

## Higher National Unit Specification

### General information for centres

**Unit title:** Learning and Development: Competence Based Assessment

**Unit code:** DN3C 34

**Unit purpose:** This unit is designed to enable candidates to develop the skills and knowledge required to devise and implement competence based assessments

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

1. Explain the principles and purposes of competence based assessment.
2. Devise instruments of assessment for the collection of performance and knowledge evidence.
3. Carry out competence based assessment and give feedback.

**Credit points and level:** 1 HN Credit at SCQF level 7 (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7\*)

*\*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:** Access to this unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, candidates would normally be expected to have competence in communication skills at Intermediate 2 (SCQF Level 5) or similar qualifications or experience and some knowledge of the training cycle and the trainer's role within it.

**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. This Unit is included as a mandatory option in the framework of the HNC Learning and Development.

**Assessment strategy:** This unit will be assessed by written and performance evidence. The candidate will produce a report and devise 2 instruments of assessment. Evidence of candidate performance will be generated through the candidate assessing knowledge and performance evidence, recording the evidence and outcomes and providing feedback to a candidate. There must be arrangements in place to ensure the authenticity of the work produced.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards**

**Unit title:** Learning and Development: Competence Based Assessment

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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**

Explain the principles and purposes of competence based assessment

#### **Knowledge**

- ◆ Purposes of assessment (diagnostic, formative, summative).
- ◆ Key features, strengths and weaknesses of competence based assessment.
- ◆ Types and sources of evidence.
- ◆ How the principles of assessment relate to competence based assessment.

#### **Evidence requirements**

Candidates will provide a written report of 750 words to demonstrate his or her knowledge and understanding of competence based assessment. Further guidance is given in Outcome 2.

#### **Assessment guidelines**

The evidence for this Outcome is combined with the evidence for Outcome 2 and could be a report/commentary detailing the candidate's understanding of competence based assessment and justifying their choice of assessment instruments in Outcome 2.

### **Outcome 2**

Devise instruments of assessment for the collection of performance and knowledge evidence

#### **Knowledge and skills**

- ◆ Selection of appropriate assessment methods
- ◆ Design of assessment instruments
- ◆ Guidance and support material
- ◆ Alternative assessment opportunities.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Learning and Development: Competence Based Assessment

### **Evidence requirements**

Candidates will provide documentary evidence to demonstrate their skills and/or knowledge by:

- ◆ designing two instruments of assessment (1 each for performance and knowledge or 2 which combine the assessment of knowledge and performance).
- ◆ The assessment documentation must include guidance and support information for both candidates and assessors and detail the opportunities for alternative assessments.
- ◆ The rationale will demonstrate the knowledge and skills for both outcomes by explaining the purposes and key features of assessment and, analysing the types/sources of evidence and justifying their choice.

### **Assessment guidelines**

Candidates will need to identify a set/sets of competence based criteria covering both performance and knowledge evidence. The unit of competence may be selected by the candidate or provided by the Centre. The evidence for this Outcome is combined with the evidence for Outcome 1.

## **Outcome 3**

Carry out competence based assessment and give feedback

### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- ◆ Practical application of the principles of assessment
- ◆ How to record evidence against criteria.
- ◆ How to record outcomes of assessment against agreed criteria.
- ◆ How to give feedback to candidates.
- ◆ How to help candidates identify opportunities to develop their competence.

### **Evidence requirements**

Candidates will provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can carry out competence based assessments.

- ◆ The candidate will apply the principles of competence based assessment to a real or simulated assessment, record evidence and outcomes.
- ◆ The candidate will also demonstrate effective and appropriate feedback skills and help the learner to identify further opportunities to develop competence.

Assessment of performance should be recorded on a checklist.

### **Assessment guidelines**

Candidates will provide evidence that they can assess the evidence; complete assessments records and provide written/oral feedback. The assessment could be a simulation provided by the centre in the form of a case study where learners are provided with a set of criteria, candidate evidence, assessment records and assessor guidance. (Video/audio tape or demonstration could be used to provide the candidates with an opportunity to assess using observation).

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Learning and Development: Competence Based Assessment

Candidates could also carry out the above using the instruments of assessment designed in Outcome 2.

## **Administrative Information**

<b>Unit code:</b>	DN3C 34
<b>Unit title:</b>	Learning and Development: Competence Based Assessment
<b>Superclass category:</b>	GE
<b>Date of publication:</b>	August 2004
<b>Version:</b>	01
<b>Source:</b>	SQA

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## Higher National Unit specification: support notes

### Unit title: Learning and Development: Competence Based Assessment

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 designed to enable candidates to develop the practical skills and knowledge to design and carry out competence based assessments.

The principal context will be the training environment with evidence generated by reports, commentaries and documentary evidence. There may also be observation of the candidate carrying out an assessment and/or providing feedback to a learner.

The Unit is designed to be practical in content with sufficient underpinning knowledge to support performance.

For Outcome 1 and Outcome 2 candidates will need a broad understanding of the form and purpose of competence based assessment and how it differs from other types of assessment. The following list is offered as a guideline only:

**Outcome 1** examines the principles and purposes of competence based assessment. Learners should be made aware of:

- ◆ Purposes of assessment: diagnostic, formative and summative.
- ◆ The assessment process.
- ◆ Main features of competence-based assessment systems [Criterion referenced competence statements, assessment of ability to perform real or simulated work tasks, covers performance and knowledge evidence, assessment decision is one where the candidate is either competent, not yet competent or evidence is insufficient].
- ◆ Differences between competence based and non-competence based assessment.
- ◆ Examples of competence-based assessment systems [eg S/NVQS].
- ◆ Range of sources of evidence: [observation of natural performance, examination of product, simulation, questioning, project, candidate report, evidence from others, accreditation of prior achievement/ learning]
- ◆ Advantages and limitations of using these sources of evidence.
- ◆ The principles of assessment [validity, reliability, currency, sufficiency, authenticity and fairness]. Cost-effectiveness should also be considered
- ◆ Internal and external quality assurance of competence-based assessment systems.
- ◆ An awareness of the impact of current legislation on assessment practice

**Outcome 2** looks at how to design instruments of assessment to collect knowledge and performance evidence. Learners should be made aware of:

- ◆ What evidence specifications are and the requirements for collecting and assuring the quality of performance and knowledge evidence.
- ◆ How to select appropriate assessment methods for the collection of performance evidence: observation, product, simulation, witness testimony, candidate report, skill

## Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

### Unit title: Learning and Development: Competence Based Assessment

- ◆ Types of assessment instruments available for collecting and recording performance and knowledge evidence: observation, product checklists, witness testimony sheets, candidate report outlines, skill tests instructions, project briefs, written test sheets, written questions sheets, oral question sheets, pre-set question sheets, assessor devised questions, multiple choice question sheets
- ◆ Ways of guiding assessors in the use of assessment instruments: cross referenced checklists, model answers, guidance on how to structure tests, simulations, assignments [number of applications, location, allowable variances].
- ◆ How to assist with special assessment requirements
- ◆ Uses of Computer Aided Assessment [CAA]

**Outcome 3** looks at how to carry out assessment and give feedback. The learner should be made aware of:

- ◆ The importance of ensuring the principles of assessment [validity, reliability, sufficiency, currency, authenticity] are taken into account when carrying out assessment,
- ◆ How to record evidence and outcomes of assessment against criteria
- ◆ Importance of valid checklists and ensuring records provide an auditable trail of evidence
- ◆ Ways of ensuring consistency [standardisation activities, internal verification]
- ◆ Principle features of effective feedback [immediate, specific, non-judgemental, positive, linked to criteria]
- ◆ Advantages and limitations of different types of feedback: [directive and non-directive]
- ◆ Outline ways of guiding candidates in identifying opportunities to develop competence
- ◆ How and when to carry out progress reviews
- ◆ Benefits of carrying out progress reviews.

### Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

Candidates should be encouraged to generate evidence of achievement from all available sources. Direct observation, oral questioning, case studies and written/documentary evidence would be appropriate methods of assessment for this Unit.

The main focus of this Unit is the design, use and review of assessment instruments and candidates should have several opportunities to prepare for the summative assessment

### Open learning

This unit is suitable for open and distance learning delivery. The assessment strategy and guidelines described in this specification must still be applied if this method of delivery is chosen. For further information and advice, please see *Assessment and Quality Assurance for Open and Distance Learning* [SQA, 2001]

## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)**

**Unit title:** Learning and Development: Competence Based Assessment

### **Candidates with additional support needs**

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs*, which is available on the SQA website [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk).



## **General information for candidates**

**Unit title:** Learning and Development: Competence Based Assessment

### **What this unit is about**

This Unit is about the knowledge and skills you need to carry out competence based assessment. Competence based assessment is when you assess someone's ability to perform tasks in real or simulated work roles. The assessor examines evidence of learners' performance and knowledge and assesses whether the candidates meet specific criteria or outcomes. These criteria link to standards of performance required in the workplace. Scottish/ National Vocational Qualifications are examples of competence-based assessment system using national standards. Many organisations have also developed their own internal competence based assessment systems.

### **What you will learn**

You will learn about

- ◆ The key features of a competence based assessment system
- ◆ How to design effective and purposeful assessments
- ◆ How to decide whether a candidate is competent or not
- ◆ How to give feedback to candidates.

### **On completion of the units you should be able to:**

- 1) Explain the principles and purposes of competence based assessment.
- 2) Devise instruments of assessment for competence based assessment.
- 3) Carry out competence based assessment and give feedback.