Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Learner Support: Support Strategies — Key Function

Unit code: DP9D 34

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to enable the candidate to develop the knowledge and skills required for the key support strategies used in supporting learning. On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to apply the four key functions of reading/proofreading, scribing, note-taking.

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

1   Prepare written material for a student with additional learning needs and communicate orally to the student.
2   Edit and proof-read the work of a student with additional learning needs.
3   Develop a clear set of notes to meet the purpose and needs of the student with additional learning needs.
4   Undertake the task of scribing for a student with additional learning needs.

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: Candidates should have good interpersonal skills and good written and oral communication skills. It is also desirable that candidates have good command of English. This could be evidenced by a pass in Higher English or by successful achievement of SVQ in a related area at level 3.

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

Context for delivery: This Unit is one of a series of Units for candidates following a training programme for Learning Assistants/Facilitators who will require to carry out a number of functions to support learners with additional support needs within an educational context. This is one of six Units, which form the Professional Development Award (PDA) Advanced Certificate: Learner Support. The Unit will normally be delivered as part of the Group Award. However, it is a free-standing Unit and may be delivered independently for Continuing Professional Development purposes.

General information for centres (cont)

Assessment: This Unit should be assessed holistically by both observation of performance of tasks and by a portfolio of evidence of the written tasks. The Unit is assessed by the candidate performing the tasks preferably in a live situation and as part of his/her normal work practice, but if this is not achievable, they could be undertaken through role-play. The evidence should arise naturally out of the tasks.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Learner Support: Support Strategies — Key Function

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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

Prepare written material for a candidate with additional learning needs and communicate orally with the candidate

Knowledge and/or skills

♦ Learning styles
♦ Structure of text for reading
♦ Punctuation and text features which may affect meaning
♦ Structure and language features (eg bold text)
♦ When to seek subject specialist help from lecturer
♦ Ground rules with candidate eg stop, continue, repeat
♦ Use of clear, audible voice at reasonable pace
♦ Respecting confidentiality
♦ Various recording materials used

Evidence Requirements

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

♦ apply techniques that take account of the candidate's learning style
♦ prepare text for reading, ensuring appropriateness of material
♦ identify features which may affect meaning
♦ seek specialist help from lecturer when required
♦ read in an effective manner
♦ ensure boundaries of confidentiality are respected
♦ maintain a record of materials read to student(s)
♦ select appropriate recording methods

Assessment guidelines

Outcome 1 is assessed by observation of performance of tasks and by written submissions to the portfolio. Candidates will be required to prepare text samples and to read these to a student, either live or by tape. Each submission should include evidence of preparation with the student and with lecturing and other appropriate staff. Evidence of student needs and preferences should also be included. Written evidence should include notes from conversations and notes made with students.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Learner Support: Support Strategies — Key Function

Outcome 2

Edit and proof-read the work of a student with additional learning needs

Knowledge and/or skills

- Student's learning style and preferences
- Structure of text for purpose
- Punctuation and text features which may affect meaning
- Structure and language features (eg bold text)
- When to seek subject specialist help from lecturer
- Boundary guidelines
- Editing skills
- Communicating skills
- Editing conventions
- Recordkeeping

Evidence Requirements

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

- take account of student's learning style
- decide with others on extent of editing required
- edit texts to a specific requirement using a standard notation
- edit errors of meaning, fact, grammar, spelling, punctuation and typing
- avoid imposing personal taste on text
- edit tables
- communicate effectively taking account of candidate preferences
- ensure the boundaries of confidentiality are respected
- maintain a record of notes taken and delivered

Assessment guidelines

This Outcome will be assessed by written evidence of editing and proof-reading a text. Evidence should be a copy of actual work undertaken for a student which has been validated by the student. Evidence of student feedback would also be required. These submissions should also be included in the portfolio.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Learner Support: Support Strategies — Key Function

Outcome 3

Develop a clear set of notes to meet the purpose and needs of the student with additional learning needs

Knowledge and/or skills

♦   Learning styles
♦   Awareness of additional learning needs and how that might impact on task
♦   Note-taking styles (eg linear, diagrammatic)
♦   Listening, vocabulary, investigation, summarising, and memorising skills
♦   Note-taking conventions
♦   Motivational skills

Evidence Requirements

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

♦   present samples of note taking to meet student's needs
♦   apply note-taking styles
♦   apply note-taking conventions
♦   ensure that notes will motivate students

Assessment guidelines

This Outcome is assessed by submission of completed notes and samples of text which must include three different styles of note-taking. At least one of these should include transcribing hand-written notes into an electronic version for delivery either on disc or by e-mail to the student. Evidence of student feedback is also required. These submissions should be include in the portfolio.

Outcome 4

Undertake the task of scribing for a student with additional learning needs

Knowledge and/or skills

♦   Understanding student's learning style
♦   Conventions of scribing
♦   Knowledge of subject vocabulary
♦   Recording conventions for dictated responses
♦   Handwriting and/or word processing skills
♦   Range of recording media
♦   Clear reading voice
♦   Understanding of graphical and tabular conventions
♦   Role boundaries and responsibilities
♦   Examination and assessment guidance

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title:

Evidence Requirements

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

♦ take account of student's learning style
♦ apply conventions of scribing
♦ use legible handwriting and/or word processing skills
♦ record dictated responses from student(s)
♦ use a clear reading voice
♦ demonstrate awareness of roles, boundaries and responsibilities
♦ understand examination and assessment guidelines and instructions and be able to articulate these to the student

Assessment guidelines

This Outcome will be assessed as part of the holistic assessment of the Unit by:

♦ observation of the candidate scribing for a student within an assessment environment and recording these assessments by audio-tape or other suitable medium. The scribed work should be assessed for accuracy.
♦ a short written report which should provide evidence of the candidate's knowledge of examination body guidelines (where appropriate), liaison with lecturer and student, knowledge of subject-specific vocabulary, layout of the environment and assessment methodology.

Administrative Information

Unit code: DP9D 34

Unit title: Learner Support: Support Strategies — Key Function

Superclass category: GB

Original date of publication: March 2006

Version: 01

History of Changes:

Version	Description of change	Date

Source: SQA

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Learner Support: Support Strategies — Key Function

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 development of the PDA, Advanced Certificate: Learner Support, has been initiated as a response to changes within the FE sector influenced by the amended DDA (Disability Discrimination Act 1995) and the Beattie Inclusiveness Agenda. As a result, the sector has taken a pro-active approach to ensure that it both meets the needs and encourages participation of individuals with diverse needs. To do this, many of the FE colleges in Scotland have employed learning facilitators/learning assistants to provide, as appropriate, support to learners with additional support needs. In the main, appropriate college lecturing staff have been provided with the opportunity of further training, through the BRITE Initiative (Beattie Resources for Inclusiveness in Technology and Education) to ensure that the needs of learners can be met. It has been through this activity that the need for a training course for learning facilitators has emerged. This PDA therefore formalises training for such individuals to ensure that we are delivering a quality provision for all learners.

Outcome 1 introduces the candidate to the knowledge and skills required in preparing written materials for students with additional learning needs. Candidates will learn how to communicate effectively and sensitively with the student regarding his/her needs and the task in hand. This will include the level of detail required, agreeing commands for stopping, continuing and repeating. Candidates should be made aware of strategies for tackling unusual features when preparing text materials as well as recognising boundaries of confidentiality. Learning styles will be explored as will reading/delivery methods and recording methodology.

For Outcome 2, attention should be given to the need for accurate proof-reading and developing editing skills. Presenting information text in note and tabular form should be explored Candidates should be given the opportunity to work with a variety of text styles, eg instructions, theoretical, independent learning/research.

Candidates should also be made aware of the importance of communicating clearly and appropriately to students to meet their needs.

For Outcome 3, note-taking conventions should be explored. Note-taking styles, eg diagrammatic, linear, should be discussed. The importance of skills in listening, summarising, memorising and motivation should be discussed in the context of supporting the learner.

Candidates will also need to be made aware of the impact of any additional learning needs the student might have on his/her ability to achieve.

In Outcome 4, candidates will explore the practical aspects of scribing for individual students. This Outcome is practically focussed on developing the skills required. Standard conventions for scribing and recording should be discussed. Conventions relating to information/text in graphical or tabular form should also be explored. The range of recording media should be detailed with focus on selecting appropriate media to meet the learner's needs. Candidates should also be made aware of the boundaries and responsibilities of their role and of the need for confidentiality. The practical aspects

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (notes)

Unit title: Learner Support: Support Strategies — Key Function

of assessment/examination procedures/instructions etc should be explored in the context of how these will impact on the learner as candidates will be expected to be able to inform learners on the conduct of examinations/assessments.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

As an SQA course, the PDA or single Units can be delivered by any approved centre. However, a partnership approach is envisaged. Access Centres are best placed to deliver and assess particular aspects of training. Colleges will however require to support and mentor their learning facilitators on an on-going basis ensuring that they get access to learners, facilities and materials to support the generation of evidence for the award. The award has been designed to ensure that a higher percentage of the evidence for knowledge and skills relates to real-life practice. It is candidate centred and the delivery model should ensure that candidates develop the skill of independent learning.

The evidence should arise naturally out of the tasks, and it will also include reflective statements by the candidate on his/her experience. Where possible, each Outcome should focus on a different support need. At least 3 different types of support needs should be focussed on over the four Outcomes.

Outcome 1

Each submission should include evidence of preparation with the student (with additional support needs), lecturing staff and other appropriate staff and demonstrate knowledge of students' needs and preferences.

An awareness of the boundaries of confidentiality and respect for these must be demonstrated by the candidate and observed by the assessor.

At least three types of text (independent learning text, theoretical text, instructions etc) for three different additional needs should be assessed, as this will allow the candidate to demonstrate a wider range of skills.

The candidate will need to demonstrate an ability to read audibly and clearly and to identify structure (chapters, headings, sub-headings), punctuation (bullet points, bold type) and any unusual features which may affect the meaning of the text to the listener. Tables will be described methodically and clearly, using appropriate vocabulary.

Evidence of student (with additional support needs) feedback would also be required.

Outcome 2

Each submission should include evidence of preparation with the student (with additional support needs), lecturing staff and other appropriate staff and demonstrate knowledge of student needs and preferences.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (notes)

Unit title: Learner Support: Support Strategies — Key Function

The candidate will need to communicate effectively and sensitively with others regarding the student's needs and the task — the level of detail required, the notation used in editing, and any further necessary information determined in editing the text. An awareness of the boundaries of confidentiality and respect for these must be observed in the candidate's responses.

At least three types of text (eg essay, science report, text with diagrams) for three different additional needs should be assessed as this will allow the candidate to demonstrate a wider range of skills. (Text of around 800 words with 50 errors — candidate must identify at least 45 errors correctly — pass mark should be 90%).

The candidate will need to demonstrate an ability to edit according to set specifications (eg edit for spelling). A standard notation will be employed. Notes or queries recorded in the left-hand margin must be clear for others to understand. Notes on notation used will be clear for students to follow. A note to submit with final copy of report should be added.

Evidence of student feedback would also be required.

Candidates will need evidence to demonstrate their skills and/or knowledge by editing a text sample according to set criteria or a combination of set criteria, eg spelling and/or meaning.

Each submission should include evidence of preparation with the candidate, lecturing staff and other appropriate staff and demonstrate knowledge of candidate needs and preferences.

The candidate will need to be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with others regarding the candidates' needs and the task — the level of detail required, the notation used in editing, and any further necessary information determined in editing the text. An awareness of the boundaries of confidentiality and respect for these must be observed in the candidate's responses.

At least three types of text (eg essay, science report, text with diagrams) proof-read for a candidate with additional support needs should be assessed as this will allow the candidate to demonstrate a wider range of skills. (Text of around 800 words with 50 errors — candidate must identify at least 45 errors correctly — pass mark is 90%).

The candidate will need to demonstrate an ability to edit according to set specifications (eg edit for spelling.) A standard notation will be employed. Notes or queries recorded in the left-hand margin must be clear for others to understand. Notes on notation used will be clear for candidates to follow. A note to submit with final copy of report should be added.

Evidence of student feedback would also be required.

Outcome 3

The candidate will demonstrate their knowledge and skills by presenting samples of note-taking to meet student need and be fit for purpose.

Each submission should include evidence of preparation with the student, lecturing staff and other appropriate staff and demonstrate knowledge of student needs and preferences.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (notes)

Unit title: Learner Support: Support Strategies — Key Functions

The candidate will need to communicate effectively and sensitively with others regarding the student's needs and the task — effective note-taking strategies, note-taking conventions and deliver readable and usable notes in an agreed time frame. An awareness of the boundaries of confidentiality and respect for these must be observed in the candidate's responses.

Submissions should include 3 different styles of note-taking in 3 different subjects for 3 different additional needs, and at least one of which would include transcribing handwritten notes into an electronic version for delivery either on disc or by email to the candidate. The final version of the notes should reflect the preferences of the student. Evidence of student feedback would also be required.

Outcome 4

This Outcome covers the practical tasks associated with scribing. As such, it should cover learning styles, scribing conventions, recording conventions, knowledge of graphical and tabular conventions. Role boundaries and responsibilities should be explored. Examination procedures and assessment guidance should also be discussed. The Outcome should be assessed by observation of the candidate scribing for a student and the resulting text assessed for accuracy. A short written report (as described below) will also be required.

The portfolio submission should include a short written report, which should provide evidence of the candidate's knowledge of examination body guidelines, liaison with the lecturer and candidate, subject specific vocabulary, layout of the environment, and assessment methodology. There should also be evidence of student feedback.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills in this Unit. However, there are clear opportunities for candidates to develop aspects of the Core Skills in Communication, particularly Written Communication (all Outcomes) and Oral Communication (Outcomes 1 and 4) and Working with Others (particularly in Outcomes 1 and 4).

Open learning

This Unit is suitable for delivering a variety of modes including open, distance and blended learning.

Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs

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. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (**www.sqa.org.uk**).

General information for candidates

Unit title: Learner Support: Support Strategies — Key Function

This is a very practical Unit which will enable you to develop the skills required to support learners in an educational setting. You will learn how to take notes/dictation for learners with additional learning needs (scribing/note-taking); standard conventions developed for this and for recording. You will learn how to edit and proof-read students' work. You will also learn presentation techniques in text, note-taking, tabular and graphical formats — there will be practical exercises and direct work with students (this may be by role-play where this is appropriate).