



Higher National Unit specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Assessment of Learners

Unit code: F1WA 37

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to enable candidates to contribute to the assessment process of learners, taking relevant professional Codes of Practice into account and using appropriate assessment frameworks. Successful candidates will participate in the design implementation and decision making relating to assessment strategies and frameworks.

On completion of the Unit candidates should be able to:

- 1 Maintain effective professional boundaries during the assessment process.
- 2 Design and implement assessment frameworks in partnership with other members of the learning delivery team.
- 3 Understand and use a range of assessment strategies at different levels.
- 4 Demonstrate accountability for decisions that learners have met required standards of professional practice.

Credit points and level: 1 HN credit at SCQF level 10: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 10*)

**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 well developed communication and inter-personal skills and be able to demonstrate their ability to critically review and consolidate knowledge, skills, practices and thinking in their disciplines. This may be demonstrated by relevant professional qualifications at SCQF level 9 (or equivalent) or above with relevant experience in a social services or other related setting. Acceptance of relevant equivalent qualifications and experience will be at the discretion of the centre.

Core Skills: Although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components in this Unit, there are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of Working with Others, Problem Solving and Communication at SCQF level 6. Additionally, there may be opportunities to develop the Core Skill of Information Technology.

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.

General information for centres

Assessment: The focus of this Unit is on the development of competence to use a wide range of principal skills, some specialised skills and advanced applications to assess learners. Assessment mechanisms should gather evidence from a range of sources.

This collection of evidence approach allows candidates flexibility in relation to evidence gathering and scope to present their evidence in a way that best fits with their learning needs and styles. The evidence gathered to demonstrate that candidates have achieved the Outcomes should be naturally occurring during their day to day activity, therefore encouraging them to critically reflect on the nature of what they do on a daily basis.

Candidates' practice evidence of their ability to demonstrate current knowledge of effective practice to assess learners can be taken from a variety of sources including feedback from peers, managers, learners, service users, carers and other professionals. This will be collated alongside evidence of the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the topics covered by the Unit. Candidates should also provide a critically reflective narrative identifying their learning for the Unit, critically reflecting on what they have done well, what they might have done differently and what they need to work on in the future.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Assessment of Learners

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or Skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Please see specific knowledge and/or skills required in relation to each Outcome and Evidence Requirements for the Unit after the Outcomes.

The whole of the content listed in the knowledge and skills sections must be taught and available for assessment.

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

Maintain effective professional boundaries during the assessment process

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Assessment roles and responsibilities
- ◆ Learner/practice educator relationships during the assessment process
- ◆ Issues of equality, fairness and ethical practice in assessment procedures
- ◆ Relationships to support the giving and receiving of feedback
- ◆ Reflection on own performance in assessing learners

Outcome 2

Design and implement assessment frameworks in partnership with other members of the learning delivery team

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Theories, principles, methods and processes of assessment
- ◆ Assessment frameworks and assessment criteria
- ◆ Roles and tasks of members of the learning delivery team in the assessment strategy
- ◆ Assessment frameworks that are clear, fair and transparent

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Assessment of Learners

Outcome 3

Understand and use a range of assessment strategies at different levels

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Relative merits and effectiveness of different assessment strategies in different circumstances, at different stages in the learning process
- ◆ Features of appropriate evidence and range of sources
- ◆ Models of gathering and judging evidence against agreed criteria
- ◆ Constructive formative feedback throughout the assessment process
- ◆ Views of others, including users and carers, in the assessment of learners

Outcome 4

Demonstrate accountability for decisions that learners have met required standards of professional practice

Knowledge and Skills

- ◆ Relevant standards for learners to achieve in relation to particular programme of learning
- ◆ Assessment regulations and complaints procedures
- ◆ Standards frameworks and professional codes of practice
- ◆ Rationale for assessment decisions against agreed criteria

Evidence Requirements for the Unit

Candidates must provide evidence to cover all Knowledge and Skills in the Outcomes above by demonstrating their contribution to the assessment process of learners, taking relevant professional Codes of Practice into account and using appropriate assessment frameworks. The evidence will demonstrate application of knowledge, sources of knowledge and a critical understanding of principal theories and skills relevant to this Unit.

Candidates will provide evidence of:

- ◆ being directly observed in their ability to give feedback and communicate assessment decision(s) to learner, providing an explanation and rationale regarding how decisions were arrived at
- ◆ a reflective narrative which critically evaluates own performance demonstrating how this would influence future performance
- ◆ designing and implementing, in collaboration with others, assessment frameworks for learning programmes and processes: recognising the roles and tasks of members of the delivery team
- ◆ critically evaluating the effectiveness of different methods of assessment
- ◆ critically evaluating their own performance in the implementation of fair, transparent and equal assessment of learners and a rationale for feedback and communications on assessment decisions
- ◆ critically evaluating evidence against agreed criteria

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Assessment of Learners

Assessment guidelines

This Unit stands alone and can be assessed in its own right. However, when delivered as part of a Group Award it may be appropriate for candidate evidence to span more than one Unit.

Appropriate methods for candidates to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how to assess learners in the practice context include witness statements, formal and informal feedback, assessment material, self-evaluation, practice products and critical evaluation of practice.

Administrative Information

Unit code: F1WA 37
Unit title: Assessment of Learners
Superclass category: PM
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History of changes:

Version	Description of change	Date

Source: SQA

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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Assessment of Learners

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 has been designed as a stand alone Unit. It can be delivered as a stand-alone Unit if a centre has determined that the knowledge and skills developed within this Unit are all that are required to enhance the capability of candidates. Alternatively, the Unit can be delivered as part of an SQA Group Award such as a Professional Development Award (PDA). For example, it is one of eight Units that comprise the:

- ◆ PDA in Practice Learning at SCQF level 10
- ◆ PDA in Practice Learning (Social Services) at SCQF level 10

Where this Unit is delivered as part of the PDA in Practice Learning (Social Services) at SCQF level 10, the centre should be aware that there may be additional entry requirements for candidates in line with Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) policy.

This Unit is intended for candidates from a range of occupational and professional situations within social services, education or health settings. Examples include first line managers supervising staff, people in a variety of posts delivering training courses to staff, those supervising learners in practice learning and workplace assessors. This list is not exhaustive but provides a flavour of the diversity of people who might wish to access this Unit from a social services or other relevant setting. The Unit is designed to enable candidates to contribute to the assessment process of learners, taking standards and relevant professional Codes of Practice into account, and use appropriate assessment frameworks. Successful candidates will participate in the design, implementation and decision making relating to assessment strategies and frameworks and be able to explain and justify assessment decisions reached.

The knowledge and skills obtained from the Outcomes of this Unit will inform candidates about the effectiveness of different assessment strategies and the building of professional relationships which underscore the processes of assessment. Candidates will also learn about the uses, design and efficiency of different assessment frameworks, the roles and tasks of members of the learning delivery team and relevant standards for their area of practice education.

The overall purpose of the Unit is to provide candidates with the ability to design and utilise appropriate methods of assessment for different learning purposes, to collect and interpret evidence and to make and communicate assessment decisions. Candidates will consider the characteristics of good assessment systems (eg relevance, validity, reliability, ease of administration, transparency, supportiveness and equity); assessment strategies (eg naturalistic observation, simulation, oral questioning, assessment of products, testimony, self-assessment, assessment by service users); the use of assessment plans, schedules and contracts; the effectiveness of different methods of assessment, utilising standards documents and providing the rationale for assessment decisions.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Assessment of Learners

On successful completion of the Unit, candidates will be able to contribute to the development of the most appropriate assessment frameworks for the learning activities in which they are involved, utilise these in practice with learners whilst providing formative and summative feedback, critically evaluate evidence collected and communicate and justify assessment decisions.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

Delivery

This Unit involves candidates in a significant amount of experiential learning. Candidates are required to critically analyse and critically reflect on this experience and to be able to make conclusions for their future behaviour and development.

It is expected that the facilitation of learning for this Unit will be through a range of approaches including face-to-face inputs, blended and other forms of directed and self-directed learning.

The delivery mechanisms adopted by centres should be flexible to allow comprehensive access and participation, including distance and e-learning. An outcomes-based approach, centred round the learning needs of the individual, may best meet the requirement for flexible delivery. The delivery of the Unit must take account of its practical nature and of the occupational and professional backgrounds of candidates.

At the outset, centres should make candidates aware of the requirements of the Unit, including the need to gather evidence, critically analyse and report on their experiences. They should also inform candidates at the outset about the type of evidence they will have to provide in order to complete the Unit successfully. It is likely that delivery will consist of some initial orientation and briefing sessions after which candidates will manage their learning independently to a significant extent. Centres will make suitable arrangements to support and guide candidates throughout. This could involve regular meetings with candidates on an individual basis or in groups or through e-learning.

Assessment

Centres should advise candidates about assessment requirements. The Unit takes a holistic approach to assessment and all four Outcomes are closely and systematically connected. Candidates should be encouraged to seek opportunities to generate evidence that would span more than one of the Outcomes. For example, demonstrating the understanding and use of a range of assessment strategies at different levels (Outcome 3) is likely to be linked to designing and implementing assessment frameworks with others (Outcome 2) since using assessment strategies and frameworks is relevant to both Outcomes. Evidence in the form of the assessment strategy devised and the reasons for its choice would provide collective evidence of these Outcomes.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Assessment of Learners

Candidates should demonstrate that they have achieved the Unit Outcomes by gathering evidence from a range of sources. As far as possible for most candidates the evidence should be ‘naturally occurring’ during the course of their day to day activity. Where candidates are not able to rely solely on naturally occurring evidence, appropriate supplementary assessment activity such as role play or simulation will need to be developed by centres. This approach aims to reduce the need for contrived assessed activity in circumstances where Outcomes are effectively being evidenced in candidates’ work. The approach aims to encourage candidates to critically reflect on the nature of what they do on a daily basis. An example of this holistic approach to gathering evidence for all eight Units of the Award can be found in the Arrangements document.

Centres should provide advice and guidance to candidates on gathering evidence. The evidence should be presented as a coherent and logical whole rather than a collection of disparate items. Essentially, it is a record of the learning journey undertaken by candidates.

The evidence produced by candidates should demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to each Outcome. Overall, this should encompass a demonstration of:

- ◆ the professional performance improvements that candidates have achieved as a result of participating in this learning and related practical activities
- ◆ candidates’ ability to critically evaluate and critically review their own and their learners’ experiences of the learning environment
- ◆ candidates’ application of relevant theories, methodologies and standards to enhance the learning environment

There may be opportunities to combine evidence for this Unit with evidence from other Units, especially where candidates are undertaking a relevant Group Award or a number of Units as part of a programme of Continuous Professional Development.

Combining evidence from several Units should be encouraged wherever possible. It will give candidates the opportunity to develop a more comprehensive record of their learning, but will also highlight the close connections and relationships between the different strands involved in professional development. It may also enable candidates to make use of the same piece of evidence in different contexts.

Collection of Evidence

Assessment mechanisms should offer candidates flexibility in relation to evidence gathering against the Outcomes. Each candidate’s evidence will be unique and will be expected to meet a set of minimum required content criteria as advised by the centre. Candidates are encouraged to offer fewer rather than more pieces of work to evidence several Outcomes. This is not intended to deter candidates from taking a rigorous approach to their assessment tasks, but rather to allow them scope to focus their evidence. The statement of standards for the Unit lists the mandatory Evidence Requirements, but the type of evidence candidates present for assessment is not prescribed unless specifically stated.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Assessment of Learners

It is likely that content will include items covering both product and process. Evidence of support for learning can be drawn from any context across health, education and social services and involve work with individual learners and/or groups, such as through the facilitation of group supervision, or planning, delivering and/or evaluating training events. Evidence can come in a variety of forms including assignment, video, audio, presentations, witness statements etc.

Centres will advise on specific requirements but candidates will need to provide evidence of knowledge, values and skills and may include some of the following, for example:

1. Critically reflective narrative of the learning from the Unit as a whole. This is candidates' summary of how the evidence they have provided meets the Outcomes. It can include a clear map indicating where the evidence provided links to the Outcomes. It is likely that this will also describe what they have done well, what they might have done differently and what they need to work on in the future
2. Candidates' critically reflective accounts of how they have met each of the Outcomes
3. Evidence of direct observation of candidates' current practice with a learner or learners
4. Witness statements from, for example, managers, colleagues, service users, the learners themselves or practitioners in other related disciplines
5. Formal and informal feedback on practice from a learner or learners with whom candidates have been working
6. Formal and informal feedback on practice from, as appropriate, mentor, assessor, a service user, carer, peers, managers, and other professionals
7. A self-assessment, including critical reflection by candidates on feedback received
8. Product evidence to specifically demonstrate knowledge gained in relation to the purposes, design and choice of evaluation strategies and collaboration in this regard. For example, assignments, reports, extracts of minutes, supervision notes and practice documents etc

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

All elements of the Core Skill of Problem Solving at SCQF level 6, namely planning and organising, critical thinking, and reviewing and evaluating could be developed and enhanced.

Support in developing an effective research strategy for accessing and critically evaluating paper based and electronic sources of complex information will be of value. The production and discussion of initial draft documents for the completed range of evidence is a useful way to ensure the development of skills in presentation and collation of relevant materials. Although communication skills are not formally assessed, candidates should be expected to produce and present written work to a professional standard, and to communicate essential ideas and concepts effectively. Terminology and spelling used in annotation should be technically accurate. As such, opportunities exist to develop Communication at SCQF level 6. The availability of suitable software to support an effective professional presentation could further assist the development of Core Skills Information Technology.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Assessment of Learners

Candidates may have the opportunity to develop the Core Skill of Working with Others as they undertake group work, and one to one supervision with their candidate. Candidates should be made aware of techniques to put subjects at ease, or to create appropriate environments, using reflective listening and non-verbal communication, including making eye contact and relaxed body language. They should know how to initiate actions confidently and in a way that progresses communication and they should continually modify and adapt their approach to produce desired effects.

Open learning

This Unit requires candidates to take responsibility for their own learning. If it is to be delivered by means of open learning it will be necessary to ensure candidates have access to relevant material to enable them to assimilate the underpinning concepts and knowledge. Candidates will also need access to guidance and support throughout the learning and development process.

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: Assessment of Learners

The Unit is designed to enable you to contribute to the assessment process of learners, taking into account standards frameworks and relevant professional codes, and use appropriate assessment strategies. You will participate in the design and implementation of assessment methods and frameworks and make, communicate and justify assessment decisions.

In this Unit you have to achieve four Outcomes. Collectively these Outcomes cover a range of knowledge and skills to design and implement assessment strategies and to make assessment decisions. They will involve you in learning about the effectiveness of different assessment strategies and frameworks and about building professional relationships which underscore the processes of assessment. You will also learn about the uses, design and efficiency of different assessment frameworks, the roles and tasks of all members of the learning delivery team and relevant standards for your area of practice education. You will gain the ability to use dynamic and constructive professional relationships with learners and others, to give and receive feedback, to ensure non-discriminatory and ethical practice, to develop and implement assessment frameworks, to utilise standards documents and to decide assessment levels.

The overall purpose of the Unit is to enable you to design and utilise appropriate methods of assessment for different learning purposes, to collect and interpret evidence and to make and communicate assessment decisions.

On successful completion of this Unit, you will be able to contribute to the development of the most appropriate assessment frameworks for the learning activities in which you are involved, utilise these in practice with learners whilst providing formative and summative feedback and communicate assessment decisions.

The assessment for the Unit requires you to produce evidence that you can devise and implement assessment frameworks for learning programmes and processes; critically evaluate the effectiveness of different methods of assessment; express fair, transparent and equal assessment of learner performance; collect and judge evidence and enable others to participate in the learning process and programme. It is important that you gather this evidence from your ongoing practice with learners and build a collection of evidence of your work. This tool should offer you flexibility in relation to evidence gathering against the Outcomes. Your collection of evidence will be unique, although it will be expected to meet a set of minimum required content criteria as advised by the centre and will include evidence of knowledge, values and skills. You can use evidence from any context across health, education and social services and involve work with individual learners and/or groups, such as through the facilitation of student supervision, study groups or planning, delivering and/or evaluating training events.

Your evidence collection is likely to consist of several different types of item covering both product and process. Centres will advise you about any specific requirements. Some examples of items of evidence you might provide are:

- ◆ critically reflective accounts of how you have met each of the Outcomes
- ◆ witness testimony from others involved in the learning process (learners, colleagues, service users, assessors, other professionals, university or college tutors etc)

General information for candidates

Unit title: Assessment of Learners

- ◆ product evidence to specifically demonstrate knowledge gained eg exercises used to assist learners to critically appraise good practice in a variety of practice specific contexts. For example, assignments/exercises, reports, extracts of minutes, supervision notes and practice documents etc
- ◆ a critically reflective narrative of learning from the Unit as a whole
- ◆ video, audio, presentations

If you take this Unit in conjunction with one or more other Units, you may be able to present evidence for more than one Unit at the same time. In this way, you can provide a much fuller record of several interconnected aspects of your personal development. It is possible, therefore, to use evidence generated as part of this Unit to gain credit for more than one Unit.