

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: DH40 35

Unit code: Supervision in Care Settings

Unit purpose: To provide candidates with an understanding of the concept and processes of supervision within care services.

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

- ◆ Explain the concept of supervision in care settings.
- ◆ Describe systems of supervision in care settings.
- ◆ Explain the importance of effective communication skills in supervision.
- ◆ Explain how supervision can contribute to individual and organisational development.

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

**SCQF credit 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 SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills Candidates should have good communication skills, both written and oral. These can be evidenced either by the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications for example Higher English or a qualification equivalent to SCQF Level 6 or by the completion of a pre-course interview part of which could take the form of a written assignment. The skills to undertake this Unit could also be demonstrated through an employer's reference or the process of application and interview. In addition to proven communication skills candidates should have preferably undertaken some real work experience, paid or voluntary, in a care setting.

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.

Candidates will have the opportunity to develop the following core skills:

Communication: Oral communication skills may be demonstrated and developed by candidates in relating to individuals in a sensitive manner. Written communication skills will be developed through the production of reports and plans of care.

Working with Others: will be developed, as the case study requires the candidate to undertake the work in collaboration with immediate colleagues, and with people in other agencies.

General information for centres (cont)

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.

It could also be delivered as stand-alone and could be useful as part of a professional development programme.

Assessment: In order to achieve this Unit, candidates are required to present sufficient evidence that they have met all the knowledge and skill requirements for each outcome. Details of these requirements are given for each outcome. An integrative approach to assessment is encouraged.

An understanding of both theory, and its relation to practice, are required for all outcomes. Hence assessment must include both the requirement to discuss various issues, and the opportunity to relate these issues to practice. Where candidates are already working in supervisory situations, it is recommended that they be asked to write about real work situations, as this will enable them to gain evidence for both PCs and Knowledge for SVQ Unit(s). If this is not feasible, then case studies devised by the tutor can be used; in this case, candidates will be able to claim knowledge evidence, but not performance criteria, for the SVQ. Details of the SVQ links can be found in the Support Notes under section 'Guidance on the Delivery and Assessment'

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Supervision in Care Settings

Unit code: DH40 35

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

Explain the concept of supervision in care settings

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Explain the value base underlying the principles of supervision
- ◆ Describe the key objectives of supervision
- ◆ Describe and evaluate key aspects of the supervisory process as it relates to teams and individuals
- ◆ Identify possible organisational constraints on effective supervision

Evidence requirements

The assessment for this outcome should be combined with outcome 2 and take the form of a written assignment.

Candidates must demonstrate an understanding of:

- ◆ The theoretical concept of supervision, and be able to explain the values derived from a range of sources including professional associations
- ◆ The key objects of supervision, in terms of responsibility and accountability, must be demonstrated. This includes the place of supervision within an ethos of continuous improvement
- ◆ Key aspects of the supervisory process, such as regularity, privacy, accountability, of both the worker and the supervisor
- ◆ Confidentiality in relation to teams, staff members and service users
- ◆ The influence of different organisations' approaches to supervision.
- ◆ How to analyse specific models of supervision, as well as different organisational cultures, and identify how this impacts on the work of the supervisor

Assessment guidelines

The assessment for this Outcome should be combined with Outcome 2 – see under Outcome 2 for details.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Supervision in Care Settings

Outcome 2

Describe systems of supervision in care settings

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Describe models of supervision
- ◆ Identify appropriate model(s) of supervision for own workplace

Evidence requirements

The assessment for this outcome will take the form of a written assignment and will be combined with outcome 1.

Candidates must be able to:

- ◆ Explain two different models of supervision, from a larger number taught under knowledge and skills, and be able to compare and contrast these in terms of their objectives and potential impact.
- ◆ Identify an appropriate model for own workplace, and justify the choice in terms of the organisational context in which they work.
- ◆ Identify and explain any other local features which have an impact on the choice of model.

Candidates should examine theoretical approaches of supervision, and compare and contrast two models based on these theories. They should demonstrate an understanding of values, key objectives, key aspects of the process, and organisational constraints. Candidates should then be required to choose one of these models which is appropriate for their own workplace.

Assessment guidelines

The assessment for this Outcome is combined with Outcome 1.

The assignment should include a discussion of the features of working life which the model is required to address. They should identify and explain at least two issues which might create additional challenges. (e.g. inexperienced or unqualified staff; long-term sickness; organisational change at a senior level) and they should explain the ways in which their chosen model would address all these factors.

The completed assessment should be no more than 1500 words.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Supervision in Care Settings

Outcome 3

Explain the importance of effective communication skills in supervision

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Identify effective communication skills in relation to supervision of staff
- ◆ Effectively apply interpersonal skills in relation to supervision of staff
- ◆ Identify effective ways of handling information relating to supervision discussions within the team

Evidence requirements

Candidates must demonstrate an understanding of communication skills, and how they affect the working relationship between supervisor and those being supervised. They must reflect on their own communication skills and explain how they use these to good effect, on more than one occasion, in achieving personal, team and organisational objectives. They must also reflect on the use of written supervision records, and explain their importance in the supervision process.

Where, in exceptional circumstances, candidates do not have current supervision responsibilities, centres should devise case studies which enable an answer which relates theory to the case studies.

Assessment guidelines

This outcome is related to personal performance in the job and requires a reflective approach, and therefore for assessment, three or four reflective accounts could be used, containing the following:

- ◆ Candidates should identify their own skills in communication, evaluating these against models of communication as identified in the literature. The account should be a real example from practice
- ◆ They should also explain how they record supervision discussions, and where and how these records are stored, again in relation to a real-life situation
- ◆ They should discuss how they have used their communication skills in supervision, on more than one occasion. This might be with the same member of staff/volunteer over two occasions, or with two different members of staff/volunteers. The discussion should include an evaluation of their own performance, identifying points for further development where appropriate.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Supervision in Care Settings

Outcome 4

Explain how supervision can contribute to individual and organisational development

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Explain the ways in which the supervisory relationship can contribute to development of individual learning
- ◆ Explain the ways in which the supervisory relationship can contribute to development of team learning
- ◆ Explain the ways in which the supervisory relationship can contribute to organisational development

Evidence requirements

Candidates must examine different ways of identifying the learning needs of staff and of teams. This must include a review of the key objectives of supervision; and an exploration of the best way to achieve these through supervision. They must discuss different ways of assessing performance in all three areas:- individual, team, or organisational objectives.

Candidates should identify individual, team and development goals from their own work setting, explaining their sources or reasoning in doing so. They should explain in depth how at least one key point from each of these three lists (i.e. individual, team, organisation) has been addressed through the supervision process; and evaluate that process in terms of its effectiveness in meeting those needs.

Assessment guidelines

This outcome could be assessed by a written assignment.

Administrative Information

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Unit title:	Supervision in Care Settings
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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Supervision in Care Settings

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

Although the unit is expressed in generic terms, it should be related to the context in which the candidate is placed or employed: for example, working with children, young people, adults or older people; and the type of support or care that is offered.

Outcome 1

In terms of values, candidates should be introduced to various codes of ethics, including that of the British Association of Social Workers, and others relating to different organisations or groups of individuals they work with. They ought to be able to compare and contrast their own organisation's value statements with those of relevant national and international bodies.

These values will include, fundamentally, the place of supervision as a means of ensuring best practice in relation to individuals receiving care. They will also include an acknowledgement of the needs of individual workers and teams for clarity and direction; and for individual and team development. Candidates should be able to identify where these values are located in organisational policy.

With regard to continuous improvement of standards, it would be helpful to discuss the concept of benchmarking, which has become popular in recent years. The Scottish Executive's Best Value Initiative is a good example of a benchmarking system, and should enable candidates to ground their ideas about good standards in a wider care context.

For comprehensive coverage on all issues related to supervision, you might refer your candidates to such texts as Brown and Bourne (1998) 'Social Work Supervision in Community, Day Care and Residential Settings' (Open University Press); or Coulshed and Mullender (2000), 'Management in Social Work' (Palgrave). Although aimed primarily at candidates undertaking the SVQ Registered Manager in Health and Social Care Level 4, Welsh and Maclean's 'Managing Care: Meeting the Requirements of the Registered Managers Award' (Kirwin Maclean) provides a practical approach to theory.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supervision in Care Settings

Outcome 2

Candidates should be able to identify and discuss models of supervision that take as their starting point an emphasis on either achievement of tasks, or support of staff members, and to accurately describe the benefits and disadvantages of both of these positions. An appreciation of the relationship and potential tensions between task-focused and people-focused supervision approaches will be required. The distinction between staff supervision and staff appraisal should be clear, with an understanding of the relationship between the two. They should be aware of other features which might affect the model – eg shift patterns or working with volunteers.

Delegation of work should be discussed, and candidates should be able to explain the appropriate use of delegating work to others, and the implications of this for good team performance. This should include recognition of situations where staff might be reluctant to accept delegated tasks, and some comment on how to overcome this.

An awareness of motivation theories should be demonstrated, along with the arguments for staff being involved in decisions regarding their work. Classic theories of involvement and motivation which provide an essential background include those of Maslow (e.g. 1968, 'Towards a Psychology of Motivation', Harper Collins) and McGregor (e.g. 1966, 'Leadership and Motivation – the Essays of Douglas McGregor', M.I.T. Press)

Candidates will find it helpful to look at theories relating to team types. Classic theories such as that of Belbin (e.g. Belbin (1993) 'Team Roles at Work', Butterworth Heineman) will enable them to understand how people with different strengths can contribute to the work of a team, and how a team's functioning will be affected by different 'team types'.

Candidates should show an understanding of the need to match specific tasks to appropriate people and their identified learning needs.

In identifying an appropriate model of supervision for their own workplace, candidates should not be constrained by the model that is actually in place, but should propose a model that would best meet their analysis of the needs of the organisation, the team, and individuals. If they feel the existing model is the most appropriate one, they should still analyse it in these terms. This model should take account of theoretical concepts, and also identify practicalities including frequency, means of recording decisions taken, and how progress is reviewed.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supervision in Social Settings

Outcome 3: Candidates should have an understanding of the interplay of verbal, non-verbal, and written means of communication in the supervision process, and should demonstrate an insight into their own behaviour in this respect. Different models of communication should be explained, and the candidate should be able to identify his/her own preferred model. For communication, Greenbaum's 1974 model of four main objectives for managers in organisational communication will provide a useful starting point (Greenbaum, 1974, 'The Audit of Organisational Communications', Academy of Management Journal Vol 17, pages 739-754). In terms of giving feedback, candidates should be encouraged to relate their approach to what they have learned about motivation; and also to link feedback to goals, as previously set. Welsh and Maclean's book as mentioned above provides a useful section on giving feedback.

Candidates should demonstrate clear understanding of the respective roles of themselves and the person being supervised, and show how they communicate those roles in practice.

They should examine different means of setting an agenda; agreeing objectives; monitoring, reviewing and updating these; and giving feedback. They should explore the impact of feedback on individuals and teams, including praise for work well accomplished, as well as comment regarding work that has not quite met objectives and highlights a need for staff development.

They should discuss the importance of record-keeping in relation to supervision, and identify issues relating to this, such as confidentiality, and potential for interface with other systems such as legal evidence relating to service user issues; or grievance and disciplinary procedures. They should know their organisation's policy with regard to ownership of supervision records and how these may be used, and be able to evaluate that policy against best practice.

Outcome 4

For assessing performance against objectives, candidates should revisit the setting of goals, on an organisational, team, and individual basis. They should consider the place of both proactive and reactive approaches to practice, being able to discuss ways of dealing with situations where practice requires further development, as well as ways of organising supervisory relationships so as to enhance the likelihood of good team and individual performance.

Different approaches to staff development and training could be covered here. This includes how to set up appropriate induction programmes for staff new to a job or a role. While many candidates will be working in organisations which have a centralised approach to training and workforce development, the important role of the supervisor in identifying individual learning needs should be discussed.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supervision in Social Settings

Candidates should examine different ways of identifying the learning needs of staff and of teams. This should include both the needs of new staff, and of those who have been working in the job for some time. They should be able to show how a new member of staff can be supported through supervision in terms of agreeing an appropriate induction programme, implementing and monitoring this, and providing opportunities for discussion.

Candidates should be able to discuss different approaches to supervision which would be effective for staff at different stages in their career, or with different development needs.

The key objectives of supervision – those of setting and achieving goals, developing individuals, and developing teams, must be explored. This should include an exploration of ‘trouble-shooting’ – what a supervisor can do in a supervisory situation to correct situations which are not going according to plan. Candidates must be able to identify the connections between supervision of individuals and teams, and the achievement of individual, team or organisational goals. They should be able to identify whether individual or team supervision is more appropriate for the achievement of different goals.

They should be able to discuss ways of assessing the learning needs of teams, and how team supervision approaches can be used to address issues of various kinds in the team. These issues might relate to interpersonal issues; organisational issues; or issues relating to the work of the team.

Candidates should be able to discuss different ways of assessing performance against individual, team, or organisational objectives.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This unit should enable the candidate to demonstrate a level of supervisory practice suitable for employment in the Care sector.

While there is a need for some straightforward teaching of theoretical concepts, it will be helpful to candidates to allow time for reflection on these, and to provide opportunities for the analysis of supervisory practice within their own and other organisations. Small group work and large class discussions will be useful. It might be helpful also to devise role play opportunities, for exploring communication skills in, for example, giving feedback.

Candidates should, nevertheless, be encouraged, and indeed expected, to undertake a fair amount of background reading to prepare them for assessment at this level.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supervision in Social Settings

Links to SVQ Units

This HN Unit provides some of the underpinning knowledge for the following SVQ Units:

HSC43 Take responsibility for the continuing professional development of self and others

HSC48 Demonstrate a style of leadership that ensures an organisational culture of open and participatory management and practice

HSC446 Manage a dispersed workforce to meet the needs and preferences of individuals at home

HSC451 Lead teams to support a quality provision

If candidates are currently working in supervisory situations and write about real work situations then this may also provide evidence for PCs for the SVQ Units.

It is anticipated that this Unit will mainly be of interest and relevance only to those candidates who already occupy a supervisory position; or who expect in the near future to be taking on a supervisory role. Those already in a supervisory role will be able to take full advantage of the SVQ links; those not yet in a supervisory role will be able to generate Knowledge Evidence but not Performance Criteria for the SVQ Units.

Open learning

This Unit is suitable for open learning. Care should however be taken to ensure that the candidate has adequate opportunity in the workplace to investigate different aspects of supervision. If the candidate wants to undertake the SVQ Unit as well as the HN Unit, they must be in a supervisory role within their organisation, and a representative of their organisation, usually either their manager or the training manager, must give a written commitment to co-operating with the assessment process.

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: Supervision in Social Settings

This Unit takes a close look at supervision and its place in the work of care teams. It aims to provide a good background and theoretical knowledge which will then enable you to develop skills appropriate to the task of supervision.

The Unit has four outcomes, which examine:

- ◆ what supervision is, and what it aims to achieve
- ◆ features of effective leadership
- ◆ communication in supervision
- ◆ assessing performance against objectives

You will be expected to undertake a fair amount of background reading for this Unit, relevant to the level at which it is assessed (SCQF level 8). You will then need to analyse those theories in terms of your own supervisory practice, and that of others.

The assessments for the Unit reflect the dual purpose of knowledge and skills, in that there is a theoretical component for each outcome, and a component in which you are asked to relate that theory to practice. If you are working in a supervisory position, and use real situations to discuss in the practical parts of the assessments, you will be able to gain evidence for SVQ Units.