Selection and Use

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 20 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit should be undertaken by tutors/trainers experienced in selecting learning materials for his/her learners. The candidate should be encouraged to reflect on their own experience and training during the Unit. In particular, the candidate should review general principles for selecting learning materials and their effective use as covered in his/her own training.

This Unit is part of the Profession Development Award in Online Learning. Candidates undertaking the full Award should be encouraged to relate their work for this Unit to the others in the Award. Links can be made with Online Learning Theory, Online Learning Materials Design Theory, Online Learning Materials: Design and Preparation Processes, Online Learning: Integration of Conventional and Online Delivery, Online Learning Materials: Reviewing Effectiveness, etc. The activity reported for this Unit may contribute towards assessments undertaken for other Units within this Professional Development Award. The output of this Unit should also contribute towards the consolidation Unit Online Learning: Consolidating Theory and Practice.

Before commencing the Unit, care should be taken to ensure prospective candidates:

- are or have been actively engaged in using online learning materials with his/her learners
- are able to access appropriate information on the availability of learning materials for online delivery
- are able, within their current instructional context, to select materials for use in their teaching
- are able to access ICT facilities that can deliver selected online learning materials to learners
- have learners who can access ICT materials to retrieve learning materials delivered online

When addressing the learning objectives that might be met by online learning materials, candidates should be encouraged to consider:

- specific content areas, eg an online simulation might be employed were learners required to learn how to apply a particular mathematical formula to calculate the maximum safe pressure for a pneumatic system
- objectives of the course beyond content areas, eg participation of learners from socially excluded groups, a reduction in the cost of course delivery, improve achievement rates, etc.
- objectives that might be met by the use of particular online approaches to course delivery, eg video conferencing might contribute towards the objective of extending course delivery to geographically distant learners

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Online Learning Materials: Selection and Use

In identifying learning materials the candidate should be encouraged to look both within and beyond his/her current institution. Appropriate resources for identifying relevant materials should be highlighted. Care should be taken to ensure that the candidate observes:

- the law of copyright and any restrictions it may place on the use of certain materials
- the licence conditions under which the materials were obtained and any restrictions these place on the use of those materials
- the host organisation's policy and procedures for obtaining and deploying materials
- the host organisation's ethical code and/or equal opportunities policies concerning the suitability of learning materials

When identifying appropriate learning strategies and delivery methods, candidates should be encouraged to consider the role of the tutor in ensuring that learning objectives are met by the use of the selected learning material, eg training to access the material, discussion activities related to the material, assignments or learner activities based on the material, preparatory and/or consolidation activities surrounding the use of the material. The report should also explain how the selection of learning strategies, delivery methods, contingency plans, etc. had been informed by:

- the identified learning objectives
- the selected learning material or materials
- the facilities available for the delivery of learning material online
- learners' abilities and information technology skills
- learners' learning styles and expectations

Although this Unit is expressed in generic terms, it should be related to the specific context of the case study. The terminology can be adapted to this context.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

It is recommended that the Unit be delivered wholly or in part through online modes of communication.

Open learning

This Unit could be delivered by open learning. It is recommended that the Unit be delivered wholly or in part through online modes of communication.

Centres should refer to, SQA publication *Assessment and Quality Assurance of Open and Distance Learning* (Code, 2000).

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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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 Arrangements* (SQA, 2001).

General information for candidates

Unit title: Online Learning Materials: Selection and Use

You will explore the main issues that affect the selection and use of learning materials through an online medium. It can also be used to allow those already experienced in selecting and using online learning materials to review and document their practice. On completion of the Unit, you should be able to:

- select appropriate learning materials for delivery online
- prepare to use learning materials delivered online

This Unit is designed for tutors/trainers experienced in selecting learning materials for his/her learners. It is appropriate for tutors/trainers preparing to use online learning materials in their courses or for those already experienced in selecting and using online materials.

This Unit is assessed through a report of the candidate's selection of online learning material to meet defined learning objectives and the candidate's specification of the manner in which the material should be used with learners. The report can be delivered in written form or through oral presentation.