

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Work Experience

Unit code: DV0M 34

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to offer a work experience opportunity to candidates. It is intended for candidates who will benefit from a work experience as an integral part of their course of study. The work experience should allow candidates an opportunity to gain experience of the world of work. Candidates will be able to understand and evaluate their roles, responsibilities and personal experiences.

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

- 1 Plan and organise the work experience.
- 2 Undertake the work experience.
- 3 Evaluate the work experience.

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 will be required to demonstrate communication, and personal and interpersonal skills at SCQF level 6. Ideally candidates should have undertaken some work experience or employment. Candidates would benefit from having some experience of working with others at Intermediate 2.

Core Skills: The achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Problem Solving at SCQF level 6 (Higher)

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 should be assessed by adopting a holistic approach to assessing whole Outcomes or a combination of Outcomes.

Candidates are required to plan, organise, undertake and evaluate their work experience. The associated activities should provide significant opportunities for candidates to gather and present evidence in their portfolio detailing their achievement of the Unit's Outcomes.

General information for centres (cont)

Unit title: Work Experience

At SCQF Level 7 candidates will be expected to take account of their roles and responsibilities related to the work being carried out and to take a significant role in the evaluation of the work experience including recognition of practices and processes.

Successful achievement of this Unit will result in the completion of a portfolio of assessment evidence generated by the candidate. The candidate will also participate in a discussion with their tutor regarding the knowledge and development gained as a result of the work experience.

An Assessment Exemplar for this Unit has been produced to indicate the National Standards required at SCQF Level 7.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Work Experience

Unit code: DV0M 34

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

Please refer to *Knowledge and/or skills for the Unit* and *Evidence requirements for the Unit* after the Outcomes.

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. Sampling is not appropriate for this Unit as candidates are aware of the content of the portfolio. However, the specific details will vary depending on the candidate and their particular work experience opportunity.

Outcome 1

Plan and organise the work experience

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ how to construct a CV
- ◆ ways to identify own work experience needs and set personal objectives
- ◆ be able to source potential employers (work experience providers)
- ◆ how to secure the work experience
- ◆ how to communicate, inform and liaise appropriately with tutor and work experience provider
- ◆ how to organise, negotiate and identify own role in work experience
- ◆ to understand what is expected of a candidate within a specific job role and within a work environment

Evidence Requirements

To achieve this Outcome at SCQF Level 7 candidates will need evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and skills by presenting a portfolio of assessment evidence which clearly shows the planning and organising of the work experience.

This would contain and cover the following:

- ◆ a CV which is clear and accurate and presented in an appropriate format incorporating a personal statement and highlighting the candidate's skills, qualities and educational achievements
- ◆ a review which outlines clearly and with justification the candidate's proposed personal objectives for undertaking the work experience. This should identify specific experiences which will enhance their work profile
- ◆ evidence of the identification and selection of the work experience and of the processes undertaken to locate and secure this position

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Work Experience

- ◆ evidence that the choice of work experience is justified in terms of the candidates' personal objectives
- ◆ documentation showing that candidates discussed with their tutor and/or work experience provider the opportunities to meet their personal objectives whilst undertaking their work experience
- ◆ at this level the candidate must take responsibility for the placement ensuring a working contract or brief is obtained and/or negotiated and presented in their portfolio of evidence
- ◆ candidates must clearly outline their roles and responsibilities within their chosen work experience

Assessment guidelines

The assessment for this Outcome can be combined with Outcomes 2 and 3 and takes the form of a portfolio of assessment evidence that is built up and added to over the course of the three Outcomes.

Candidates should be made aware of the need to gather and present evidence in their portfolio which demonstrates their achievement of the Unit Outcomes.

Please refer to the assessment guidelines section of Outcome 3.

Outcome 2

Undertake the work experience

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ be able to document and record the work experience
- ◆ be able to plan, monitor and review own performance and progress in meeting personal objectives in the work experience
- ◆ how to undertake continuous improvement and implement improvement strategies
- ◆ how to collaborate with others to support good working relationships
- ◆ know how to apply problem solving strategies
- ◆ know how to identify one area of development within the work experience and analyse it and identify possible solutions
- ◆ be able to communicate effectively and discuss performance with line manager and/or tutor and gain feedback on personal performance
- ◆ know how to research the organisation and source information on the overall organisation business and where the candidate's role fits into the structure
- ◆ know how to recognise and effectively apply policies or legislation appropriate to the work experience

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Work Experience

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need evidence to demonstrate their skills and/or knowledge by showing that they can undertake a work experience and take responsibility for carrying out a range of activities whilst seeking to achieve their personal objectives.

The Portfolio evidence must contain:

- ◆ A personal log/ diary which details:
 - the tasks undertaken throughout the work experience
 - how continuous improvement opportunities were identified and subsequently actioned
 - how supportive working relationships were developed
 - how feedback was obtained and how this related to performance

- ◆ An individual report by the candidate.

The evidence must demonstrate that the candidate has a clear understanding of the organisation, their role within the organisation, an awareness of pertinent procedures and/or policies and how they are applied in the work experience.

The report should include:

- ◆ an outline of the organisation structure and the role the candidate performed within it
- ◆ detail of how the candidate's personal objectives are progressing
- ◆ an analysis which outlines an opportunity to improve work practice eg a swot analysis
- ◆ an outline of one pertinent policy and/or piece of legislation and how it impacts on the work experience

Assessment guidelines

The assessment of this Outcome can be combined with Outcomes 1 and 3 and takes the form of a portfolio of assessment evidence that is built up and added to over the course of the three Outcomes.

Candidates should be made aware of the need to gather and present evidence in their portfolio which demonstrates their achievement of the Unit Outcomes.

Please refer to the assessment guidelines section of Outcome 3.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Work Experience

Outcome 3

Evaluate the work experience

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ understand the process of review, reflection and evaluation
- ◆ the ability to assess if personal objectives were appropriately identified and how they were progressed throughout the work experience
- ◆ the ability to reflect on the learning experience and identify strengths and weaknesses of own performance and draw conclusions
- ◆ be able to update the CV

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ update the CV
- ◆ discuss the work experience with their tutor and record it on a review sheet
- ◆ evaluate the work experience by means of a report

The initial CV must be updated with the work history section being amended to include the work experience undertaken and detailing skills and experiences gained.

The discussion with the tutor must be recorded by the candidate and must focus on the candidate's development, experiences and performance throughout the Unit.

In the evaluation of the work experience, the candidate must draw on evidence from the planning stages through to the completion of the work experience. The report should include evidence drawn from the initial identification of work experience needs, and the planning, undertaking and reviewing process. It should also include a review of their specific roles and responsibilities. Evidence should be drawn from supervisor/tutor reviews, and evaluation of tasks carried out successfully/unsuccessfully.

This must be presented in a short summary report, (minimum 500-750 words) detailing the evidence required.

The candidate portfolio has to be finalised by inclusion of the report, the review sheet and the updated CV.

Assessment guidelines

The assessment for this Outcome can be combined with Outcomes 1 and 2 and takes the form of a portfolio of assessment evidence that is built up and added to over the course of the three Outcomes.

Candidates should be made aware of the need to gather and present evidence in their portfolio which demonstrates their achievement of the Unit Outcomes.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Work Experience

In order to achieve the Unit candidates must gather and present sufficient evidence to demonstrate that they have met all the Unit Outcomes identified in the statement of standards. The primary source of evidence will be documents compiled and retained by the candidate whilst securing and undertaking the work placement.

Administrative Information

Unit code:	DV0M 34
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Superclass category:	HB
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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Work Experience

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 for candidates who wish to gain experience of the world of work or who wish to enhance their existing work history and skills.

The Unit is included in a wide range of HNC and HND Group Awards. It is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the context of the particular group award to which it contributes. The work experience should focus on the vocational area being studied and provide the candidate with the opportunity to apply knowledge and learning to real life situations within the working environment.

There is no specific time recommended for the actual work experience element of this Unit as it is recognised that within some vocational areas and in some parts of the country the industry will dictate the availability, duration and the frequency of the work experience. Some candidates will have the opportunity to undertake the work experience in a block of time whilst others may have fewer hours over a prolonged period. The only consideration is that the candidate should have sufficient time and exposure to the world of work to gather the assessment evidence outlined in the statement of standards.

For some candidates this may be the first foray into the world of work whereas for others it may provide the opportunity to further develop existing skills and add to experiences.

Outcome 1

This focuses on the candidate auditing their present skills, knowledge, qualifications and work history to create a Curriculum Vitae (CV). This enables the candidate to set personal objectives through reviewing their situation and to identify any experiences which would augment their existing profile.

The candidate should identify potential work placement opportunities through a variety of means such as consulting employment directories, visiting careers and/or jobs websites/centres, reviewing trade journals or simply by word of mouth.

The candidate must secure a work experience taking into consideration the nature of the vocational area within which they hope to enter and how the opportunity will progress their personal objectives. Candidates should clearly understand what their responsibilities will be when undertaking the work experience. This requires them where possible to gain a specific job description and negotiate and define their specific responsibilities within the work experience.

For this Outcome candidates need to develop:

- ◆ organisational, planning and task management skills to enable them to keep track of their progress in securing the work experience
- ◆ an understanding of problem solving strategies

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Work Experience

- ◆ basic research skills in locating information
- ◆ communication skills to enable them to present themselves appropriately to potential work experience providers and keep all necessary parties informed of progress
- ◆ skills in setting clear objectives

Candidates should be aware of the different formats of Curriculum Vitae and be encouraged to present theirs in a style appropriate to the type of work they intend to pursue.

Outcome 2

This focuses on the candidate undertaking the work experience and on developing their awareness of the business within which they are working.

Whilst undertaking the work experience they are required to record their progress in meeting their personal objectives and in the fulfilment of the responsibilities and duties associated with the position they have secured. It is not intended that the candidate documents all activities but is selective in recording learning and personal development.

Throughout the work experience candidates should be looking out for opportunities where (on reflection) approaches or procedures could be modified and improved. The candidate has the opportunity to develop their problem solving skills by reviewing an issue or problem using a SWOT analysis and identifying potential ways to deal with the situation.

Each industry or area of employment is governed by regulations, policies and laws. Candidates need to be aware of the most pertinent ones connected to their work experience and be able to explain how they are applied within the organisation or industry. This could include regulations and legislation such as health and safety, food hygiene, copyright or freedom of information. Evidence showing this would be compiled in a report.

Candidates should be aware of a range of interpersonal skills — communication skills (verbal and non-verbal), negotiation skills and assertiveness skills. They must understand the impact of effective and ineffective communication skills and be able to communicate effectively both within the work experience and when reporting progress to their tutor. They need to develop an understanding of how difficulties within the work place are dealt with and appropriate reporting procedures and lines of communication.

Candidates should also know how to gain and deal with feedback on their performance and understand that both positive and negative feedback has value.

Some work experience roles lend themselves to gaining formal feedback and where possible this should be sought to inform the final report.

Outcome 3

This is based on a review and evaluation of the whole experience from the planning stages through to the completion of the actual work experience.

Candidates would be expected to have an understanding of how to present information in a report format.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Work Experience

The report should reflect learning gained, highlighting both successes and those areas where opportunities were missed or things did not go as planned or anticipated. The candidate is required to develop their evaluation skills to enable them not only to provide accounts of these activities but to be able to justify conclusions drawn from the experience.

The update of the CV could be completed after the discussion with the tutor to ensure all learning gained is included.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

The Work Experience Unit is organised around a process that involves candidates in planning and organising a work experience, undertaking the work experience and finally reviewing the complete process.

Throughout the activity the candidate compiles a portfolio of assessment evidence which charts their progress in identifying and securing a work experience, the experience gained while undertaking the work experience and culminates in a report on the process, experiences and understanding.

Candidates must be made aware of the need to gather and present evidence in their portfolio which demonstrates their achievement of the Unit Outcomes.

In order to achieve the Work Experience Unit candidates must gather and present sufficient evidence to demonstrate that they have met all the Unit Outcomes identified in the statement of standards. The primary source of evidence will be gathered and retained by the candidate whilst securing and undertaking the work placement.

This evidence should be retained and presented as a portfolio. The content may vary in style from candidate to candidate and will depend on the nature of the industry in which the work experience is undertaken.

Although this section acts as guidance realistically the following elements should be contained in the final portfolio.

- ◆ Two CVs. One prior to the experience and an updated and amended version on completion of the work experience.
- ◆ A review highlighting personal objectives for undertaking the work experience — this may include either general or specific areas for development.
- ◆ Research notes listing potential work experience opportunities explored.
- ◆ Justification of why a specific experience was chosen and if appropriate any negotiations conducted to secure the work experience.
- ◆ Notes on how the candidate communicated with their tutor and experience provider.
- ◆ Details regarding the specific duties and responsibilities associated with the work experience secured.
- ◆ A diary or log detailing how the candidate undertook their responsibilities, how they communicated with others and identified opportunities for improvement. This should also include how feedback on performance was obtained and any amendments and adaptations to working practices that were adopted in light of the feedback.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Work Experience

- ◆ An outline of the organisational structure detailing where their role fits in. If this is not possible because of the nature of the industry (such as freelance photographer/journalist) details should be included outlining the process or steps required to ensure their work is selected or used.
- ◆ Details on their progress in meeting personal objectives.
- ◆ An analysis of a work improvement opportunity. This need not be a problem but could be derived from exploring opportunities to improve existing practice. This could detail the analysis of the situation; outlining the present state, why it could be improved, the intended outcome, different approaches considered to deal with the situation, the most effective way to deal with the situation and the benefits this may bring, as well as outlining possible ways to implement the improvement strategy.
- ◆ A summary of a relevant policy or piece of legislation and its impact on the role and/or responsibilities undertaken during the work experience.
- ◆ A report which details personal development and learning gained from organising and undertaking the work experience.
- ◆ Review sheet from the final discussion with the tutor.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

The achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Problem Solving at SCQF level 6 (Higher)

Core Skill	Component	Outcomes
Communication	Oral Communication	Outcome 1, Outcome 2, Outcome 3
	Written Communication	Outcome 1, Outcome 2, Outcome 3
Problem Solving	Critical Thinking	Outcome 1, Outcome 2
	Planning and Organising	Outcome 1
	Reviewing and Evaluating	Outcome 2, Outcome 3
Working with Others	Working with Others	Outcome 1, Outcome 2, Outcome 3

Depending on the sectoral area within which the work experience is carried out there could be scope to achieve elements of the final two core skills.

Numeracy Using Graphical Information
 Using Number

IT Using Information Technology

Open learning

This Unit could be delivered by distance learning. However, it would require planning by the centre to ensure the sufficiency and authenticity of candidate evidence.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Work Experience

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 on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs*, which is available on the SQA website **www.sqa.org.uk**.

General information for candidates

Unit title: Work Experience

By completing the Work Experience Unit you will gain important knowledge, skills and experience of the world of work.

This Unit is intended to develop both your general skills as a part of the workforce and also specific knowledge and skills relevant to your particular field of employment.

You will develop your task management skills through planning, organising and participating in your work experience.

You undertake a review of your personal skills, education, experiences and work history from which you create a CV appropriate to your chosen field of employment. Undertaking this self-assessment provides you with the opportunity to look at what additional skills or experiences you might gain or develop from undertaking a work experience. From this information personal objectives are set and where possible should be used to influence the work experience placement you research. Whilst it is desirable that these objectives are achieved through the work experience it is recognised that it may be necessary in light of the experience to amend or change these.

Your research skills will be developed in both the planning and undertaking of the work experience and also when sourcing out company information.

Researching potential openings for the work experience provides you with information about potential job openings which you may use at a later date. When in the work experience you are also required to research policies or regulations which impact on your particular employment field and detail how they impact on your role.

Having the ability to resolve problems or difficulties is a skill desired by employers. This Unit provides you with the opportunity to develop your problem solving skills. Initially you have to find and secure a work experience and when in post you are asked to analyse one development opportunity or problem and present potential opportunities for improvement.

Undertaking this Unit will also develop both your written and verbal communication skills. You will need to use appropriate and effective communication, not only when undertaking the work experience, but also when planning, reviewing and gaining feedback on your participation in the activity. It is your responsibility to document your progress from the outset of the Unit through to the final review. You will be required to maintain a log or diary of this progress and compile a report outlining certain aspects of the work experience. You should also ensure others (tutor/supervisor/line manager) are informed, where appropriate, of your activities and progress.

It is intended that you will gain a greater understanding of your roles and responsibilities as part of the work force and the part your position plays in achieving the overall organisation goal.

Reviewing and Evaluating are important skills you will develop throughout the Unit both as a continual process when you are on the work experience, through continually improving your performance and on completion of the work experience when reflecting on your overall performance in the unit and justifying conclusions drawn.

In the last stages of the Unit you will be asked to complete a final report on the work experience which must be presented appropriately. In addition to this you will also participate in a discussion with your tutor which will focus on your overall performance.

General information for candidates

Unit title: Work Experience

The Unit focuses on three main stages:

- ◆ planning and organising the work experience
- ◆ undertaking the work experience
- ◆ reviewing and evaluating the work experience

It is your responsibility to gather and present in your portfolio sufficient evidence to demonstrate that you have met the assessment requirements.

Your content may vary in style from other candidates and will depend on the nature of the industry in which your work experience is sought.

Although this is only guidance realistically the following should be contained within your final portfolio:

- ◆ Two CVs. One prior to the experience and an updated and amended version on completion of the work experience.
- ◆ A review highlighting your personal objectives for undertaking the work experience — this may include either general or specific areas for development.
- ◆ Research notes listing potential work experience opportunities explored.
- ◆ Justification of why a specific experience was chosen and if appropriate any negotiations conducted to secure the position.
- ◆ Notes on how you communicated with your tutor and experience provider.
- ◆ Details regarding the specific duties and responsibilities associated with the work experience secured.
- ◆ A diary or log detailing how you undertook your responsibilities, how you communicated with others and identified opportunities for improvement. This should also include how feedback on performance was obtained and any amendments and adaptations to working practices that were adopted in light of the feedback.
- ◆ An outline of the organisational structure detailing where your role fits in. If this is not possible because of the nature of the industry (such as freelance photographer/journalist) details should be included outlining the process or steps required to ensure their work is selected or used.
- ◆ Details on your progress in meeting personal objectives.
- ◆ An analysis of a work improvement opportunity. This need not be a problem but could be derived from exploring opportunities to improve existing practice. This could detail the analysis of the situation; outlining the present state, why it could be improved, the intended outcome, different approaches considered to deal with the situation, the most effective way to deal with the situation and the benefits this may bring, as well as outlining possible ways to implement the improvement strategy.
- ◆ A summary of a relevant policy or piece of legislation and its impact on the role and responsibilities undertaken during the work experience.
- ◆ A report which details personal development and learning gained from organising and undertaking the work experience.
- ◆ Review sheet from the final discussion with your tutor.

Your tutor will provide you with guidance on the specific documentation required for each stage of the Unit.