

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Community Safety Initiatives: Media Skills

Unit code: F0E1 35

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to enable candidates to develop skills to compose and deliver information on community safety activity to the media, particularly radio and television.

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

- 1 Prepare material for distribution to the media
- 2 Contribute to media broadcasts

Credit points and level: 0.5 HN Credit at SCQF level 8: (4 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, or be in a position to gain, experience of working in crime reduction or community safety. They should have a good working knowledge of relevant general procedures which could be gained through experience of working in a community safety environment.

Core Skills: There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of Communication, Information Technology and Working with Others at SCQF Level 6 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.

Assessment: This Unit can be assessed by practical assignments in which candidates prepare a press release on a local or national community safety initiative or campaign and contribute to a radio and television interview or discussion on the press release. Different subjects can be used for different assignments to enable candidates to get practice in different types of crime reduction activity. Assessment can be undertaken in simulated conditions but, where this is done, the situation should be made as realistic as possible.

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

Prepare material for distribution to the media

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Relations with the media
- ◆ Preparation of a press release

Outcome 2

Contribute to media broadcasts

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Communication techniques
- ◆ Interview and response techniques
- ◆ Differences between types of media

Evidence Requirements for the Unit

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills for both Outcomes by showing that they can prepare two press releases on different aspects of community safety activity. Candidates must also participate in a radio discussion relating to one of the press releases and in a television discussion on the topic of the other press release.

Each press release must meet the following criteria:

- ◆ be based on a local or national community safety initiative or campaign
- ◆ be presented in a format suitable for a press release
- ◆ be written in a manner which gives a positive impression of community safety activity and avoids raising the fear of crime
- ◆ encourage the recipient to take further action to publicise the subject matter of the press release

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Community Safety Initiatives: Media Skills

During the radio discussion the candidate must:

- ◆ succeed in getting the key messages across to the audience
- ◆ respond clearly and accurately to questions in a manner which presents the community safety activity in a positive manner and avoids raising the fear of crime
- ◆ adopt a co-operative approach to the discussion
- ◆ make statements clearly and concisely without hesitation
- ◆ explain points in a manner likely to be comprehensible to the audience

During the television discussion the candidate must:

- ◆ succeed in getting the key messages across to the audience
- ◆ adopt a style of dress and personal appearance which presents a positive image
- ◆ appear calm and controlled in front of camera
- ◆ respond clearly and accurately to questions in a manner which presents the community safety activity in a positive manner and avoids raising the fear of crime
- ◆ adopt a co-operative approach to the discussion
- ◆ make statements clearly and concisely without hesitation
- ◆ explain points in a manner likely to be comprehensible to the audience

The radio and television interview may be conducted in a simulated environment.

Assessment guidelines

Assessment for this Unit should consist of two practical assignments in each of which candidates prepare a press release on a different local or national initiative or campaign. One press release will form the basis of a radio discussion in which the candidate participates while the other will be the subject of a television discussion involving the candidate. Different subjects should enable candidates to get practice in different types of community safety activity. Assessment can be undertaken in simulated conditions but, where this is done, the situation should be made as realistic as possible.

Administrative Information

Unit code: F0E1 35

Unit title: Community Safety Initiatives: Media Skills

Superclass category: KA

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Version	Description of change	Date

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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Community Safety Initiatives: Media Skills

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 is intended for persons engaged in crime reduction/community safety work. Candidates will normally be following a recognised training programme such as that provided by the Scottish Police College.

The Unit is one of four Units which make up the Professional Development Award: Diploma in Community Safety and Crime Reduction.

The success of crime reduction and community safety work often depends on gaining public support for campaigns and initiatives. Those involved in crime reduction and community safety can, therefore, benefit substantially from positive marketing and publicity. One way to do this is to actively canvass support from broadcast media, especially local radio and television. This means using press releases to inform local media of local crime reduction and community safety activities. These may be local initiatives designed to address a particular local issue or national campaigns which are being rolled out locally. Radio and television interviews or discussions can help gain valuable publicity and support for crime reduction and community safety activities. They can also raise public awareness and helping to create a positive image for those involved with crime reduction and reduce fear of crime among the public.

This Unit concentrates on the skills required to prepare an effective press release and to participate in a radio and television interview or discussion. Candidates will be encouraged to see these activities as ways of positively marketing local police activity and as an essential component of winning public support for crime reduction and community safety activities. It is a practical Unit and it concentrates on the development and application of media skills to community safety initiatives.

The following notes give some additional information on each Outcome. Throughout, the Unit should relate to legislation and practice current at the time the Unit is delivered.

Outcome 1

Relations with the media: considerations of working with the media, keys to a good relationship

Preparation of a press release: good practice, legal issues

Outcome 2

Communication techniques: use of language, including jargon, body language, distractors, enthusiasm, assertiveness

Interview and response techniques: preparation

Differences between types of media: characteristics of radio and television broadcasts

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Community Safety Initiatives: Media Skills

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This Unit can be delivered on a stand-alone basis or as part of a development programme for persons engaged in crime reduction/community safety work.

Delivery of this Unit will involve ensuring that candidates develop the requisite practical skills. Much of the delivery, therefore, is likely to be based on practical exercises such as writing press releases and participating in radio and television interviews and discussions. Candidates can be given feedback on their performance in these exercises. Much of the practical work is likely to involve role plays of situations which those involved with crime reduction are likely to meet in the dealings with media organisations. In order to ensure that the Unit is as realistic as possible, media professionals should be closely involved in the delivery particular in giving feedback to candidates. However, the candidates' own operational environment should provide examples which can form the basis of suitable practical work and this, too, may help to make the Unit as realistic as possible.

Summative assessment can be based on two practical assignments. Candidates can prepare two press releases and participate in a radio discussion for one of them and a television discussion related to the other. Candidates can be prepared for summative assessment by undertaking similar practice exercises as formative assessment. The feedback from this formative assessment can be used to help candidates to reach a suitable standard for the summative assessment.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

Skills in accessing, analysing and evaluating sources which provide background information will be naturally developed as candidates research electronic and paper based sources to develop current background knowledge. An analytical evaluation of information accessed should include checks on currency and relevance. Candidates should be made aware of systems and procedures for computerised record keeping and the responsible use of technology in the context of research work.

Candidates will be expected to present a specific viewpoint which expresses essential ideas and information positively and coherently, using a recognised press release format. Language, spelling and punctuation should be accurate and unambiguous. Resources available should include appropriate software packages to support accuracy and the effective, professional presentation of information.

Candidates will need effective oral communication skills in order to present a positive message under pressure. A sophisticated level of verbal and non-verbal communication skills will be developed in order that broadcast information is presented in a professional style and format. Candidates will have to be aware of how to collate, organise and structure complex information, adapting language, register and style as appropriate in order to reach a wide range of listeners. As they work with others to undertake a series of media events, skills in co-operative working and negotiation will be naturally developed. Candidates should be made aware of techniques to negotiate with others, to agree and develop appropriate approaches and content for media interaction, using reflective listening techniques; and non-verbal communication, including eye contact and relaxed body language. They will know how to influence and progress positive communication, and continually review, modify and adapt their approaches to produce desired effects.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Community Safety Initiatives: Media Skills

Open learning

This Unit could be delivered partially by Open Learning as this would be a suitable way to enable candidates to acquire the relevant background knowledge and techniques involved in the development of media skills. It is, however, fundamentally a practical Unit and candidates who follow an Open Learning route would need to find opportunities to practice their skills and to gain feedback on their work. Arrangements would need to be made for assessment and quality assurance. For information on this, please refer to the SQA document *Assessment and Quality Assurance of Open and Distance Learning*, which is available on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk.

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. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Alternative Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs*, which is available on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk.

General information for candidates

Unit title: Community Safety Initiatives: Media Skills

This Unit forms part of the Diploma in Community Safety and Crime Reduction which is a Professional Development Award accredited by SQA.

The Unit is designed to enable you to develop the skills that you will need to prepare press releases and to participate in radio and television interviews and discussions. All of these are important ways of raising awareness and gaining public support for crime reduction and community safety work. The Unit is very practically oriented and much of your work will involve writing press releases and participating in radio and television discussions. You will be given feedback by media professionals on the work that you do and this feedback should help you to reach the level of media skills which you will require in your work in crime reduction and community safety.

The assessment for the Unit consists of a two practical assignments which you will undertake in simulated conditions. You will be required to write two press releases on different local or national initiatives or campaigns. You will then contribute to a television and a radio discussion. One discussion will be based on one of your press releases and the other will relate to the second press release. You will be expected to prepare your press releases using suitable language and present them in a suitable format. You will be expected also to respond effectively and positively to the discussions in a manner which is appropriate to appearing on radio or television.

You will have succeeded in completing this Unit if you satisfactorily complete both assessments.