



Higher National Unit specification

General information for centres

Unit title: ESOL: Basic Operational Reading and Writing Skills

Unit code: F2VK 33

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to develop reading and writing skills in English within a social or work-related context, to establish everyday social relations, transact straightforward, everyday tasks and understand spoken materials of a straightforward, everyday nature.

This Unit is aimed at those for whom English is not their first language.

It is relevant for those who would like to develop further their modern language skills to enhance their career prospects or for those who wish to learn the language for social purposes.

The Unit embodies the National Language Standards at SVQ level 3.

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

- 1 Read documents written in the target language on work-related topics and/or social topics.
- 2 Compose standard documents in the target language in work-related or social contexts.

Credit points and level: 1 HN credit at SCQF level 6: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*)

**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 should have good communication skills and an interest in gaining language skills.

These may be demonstrated by the achievement of:

- ◆ D01B 11 Communication
- ◆ C115 11 Intermediate 2 English or its component Units
- ◆ other qualifications comparable to the above

General information for centres (cont)

Some previous knowledge of the target language at a basic level would be advisable. This could be demonstrated by achievement of one or both of the following SCQF level 5 Units:

- ◆ F1J0 40 *ESOL: Developing Basic Listening and Speaking Skills*
 - ◆ F1J1 40 *ESOL: Developing Basic Reading and Writing Skills*
- or
- ◆ National Qualification Units in ESOL at Intermediate 2 level
- or
- ◆ F2VJ 33 *ESOL: Basic Operational Speaking and Listening Skills*

Core Skills: There are opportunities to develop the Core Skill of Communication in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components. Further detail is provided in the Support Notes.

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 will be assessed by two Instruments of Assessment which will test the skills of Reading and Writing. The assessments will be conducted under controlled and supervised conditions. Wherever possible, the assessments should be contextualised in a situation mirroring real-life tasks within a social or work-related context.

The **Reading** assessment will consist of four documents. The combined total word-count for the reading items should be within the range of 500–650 words.

Documents may be considered individually or together.

The total time required for the Reading Assessment should not exceed 90 minutes. The use of a dictionary is allowed.

The **Writing** assessment will consist of one task. The text produced should be in the range of 150–180 words in length.

The total time required for the Writing Assessment should not exceed 60 minutes.

The use of a dictionary and other relevant reference materials (eg glossaries, model document formats, notes containing standard letter/message/report-formats and phraseology) is allowed.

NOTE: Where special arrangements are required for a candidate, an additional time allowance may be made in line with SQA guidelines.

Assessments should generally be carried out towards the end of the Unit, when candidates have had the opportunity to sufficiently develop the above skills.

Exemplar instruments of assessment and marking guidelines are produced by the SQA to indicate the national standard of achievement required at SCQF level 6.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: ESOL: Basic Operational Reading and Writing Skills

Unit code: F2VK 33

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

Read documents written in the target language on work-related topics and/or social topics

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Understand a wide variety of work-related and social vocabulary*
- ◆ Understand a range of polite forms of address, greeting and leave-taking and expressions of gratitude, regret, apology, annoyance
- ◆ Understand some less commonly used, technical terms relevant to the area of work
- ◆ Understand numerical data
- ◆ Understand a range of structures using the infinitive (or other basic verb root) form, where appropriate to the language
- ◆ Understand the present, past, future and conditional aspects, where appropriate to the language
- ◆ Understand commonly used sentence structures in their positive, negative, imperative and interrogative forms
- ◆ Understand a range of complex sentence combinations, of which some are rehearsed models
- ◆ Understand a wide range of linking language, eg ‘although’, ‘provided that ...’
- ◆ Understand alternative terms and structures which modify register for different audiences and contexts
- ◆ Use reference sources (eg glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary*

Evidence Requirements

The **Reading** assessment will consist of four documents. The combined total word-count for the reading items should be within the range of 500–650 words.

Documents will contain mainly vocabulary and structures familiar to candidates.

The total time required for the Reading Assessment should not exceed 90 minutes and may take place **either** over a number of separate occasions dealing with one or more texts **or** on a single occasion, if preferred, dealing with all four reading texts together.

The use of a dictionary is allowed and/or other relevant reference sources (eg glossaries).

The Reading Assessment should be conducted under controlled and supervised conditions.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: ESOL: Basic Operational Reading and Writing Skills

Understanding may be presented in any suitable way, eg written, oral, signed.

The candidate must meet all of the minimum Evidence Requirements for the Outcome in order to pass the Unit.

The candidate must demonstrate his/her ability, when dealing with a folio of written documents which form one overall reading assessment task, to:

- ◆ identify from a piece of text in English the main content and theme
- ◆ identify specific relevant details
- ◆ understand varied text in a range of work-related contexts and/or social contexts

Evidence for the Knowledge and/or Skills in this Outcome will be provided by an assessment that samples across the Knowledge and/or Skills. A different sample should be chosen on each assessment occasion or re-assessment occasion to prevent candidates from being able to predict what they will be asked.

The assessment instrument chosen for summative assessment purposes must cover a sufficient sample of Knowledge and/or Skills for an assessor to infer the candidates are competent in the Outcome.

Items of Knowledge and/or Skills that must be assessed on every assessment occasion are identified with an asterisk () in the 'Knowledge and/or Skills' section of this Outcome as above.

Performance overview

The candidate must be able to handle a range of materials, in a variety of formats and registers. The candidate should be able to scan texts for required details and bring together information, ideas and opinions in order to understand their overall meaning.

With the help of a dictionary, the candidate obtains factual information with a satisfactory level of detail and accuracy from text of some complexity likely to be encountered in a work context or social context.

The candidate extracts and understands essential information from text which contains a number of major and subsidiary points, including the expression of points of view.

The candidate understands a satisfactory proportion of the points of detail and some of the opinions/ideas expressed. The candidate may understand text of some complexity, only partially.

For the purposes of re-assessment a different instrument of assessment/folio of texts should be chosen. In the case where a candidate fails on any individual text document, the re-assessment instrument may be a different single text document of a comparable nature/content/ level of difficulty.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: ESOL: Basic Operational Reading and Writing Skills

Assessment Guidelines

In preparing for this assessment, the candidate should be encouraged to participate in different reading exercises, but will only be assessed on one set of texts, chosen as the most suitable to his/her work-related area or personal need.

Candidates will be asked to read a folio of four documents written in English, such as:

- ◆ an advertisement or other promotional material
- ◆ an article or extract/s from an article
- ◆ an extract/extracts from a brochure, booklet, manual
- ◆ an extract/extracts from a web page or similar
- ◆ a report or an extract from a report
- ◆ a formal letter
- ◆ a personal letter
- ◆ an e-mail, fax or similar written text message
- ◆ a sign or notice

For the purpose of the Unit assessment, candidates may demonstrate comprehension by undertaking tasks such as the following:

- ◆ responding in English to questions in English
- ◆ choosing the correct multiple-choice option in English
- ◆ composing a summary in English
- ◆ completing grids to indicate comprehension
- ◆ following written instructions to complete a task

Outcome 2

Compose standard documents in the target language in work-related or social contexts

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Use a wide variety of work-related and social vocabulary*
- ◆ Use a range of polite forms of address, greeting and leave-taking and expressions of gratitude, regret, apology, annoyance
- ◆ Use some less commonly used, technical terms relevant to the area of work
- ◆ Use numerical data
- ◆ Use a range of structures using the infinitive (or other basic verb root) form, where appropriate to the language
- ◆ Use the present, past, future and conditional aspects where appropriate to the language
- ◆ Use commonly used sentence structures in their positive, negative, imperative and interrogative forms
- ◆ Use a range of complex sentence combinations, of which some are rehearsed models
- ◆ Use a wide range of linking language, eg 'although', 'provided that ...'
- ◆ Use alternative terms and structures which modify register for different audiences and contexts
- ◆ Use reference sources (eg glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary*

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: ESOL: Basic Operational Reading and Writing Skills

Evidence Requirements

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

The **Writing** assessment will consist of one task.

The written text produced, including conventional letter/report or similar conventional phraseology, should be in the range of 150–180 words in length.

The total time required for the Writing Assessment should not exceed 60 minutes.

The use of a dictionary and/or other relevant reference sources (eg glossaries, model document formats, notes containing standard letter/message/report formats and phraseology) is allowed.

The assessment should be conducted under controlled and supervised conditions.

Candidates should write at least the minimum number of words (excluding addresses), however, those candidates who write more will not be penalised but should try to restrict their communication to within recommended length in order to minimise error. Particular attention should be paid to the overall layout and register/tone of the communication which should be appropriate to the work-related context or social context.

The candidate must meet all of the minimum Evidence Requirements for the Outcome in order to pass the Unit.

The candidate must demonstrate his/her ability in the assessment task to:

- ◆ produce a piece of writing that is of a formal nature and which demonstrates appropriate use of register and a high level of accuracy of language.
- ◆ use some variety of straightforward sentence structure
- ◆ use appropriate layout and structure for a formal business document of this nature

Evidence for the Knowledge and/or Skills in this Outcome will be provided by an assessment that samples across the Knowledge and/or Skills. A different sample should be chosen on each assessment occasion or re-assessment occasion to prevent candidates from being able to predict what they will be asked.

The assessment instrument chosen for summative assessment purposes must cover a sufficient sample of Knowledge and/or Skills for an assessor to infer the candidates are competent in the Outcome.

Items of Knowledge and/or Skills that must be assessed on every assessment occasion are identified with an asterisk () in the 'Knowledge and/or Skills' section of this Outcome as above.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: ESOL: Basic Operational Reading and Writing Skills

Performance overview

The candidate is able to produce text of the required length and adapt the style of writing as appropriate to the subject and the readers. Formal writing is for the most part technically accurate. Any errors made do not interfere with the reader's overall understanding.

Content

With the help of a dictionary and notes on writing formats, the candidate produces a straightforward text in the target language which is comprehensible to a sympathetic reader of English.

Writing shows an attempt to clearly structure the presentation of information and incorporates all the points of information required.

The candidate shows sufficient awareness of the rules of grammar appropriate to this level to ensure comprehension in spite of errors. He/she use simple sentences possibly with the use of some memorised material and phraseology.

Assessment Guidelines

In preparing for this assessment, the candidate should be encouraged to participate in different writing exercises but will only be assessed on one, chosen as the most suitable to his/her work-related area or personal needs.

The candidate could be required to compose in a formal format in English:

- ◆ a work-related or personal letter
- ◆ a message
- ◆ a short report
- ◆ a summary
- ◆ an account of an event

Text should relate to work-related or social contexts.

Documents will be produced in English and in a context which is relevant to the candidate's field of study, area of work or personal interest. Attention should be paid to layout, where appropriate.

The initial compilation of the document will be under controlled and supervised conditions (hand-written or typed/word-processed). Where not produced in a typed/word-processed format then it could be transferred verbatim into such a format before final submission along with the original draft, but this is not mandatory.

Adequate time should be given to compose the written document consulting both a dictionary and notes containing standard letter/message formats and phraseology.

However, it is suggested that the total time required for the Writing Assessment should not exceed 60 minutes. (Extra time may be given to candidates who wish to transfer a hand-written copy into a verbatim word-processed format at the discretion of the centre.)

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: ESOL: Basic Operational Reading and Writing Skills

If the assessment is hand written and subsequently word processed, then both copies should be retained for moderation purposes.

Administrative Information

Unit code: F2VK 33

Unit title: ESOL: Basic Operational Reading and Writing Skills

Superclass category: FK

Original date of publication: January 2008

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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: ESOL: Basic Operational Reading and Writing 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 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit is part of a set of two Units at SCQF level 6 and may be taught as a freestanding Unit or as part of the set. To successfully complete the Unit and achieve the Outcomes, the candidate will be introduced to all four language skills, and appropriate language structures, but he/she will only be assessed on Reading and Writing.

It may be taught as part of a Group Award or as a free-standing Unit. If it is taught as part of a Group Award it is recommended that it should be taught within the subject area/context of the Group Award to which it contributes. As a free-standing Unit it may relate to the field of interest of the candidate and should be taught and assessed within a work-related or a social context.

The Unit has also been devised to allow for the progression and development of language skills at higher levels, generally as part of an HNC or HND award.

The principal content of the Unit should be:

- ◆ personal/social information as it relates to a social or work context (personal background details, details of place of residence, interests, skills, study details, work experience details)
- ◆ transactional contexts relating to the candidate's area of study or work (eg details of place of work and sector, obtaining and providing information goods and services, travel arrangements, directions, areas of information and interests related to vocational or social contexts)

The Unit embeds the National Language Standards (revised 2005) for SVQ level 3 Reading and Writing. The National Language Standards are published by CILT, The National Centre for Languages, 20 Bedfordbury, London, WC2N 4LB.

The Unit is also benchmarked against a Higher pass at Grade C.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This Unit is likely to form part of a number of Group Awards where it is recognised that knowledge of English will either be a necessary or a beneficial skill for candidates when looking for employment. It can also be delivered as a stand alone Unit for those wishing to learn the language for social purposes.

Although the Unit is expressed in generic terms, where possible, it should be related to a context that is familiar to candidates.

Each of the two Outcomes refers to a separate skill (reading and writing) but it is assumed that tutors will teach skills in an integrative manner.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: ESOL: Basic Operational Reading and Writing Skills

Language structures appropriate to this level will underpin all Outcomes.

Assessment tasks should involve the kind of situations that a candidate will routinely be required to deal with on an everyday basis when receiving a visitor from abroad, when dealing with customers abroad or when interacting with others when travelling/living/ working abroad. This will involve dealing with commonly occurring work or social situations where use of the language studied may be required (eg exchanging personal information, giving details of place of work and sector, obtaining and providing information, goods and services, making travel and accommodation arrangements, buying items, making meeting arrangements, asking for directions, socialising). This is most likely to occur in formal or semi-formal settings.

Assessment will be by two Instruments of Assessment.

An opportunity for reassessment should be given where the candidate does not achieve a Pass. A new instrument of assessment should be chosen.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop Core Skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components.

This Unit goes some way towards meeting the demands of:

- ◆ Written Communication (Reading) at Intermediate 1
- ◆ Written Communication (Writing) at Intermediate 1

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. Arrangements would have to be made to ensure that the assessments for Outcomes 1 and 2 are delivered in a supervised environment under controlled conditions.

For information on normal open learning arrangements, please refer to the SQA guide *Assessment and Quality Assurance of Open and Distance Learning* (SQA, 2000).

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: ESOL: Basic Operational Reading and Writing Skills

This Unit is designed to equip you with the ability to deal with a number of situations that involve using English in work or social contexts. It is primarily intended for candidates who expect to take up a post where some knowledge of English would be beneficial or essential, or for those who want to improve their knowledge of the language for personal or social reasons.

The Unit may be studied alone or as a means to proceed to the second Unit: F2VJ 33 *ESOL: Basic Operational Speaking and Listening Skills* or as part of any Group Award programme.

This Unit involves the kind of tasks that a person working in a company or organisation dealing with international clients may be expected to be able to perform, either in the UK or abroad. It will also enable you to use the language in a social context, either when travelling abroad or dealing with foreign visitors on the UK. To help you gain this ability you will develop all the skills necessary to function in another language at this level, including intercultural competence. You will also increase your knowledge about and understanding of the essential structures of the language you are studying. The language tasks will be practical and related to the context. There will also be a requirement for private study. Your tutor will guide you on this.

Overall, the knowledge and skills gained from this Unit will enable you to move to the next level, and to work towards becoming an independent language learner. This may help you in the future if you wish, choose or need to start learning another language for either work or personal reasons. The skills you will gain from this Unit may also be recorded in the European Language Portfolio, which has Europe-wide currency.

Assessment

In order to complete this Unit successfully, you will be required to complete a range of tasks in which you will demonstrate that you can use some of the basic structures of the language. You must achieve a satisfactory level of performance in two assessments which test the skills of Reading and Writing. These will be conducted under controlled and supervised conditions towards the end of the Unit.

For the **Reading Assessment (Outcome 1)** you will be given four written texts relating to the overall field of your study, work and/or social interest. These could be from the following:

- ◆ an advertisement or other promotional material
- ◆ an article or extract/s from an article
- ◆ an extract/extracts from a brochure, booklet, manual
- ◆ an extract/extracts from a web page or similar
- ◆ a report or an extract from a report
- ◆ a formal letter
- ◆ a personal letter
- ◆ an e-mail, fax or similar written text message
- ◆ a sign or notice

General information for candidates (cont)

Unit title: ESOL: Basic Operational Reading and Writing Skills

The total length/word-count of texts will be within the range of 500–650 words. You may be asked to produce a short summary of what the text is about in English or answer questions in English on the texts. In one case you may be asked to read the text in detail and give detailed information/ a detailed summary in English of the text. No prior information will be given about the contents of this task but you will be allowed to use a dictionary.

You may be asked to look at the texts separately on different occasions or altogether as a folio during class/tuition. Adequate time (up to 90 minutes in total) will be given in either circumstance for you to complete this task.

For the **Writing Assessment (Outcome 2)** you could be asked to compose a short letter, a message or a short report, summary or account of event in a relevant business format relating to your work or field of study or social interest. You will be expected to produce between 150 and 180 words in total in the target language. You will be allowed to use a dictionary and to refer to notes giving standard letter, message or report formats and phraseology. Adequate time (up to 60 minutes in total) will be given for you to complete this task.

Depending on your reason for taking the Unit, the content and the assessments for the Unit may be tailored to take account of any special circumstances your work may involve.

If you do not achieve a Pass at the first attempt, an opportunity for reassessment will be given.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop Core Skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components.

This Unit goes some way towards meeting the demands of:

- ◆ Written Communication (Reading) at Intermediate 1
- ◆ Written Communication (Writing) at Intermediate 1