



## Higher National Unit Specification

### General information for centres

**Unit title:** Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Professional Skills Development

**Unit code:** F3S2 34

**Unit purpose:** This Unit is designed for those who are working, or plan to work, either as volunteers or in paid employment for an agency or organisation which provides support to asylum seekers and/or refugees. This Unit will normally be delivered as part of the Professional Development Award level 7: Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees. In this Unit, the candidate will develop detailed knowledge and understanding of the professional skills required to work with asylum seekers and the application of these to understanding their support needs.

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

- 1 Identify and explain the skills required by practitioners working in the field of asylum support.
- 2 Identify support needs and apply the Personal Action Planning Process.
- 3 Reflect on and develop own practice and skills.

**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:** Candidates should have good communication skills, both written and oral. These could be evidenced either by the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications for example a qualification equivalent to SCQF level 5 or above. In addition to proven communication skills, candidates should have real work experience, paid or voluntary, of providing services to asylum seekers and/or refugees.

**Core Skills:** There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components. However, there are opportunities to gather evidence towards aspects of the Core Skill of *Communication* (oral and written).

## General information for centres (cont)

**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. This Unit forms part of the *PDA Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees*.

**Assessment:** There are three instruments of assessment for this Unit. Outcomes 1 and 2 may be assessed by a case study with extended response questions. The assessment for Outcomes 1 and 2 could be integrated. Outcome 3 may be assessed by the production of an Action Plan for the candidate's own Continuing Professional Development.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards**

**Unit title:** Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Professional Skills Development

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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**

Identify and explain the skills required by practitioners working in the field of asylum support

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Communication skills
- ◆ Counselling skills and professional boundaries
- ◆ Interviewing techniques
- ◆ Working with interpreters
- ◆ Anti discriminatory practice
- ◆ Cultural sensitivity
- ◆ Dealing with conflict
- ◆ Dealing with trauma
- ◆ Risk assessment
- ◆ Intervention skills
- ◆ Crisis/trauma management

#### **Evidence Requirements**

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

- ◆ explain the skills required by practitioners in the field of asylum support
- ◆ identify the issues associated with intervention
- ◆ explain how to take action for a client in a given situation

#### **Assessment Guidelines**

Evidence could be presented in the form of an assignment which should be based on a case study with structured questions. Each candidate will be required to provide evidence that they can explain the skills of a practitioner in the field of asylum support, the issues associated with intervention, and how to take action for the client.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Professional Skills Development

### **Outcome 2**

Identify support needs and apply the personal action planning process

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Identification of individual's skills, qualities and abilities
- ◆ Types of need — physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and cultural
- ◆ Maslow's hierarchy of need
- ◆ Stages of the personal action planning process
- ◆ Relevant legislation and policy
- ◆ Barriers which limit access to support
- ◆ Support available for asylum seekers and refugees
- ◆ Rights of access to health care, education, benefits, housing, and social welfare
- ◆ Education and training opportunities
- ◆ Benefits of partnership working

#### **Evidence Requirements**

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

- ◆ identify the skills, qualities and abilities of an individual
- ◆ identify the needs of an individual
- ◆ explain Maslow's hierarchy of need
- ◆ explain each stage of the personal action planning process
- ◆ show understanding of relevant legislation and policy
- ◆ identify any barriers which limit access to support
- ◆ recognise the importance of confidentiality of information
- ◆ recognise and demonstrate the importance of involving individuals in their personal action plan and the role of interpreters to support this

#### **Assessment guidelines**

Evidence could be presented in the form of an assignment which should be based on a case study. The case study could be based on an individual with whom the candidate is working. This could be combined with the assessment for Outcome 1. Candidates will need to show they understand the personal action planning process in detail and carry out an assessment of the needs of an individual. This could be supported by the completion of a personal action planning document.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Professional Skills Development

### **Outcome 3**

Reflect on and develop practice and skills

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Principles underpinning personal and professional development and reflective practice
- ◆ Reflective practice
- ◆ Skills and knowledge needed to practice effectively
- ◆ Development opportunities to improve practice
- ◆ Personal action planning

#### **Evidence Requirements**

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

- ◆ identify own responsibilities in relation to CPD
- ◆ identify own strengths and weaknesses
- ◆ reflect on practise and identify development needs
- ◆ produce an action plan for own professional development
- ◆ review a training or development opportunity and explain how personal practice has improved

#### **Assessment Guidelines**

This Outcome can be assessed in a portfolio of evidence which will include an action plan for own Continuing Professional Development and a reflective account of a learning opportunity undertaken which explains how practice has improved.

## Administrative Information

**Unit code:** F3S2 34

**Unit title:** Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees:  
Professional Skills Development

**Superclass category:** PN

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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: Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Professional Skills Development

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 those who are working, or plan to work, either as volunteers or in paid employment for an agency or organisation which provides support to asylum seekers and/or refugees. This Unit will normally be delivered as part of the Professional Development Award level 7: Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees. In this Unit, the candidate will develop detailed knowledge and understanding of the professional skills required to work with asylum seekers and the application of these to understanding their support needs.

#### Outcome 1

This Outcome introduces candidates to the range of communication and interpersonal skills required to work with asylum seekers and refugees.

Communication skills include:

- ◆ listening and questioning skills
- ◆ tone and pitch of voice
- ◆ avoiding jargon
- ◆ non verbal communication
- ◆ dealing with the stress and emotion of others
- ◆ dealing with a variety of situations
- ◆ recognising roles boundaries and limitations

Women asylum seekers are often vulnerable; they have habitually faced forms of gender persecution such as rape, sexual violence, forced sterilisation, genital mutilation, trafficking, torture and domestic violence, as well as witnessing the killings of family members and friends. Certain health problems specific to women are also likely to be exacerbated by the process of seeking asylum in this country. Gender issues may also influence the delivery of health care, for example, in many societies, women are reluctant to consult male doctors and the presence of female health staff can be essential to the success of a health programme. Many asylum seekers will require an interpreter for a consultation.

Working with interpreters:

- ◆ using an interpreter may mean that more time should be allocated for the meeting
- ◆ avoid specialist terminology
- ◆ use trained and experienced interpreters whenever possible; remember that they are part of the consultation and respect their contribution and different training
- ◆ always remain aware that you are interviewing someone from a different culture and who therefore may put different interpretations on events or feelings

## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)**

### **Unit title: Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Professional Skills Development**

Within many cultures, mental health problems carry considerable stigma. Many asylum seekers are survivors of torture and organised violence, children and adults, who are now trying to cope with the pain of the effects of torture and exile.

It may have become a habit for people who have spent many years in oppressive regimes to keep feelings and thoughts hidden as a form of protection. They may worry that information they give to an agency may adversely affect their asylum application eg reporting mental health problems or domestic violence. They may be unaware that information must be kept confidential and shared only with their consent. Asylum seekers and refugees are entitled to the same high degree of confidentiality as everyone else in society. All data should be recorded in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988.

#### **Outcome 2**

This Outcome introduces candidates to the process of identifying and prioritising the needs of individuals who are asylum seekers and refugees in order that a personal support plan can be put in place. The support plan must identify, prioritise and meet the needs of the individual.

Asylum Seekers have a wide range of support needs. They have come to a country with an alien culture and language; they have had no time to prepare for such a change in their lives and are often traumatised by their experiences — many have been tortured or imprisoned; they are often separated from their families; they may arrive only with what they can carry, and need immediate practical assistance with housing, food and income, as well as longer-term support in relation to language, health, education, training and employment. There are five levels in Maslow's pyramid depicting his hierarchy of needs. At the base are physiological needs. Then comes safety, social belonging, and esteem, and at the top, self-actualisation.

A key feature of Maslow's theory is that, an individual needs to fulfil their basic needs before they can be motivated to fulfil their higher needs. Securing the basic needs of food clothing shelter and security is the main focus for asylum seekers and other needs such as health and education are not prioritised. The experience of racial harassment, which can vary from verbal abuse to physical attack, will adversely affect the sense of safety for asylum seekers and prevent them from moving up the hierarchy and being able to address other needs. While an asylum seeker is waiting for their application to be considered they have access to healthcare, education and social services. If they fulfil certain criteria they are also entitled to receive subsistence benefits and accommodation. Some speak good English and can readily adapt to life in the UK. Others are unfamiliar with the UK system and need support to integrate.



## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)**

**Unit title:** Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Professional Skills Development

### **Outcome 3**

This Outcome introduces candidates to the principles of personal development planning as a mechanism to encourage and support individuals to take responsibility for their own learning and continuing development. A Personal Development Action Plan is a tool that can be used to identify areas for further development and encourage lifelong learning. A PDAP can identify goals for the forthcoming year and methods for achieving these goals. PDAPs can be used as a basis for continuing professional development (CPD). People learn through study, experience, personal reflection and shared learning. Lifelong learning is not just about going on courses and it is now possible to access a wide range of learning opportunities including those involving IT. The PDAP is a means of identifying development needs and strengths as well as weaknesses so that learning needs can be prioritised.

Useful websites could include:

BBC Action Network: [www.bbc.co.uk/dna/actionnetwork](http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/actionnetwork)

National Asylum Support Service: [www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/applying/asylumsupport](http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/applying/asylumsupport)

Refugee Mentorship: [www.timetogether.org.uk](http://www.timetogether.org.uk)

Scottish Asylum Seekers Consortium: [www.asylumscotland.org.uk](http://www.asylumscotland.org.uk)

Scottish Refugee Council: [www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk](http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk)

Home Office law and policy asylum: [www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/lawandpolicy/asylum](http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/lawandpolicy/asylum)

Information Centre about Asylum and Refugees in the UK: [www.icar.org.uk](http://www.icar.org.uk)

### **Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit**

This Unit may form part of a PDA that is primarily designed to provide candidates with professional knowledge, values and skills related to working with asylum seekers and refugees. The Unit should be delivered in a way that enables the candidates to appreciate its relevance to their own occupational area. Throughout the Unit candidates should be encouraged to apply what they are learning to the behaviour, experiences and life chances of the individual asylum seekers and/or refugees with whom they work. Candidates should demonstrate that they are able to review a learning experience and plan what he/she would like to do in the future to enhance and improve professional knowledge and skills

There are three instruments of assessment for this Unit. Outcomes 1 and 2 are assessed by a case study with extended response questions. The assessment for Outcomes 1 and 2 could be integrated. Outcome 3 is assessed by the production of an Action Plan for the candidate's Continuing Professional Development

## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)**

**Unit title:** Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Professional Skills Development

### ***Opportunities for developing Core Skills***

There are opportunities to gather evidence towards Core Skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components. Candidates will have the opportunity to develop aspects of the following Core Skill:

*Communication:* This will be evidenced and developed by candidates through a range of activities and assessment (written) as well as class and small group discussions (oral). Written communication will be developed through candidates producing written work in a variety of formats.

### **Open learning**

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

### **Candidates with 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](http://www.sqa.org.uk)).

## **General information for candidates**

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This Unit is designed for those who are working, or plan to work, either as volunteers or in paid employment for an agency or organisation which provides support to asylum seekers and/or refugees. This Unit forms part of the Professional Development Award level 7: Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees. In this Unit, you will develop detailed knowledge of the professional skills required to work with asylum seekers and the application of these to understanding the support needs of asylum seekers. You will also be encouraged to develop a reflective approach to work practice and learn how to ensure that your knowledge and skills are kept up to date.

There are three Learning Outcomes:

- ◆ identify and explain the skills required by practitioners working in the field of asylum support
- ◆ identify support needs and apply the Personal Action Planning Process
- ◆ reflect on and develop own practice and skills

There are three instruments of assessment for this Unit. Outcomes 1 and 2 are assessed by a case study with extended response questions. Outcome 3 is assessed by the production of an Action Plan for your own Continuing Professional Development.