Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Countryside Visitor Management

Unit code: F3F6 34

Unit purpose: This Unit will allow the candidate to undertake important aspects of countryside visitor management. Candidates will study methods of gathering information for a chosen site. Then, using primary and secondary research techniques, they will gather visitor data. Finally they will analyse the data with a view to making proposals which encourage recreation participation and manage visitors in a positive manner.

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

1   Prepare and undertake visitor surveys.
2   Prepare proposals to encourage recreation participation and management of visitors at a site.

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: It is recommended candidates have completed Unit F432 34 — *Countryside Recreation and Access* or equivalent studies at SCQF level 6 before commencing this Unit. Candidates would also benefit from prior vocational experience of visitor management before commencing this Unit.

Core Skills: There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Communication*, *IT*, *Problem Solving*, *Working with Others* and *Numeracy* all at SCQF level 6in 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 could be assessed by a holistic assessment which covers Outcome 1 and Outcome 2. This could take the form of a report.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Countryside Visitor Management

Unit code: F3F6 34

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 and undertake a visitor surveys

Knowledge and/or Skill

- Primary research
- Secondary research
- Quantitative visitor survey techniques
- Qualitative visitor survey techniques
- Survey design

Evidence Requirements

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

- select a primary and secondary method of collecting visitor data
- prepare a quantitative visitor survey
- prepare a qualitative visitor survey
- undertake a visitor survey to ascertain quantitative and qualitative visitor data

A hard copy of each type of visitor survey must be provided.

Assessment Guidelines

Outcome 1 could be assessed individually or holistically with Outcome 2. A lecturer checklist could be used to record candidate achievement. Further details of the holistic assessment are detailed under the Assessment Guidelines for Outcome 2.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Countryside Visitor Management

Outcome 2

Prepare proposals to encourage recreation participation and management of visitors at a site

Knowledge and/or Skills

♦ Analysis of visitor data
♦ Recreation participation
♦ Site needs
♦ Visitor needs
♦ National policy framework and guidance re access to countryside recreation
♦ Standards for provision of facilities
♦ Organisational requirements
♦ Visitor management proposals

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing they can:
♦ analyse visitor survey data gathered for the site
♦ present quantitative visitor survey data using appropriate types of graphical representation
♦ utilise qualitative and quantitative data to support visitor management proposals
♦ prepare visitor management proposal for the site which:
   — meets the needs of visitors in terms of access, recreation participation, education and enjoyment
   — meets the needs of the site in terms of aesthetic criteria and preservation of biodiversity
   — meets the needs of site managers in terms of management objectives
   — follow national policy framework and guidance regarding access to the countryside
   — are realistic in terms of resources, staffing and finance

Candidates are required to choose or may be given a countryside recreation site for which they must design and conduct visitor research. The results of the research must be analysed and used to assist with the preparation of a visitor management proposal presented in the form of a report which addresses all the Evidence Requirements.

Assessment Guidelines

Outcome 2 could be assessed holistically with Outcome 1. The visitor surveys from Outcome 1 could be used and included as appendices in this report. The surveys and collection of data could be the product of group work. However, if group work is chosen, centres must ensure that each individual candidate meets the minimum Evidence Requirements of the Unit.

Administrative Information

Unit code: F3F6 34

Unit title: Countryside Visitor Management

Superclass category: QA

Original date of publication: August 2008

Version: 01

History of Changes:

Version	Description of change	Date

Source: SQA

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges have made to the development of Higher National qualifications.

Additional copies of this Unit specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. Please contact the Customer Contact Centre for further details, telephone 0845 279 1000.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Countryside Visitor Management

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

If this Unit follows on from F432 34 *Countryside Recreation and Access* the candidate will have been introduced to visitor management. This would include visitor needs, spatial behaviour and appropriate management. In this Unit the candidate will have the opportunity to both build on and add to their appreciation of visitor management requirements. This will be achieved through the gathering of visitor data and its use, through analysis, to formulate management proposals appropriate to the site and visitor.

This management of visitors in the countryside is a key vocational skill. However if visitor management is to be effective the decisions taken must be based on sound information. Candidates need to be able to survey visitors using secondary research but also by devising and undertaking quantitative and qualitative data primary data collection methods.

Secondary research could be: traffic counters; people counters; ticket sales; leaflet uptake etc. The qualitative survey is an excellent opportunity for candidates to develop their interpersonal skills as the manner in which candidates communicate with members of the public provides the opportunity to develop their oral communication and interpersonal skills.

Useful information to ascertain from a visitor management perspective could include:

♦   numbers of visitors to the site
♦   visitor distribution in time and space — when they go during the day/week/year, length of stay, spatial distribution on site, favoured areas etc
♦   motivations for visiting — exercise, 'fresh air', peace and quiet, recreational pursuit etc
♦   composition of visitors — ages, socio-economic background, demographics, distance travelled to site, mode of transport used, frequency of visit, party size etc
♦   who is not using the site and why?
♦   what they do when they are on site — activities undertaken, when and where?
♦   their perceptions about current visitor provision — paths, furniture, signage, access etc
♦   what they would like by way of changes
♦   their impact on the site and its natural heritage — positive and negative, potential

Candidates also need to be aware of how to use this information in order to formulate visitor management proposals — what does it mean in terms of management requirements if the peak of visitors is on a Sunday afternoon between 1400 and 1600, the average length of time spent on site is 45 minutes and they come by car from less than 10 miles away? This ability to usefully use data collected could be developed from Outcome 1 through Outcome 2.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Countryside Visitor Management

As well as understanding the visitors and their pattern of site use the candidate must also understand the site and its needs — ability to absorb visitors, robustness under foot, sensitive areas for natural heritage, current level of facility provision etc. How well is the site, in its current state, 'fit for purpose'?

Once there is understanding of both the nature of the users and the site itself the candidate should then develop proposals for visitor management. These are perhaps best approached from the perspective of 'I want to maximise visitor use and enjoyment of the site without damaging the site itself'.

Visitor management proposals could cover areas such as:

♦   widening access
♦   awareness raising via marketing and publicity
♦   control of visitors activities and distribution on site
♦   provision or omission of aspects such as information, interpretation, paths, footpath furniture, charges, access points, car park size/design, educational activities etc
♦   zonation of visitors/activities in terms of space and time
♦   maximising social, economic and environmental benefits
♦   meeting legal and policy framework obligations and current standards for access

Legal and policy framework obligations and current standards for access could refer to Disability Discrimination Acts and current initiatives/drivers/standards for provision from organisations such as the Fieldfare Trust, Paths for All, Sustrans, Ramblers Association etc.

Any proposals made must be realistic in terms of organisational requirements such as: finances, staff, resource availability, biodiversity value of site.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

Candidates need firstly to be re-introduced to the basics of visitor management — making decisions which balance the needs of the visitor with the needs of the site based on the availability of sound information and the resources available.

A local countryside recreation site should then be selected. A visit at an early stage to get a feel for the site should be made. This needs to be done prior to starting to develop any of the survey details. Repeat visits as necessary to gather all evidence. It would also be desirable to visit a range of similar sites to investigate differing levels of provision and management before finalising proposals for the study site. Input from site managers is highly recommended.

Candidates need to develop and undertake both quantitative and qualitative visitor surveys. While it is acceptable to develop the surveys/questionnaires within a team each individual candidate should:

♦   participate in the collection of both quantitative and qualitative visitor information
♦   analyse the data produced

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Countryside Visitor Management

The most likely survey methodologies are visitor observation (qualitative information) and formal visitor interview questionnaire (quantitative information). However there are a number of other techniques which may prove appropriate and a combination of data sources may be used: self-completed questionnaires.

Appropriate methods of presenting the analysed information would include percentages, line graphs, pie charts, bar charts, selected comments from visitors etc.

Assessment for Outcome 1 and 2 may be best undertaken in the form of an integrated project with a report submission at the end.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

Although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills within this Unit there are opportunities to develop them in a number of areas. In developing and undertaking the quantitative and qualitative visitor survey the candidates will have ample opportunity to develop *Communication*, *Problem Solving*, *Working with Others* and *Numeracy* at SCQF level 6. Once the data has been gathered there will be opportunities to develop IT through the analysis of the data and its presentation.

Open learning

If this Unit is delivered by open or distance learning methods, additional planning resources may be required for candidate support, assessment and quality assurance.

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: Countryside Visitor Management

This Unit will give you experience of:

♦   collecting information about visitors at a countryside recreation site
♦   developing proposals to manage visitors at a countryside recreation site

Managing visitors is a key vocational skill which you need to develop. If you get the management proposals and provision correct then actual management of visitors on the ground should be easier. To achieve this you need good visitor data on which to base decisions. You will develop appropriate visitor survey methodologies which must cover both quantitative (numbers) and qualitative (perceptual) data. These are likely to be by remote observation of visitors and through direct contact in the form of an interview questionnaire and you will undertake these visitor surveys at a location.

After you have gathered the visitor data you are required to analyse it and use your experience of the site to come up with visitor management proposal. These are probably best approached from the perspective 'how can I maximise visitor use and enjoyment of the site without damaging the site itself'?

Both the Outcomes may be assessed by the one project requiring you to conduct visitor research and produce a final report containing a countryside visitor management proposal for a site.

Your visitor management proposals could cover areas such as:

♦   widening access
♦   awareness raising via marketing and publicity
♦   control of visitors activities and distribution on site
♦   provision or omission of aspects such as information, interpretation, paths, footpath furniture, charges, access points, car park size/design, educational activities etc
♦   zonation of visitors/activities in terms of space and time
♦   maximising social, economic and environmental benefits
♦   meeting legal and policy framework obligations and current standards for access

Legal and policy framework obligations and current standards for access could refer to Disability Discrimination Acts and current initiatives/drivers/standards for provision from organisations such as the Fieldfare Trust, Paths for All, Sustrans, Ramblers Association etc.

Any proposals you make must be realistic in terms of finances, staff, resource availability and biodiversity value of site.

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Communication*, *IT*, *Problem Solving*, *Working with Others* and *Numeracy* all at SCQF level 6in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.