Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: ESOL Assessment and the Scottish Framework

Unit code: FK8Y 36

Superclass: GC

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Version: 01

Unit purpose

This Unit is designed for candidates who are ESOL practitioners, delivering ESOL in a variety of contexts. The primary focus is on adult ESOL learning. It would also be appropriate for EAL teachers working with secondary school age learners. It is designed to enable candidates to apply the principles and processes of ESOL assessment and to develop knowledge, skills and strategies to assess ESOL learners across the four language skills within the Scottish Qualifications ESOL Framework.

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

1 Critically analyse the roles and types of assessment in ESOL.
2 Describe and evaluate the ESOL assessment framework in Scotland.
3 Assess ESOL learning effectively using the SQA NQ ESOL framework specifications.
4 Design effective summative SQA NQ ESOL assessment instruments.

Prior to delivery, centres must gain specific qualification approval for this Unit.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, candidates would normally be expected to have competence in *Communication* skills at SCQF level 6, *Numeracy* skills and *Information and Communication Technology* skills at SCQF level 5, or similar qualifications or experience. In addition, candidates should have experience of working with ESOL learners.

Candidates undertaking this Unit must have demonstrable knowledge of:

- Cultural, social and linguistic diversity of ESOL learners
- Specific methodologies and the language/linguistics involved in teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

General information (cont)

This knowledge will be demonstrated by candidates holding, as a minimum, the SQA PDA in TESOL (GA53 49) at SCQF level 9 or an equivalent TESOL/ELT qualification which can be demonstrated to meet the following criteria:

- is externally validated by a reputable examination body (usually a university or recognised examination board)
- contains at least 6 hours' supervised teaching practice (ie teaching practice where the trainee teacher is observed and assessed teaching genuine ESOL learner groups, and given feedback on his or her performance)
- contains at least 100 hours of ELT/TESOL input

This Unit is a mandatory Unit within the PDA in Applied Practitioner Studies in TESOL. Centres must inform candidates that it is not possible to achieve the Group Award towards which this Unit contributes unless they already hold a TESOL/ELT qualification which meets the above criteria.

While this Unit is primarily aimed at adult ESOL practitioners, it is also relevant for qualified school teachers, particularly EAL practitioners, who are delivering, or intend to deliver, SQA NQ ESOL qualifications to secondary school age bilingual learners and wish to take this Unit on a freestanding basis. In such cases, the candidate may not have a TESOL qualification but will already hold a full teaching qualification and have relevant experience related to English language teaching.

Selection criteria procedures will be checked at approval stage. Qualifications and experience of candidates will be checked during verification.

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 9: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 9*)

**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.*

Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Communication, Problem Solving* and *Working with Others* at SCQF level 6 and *Information and Communication Technology* at SCQF level 5, 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.

This Unit is a mandatory Unit in the PDA in Applied Practitioner Studies in TESOL. However, the Unit can also be delivered as a freestanding Unit as professional development for ESOL and EAL practitioners.

General information (cont)

The principal context will be an ESOL teaching environment. Candidates should have access to an environment where the required evidence can be generated. The Unit should be delivered in a context which enables candidates to work with ESOL learners and undertake assessment of these learners. Candidates must have access to authentic ESOL learners to achieve this Unit. This access can be provided by the centre where candidates are not currently working with ESOL learners.

The candidates could either be working with adult ESOL learners or secondary school age bilingual pupils within an EAL environment.

Assessment

This Unit will be assessed using analytical and practical Instruments of Assessment. The candidate is required to produce a reflective report which analyses different types of assessment and assessment instruments. They will also assess ESOL learners in speaking and writing and design/contextualise a summative reading or listening assessment instrument using SQA's NQ ESOL qualifications framework. The centre must put arrangements in place to ensure the authenticity of the work produced.

Exemplar Instruments of Assessment and marking guidelines are produced to show the national standard of achievement required at SCQF level 9.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: ESOL Assessment and the Scottish Framework

Unit code: FK8Y 36

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

The Unit will be assessed holistically. Evidence Requirements and Assessment Guidelines for the Unit appear after Outcome 4.

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

Critically analyse the roles and types of assessment in ESOL.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- Purposes of assessment
- Types of assessment
- Assessment instruments
- Qualification frameworks and levels
- Progression routes
- Learning and assessment

Outcome 2

Describe and evaluate the ESOL assessment framework in Scotland.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- Initial assessment
- National qualifications and developments
- Assessment process and Quality Assurance
- Teacher roles in assessment
- National and international standards

Outcome 3

Assess ESOL learning effectively using the SQA NQ ESOL framework specifications.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- Planning for assessment
- Applying Performance Criteria
- Making consistent and fair assessment decisions
- Recording achievement and providing feedback
- Evaluating the effectiveness of assessment instruments
- The reflective practitioner

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: ESOL Assessment and the Scottish Framework

Outcome 4

Design effective summative SQA NQ ESOL assessment instruments.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- Creation, adaptation and contextualisation of assessment instruments
- Performance Criteria in assessment design
- Validity and reliability
- Copyright considerations
- Evaluation of instruments

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills for all Outcomes. All assessments are open-book assessments which will be completed in the candidate's own time. Candidates will provide evidence in the form of:

1 Reflective Report on Assessment

A written reflective report describing and critically analysing features of different types of English language tests/assessments and different assessment instruments. The report should include detailed information on:

- the purposes of different assessment types
- the similarities and differences between different assessment types and/or instruments
- the advantages and disadvantages of different assessment types and/or instruments
- levels according to relevant national/international frameworks
- the potential target group/candidates
- the quality assurance procedures

The report must make reference to specific examples of at least two different test/ assessment instruments to support the analysis. The candidate must submit one authentic assessment task sample for each assessment instrument referenced (eg as an appendix).

In addition, the candidate must reference a minimum of three sources (eg published studies/ articles on assessment) which they have used during research for this assignment. The candidate should use a standard referencing format, such as Harvard or APA.

NB — While there is no stipulated word count, (a suggested guide is approximately 1500 words), it is important that the evidence generated reflects SCQF level 9 in depth of analysis provided in this reflective report.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: ESOL Assessment and the Scottish Framework

2 Assessment of ESOL Speaking and Writing

A written account and assessment records of one speaking and one writing summative assessment carried out with learners within the SQA NQ ESOL framework, which evidence the candidate's ability to use specialised skills and knowledge in assessing outcomes of ESOL learning and providing feedback to learners. This will include:

- an audio recording of the learner's speaking assessment
- completed written assessment including any drafts
- appropriate Performance Criteria checklists for the relevant NQ Unit giving a professional judgement as to whether each assessment completed by the learner would achieve at the given level
- a justification for the assessment decisions
- a critical evaluation of the assessment instruments used and the method of assessment
- an outline of the feedback given to the learners
- a short account of any preparatory work undertaken with the learner prior to the summative assessment

One assessment instrument must be with a learner at SCQF level 4 or below and the other at SCQF level 5 or above, ie where the candidate assesses speaking at SCQF level 5 or above, writing must be assessed at SCQF level 4 or below. The candidate must work with two different learners to complete the assignment.

Candidates **must not** use the NQ ESOL assessment instruments (NABs) from the SQA secure site for this assignment. Candidates will use alternative assessment instruments provided by SQA. The evidence must be generated with authentic ESOL learners while the candidate is undertaking the Unit. However, the ESOL learners undertaking this 'summative assessment' cannot gain certification for the Outcomes of an NQ Unit based on this speaking or writing assessment. It is not acceptable for candidates to provide evidence from previous assessment experiences. Candidates should carry out assessments and make professional judgements autonomously.

The learners selected by the candidate must be agreed with his/her assessor. The candidate must obtain written permission from the learners they will work with for this assessment. The candidate must assess the learners face-to-face.

3 Design of Assessment Instrument (Reading/Listening)

One reading or listening summative assessment instrument designed by the candidate for a specific SQA NQ ESOL Unit, and an account of the design and evaluation process, evidencing the candidate's ability to design and contextualise NQ ESOL assessment instruments. This will include:

- details of the level, Unit title and Outcome
- candidate and assessor instructions for the task
- a copy of the text and questions
- a detailed answer key
- a rationale for the design of the instrument (eg length of text, contextualisation, use of instructions, question types and Performance Criteria)
- details of how the instrument was evaluated (eg through peer review, candidate trialling)
- a copy of any authentic text(s) used (sources should be acknowledged as required and any potential copyright issues noted)

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: ESOL Assessment and the Scottish Framework

The candidate may choose to design their own assessment instrument, which will include the creation of a spoken or written text. Alternatively, they could base their assessment instrument on an authentic spoken or written text, in its original form or adapted. In both cases, candidates will demonstrate an understanding of the scope and boundaries of assessment types when completing this Evidence Requirement.

Candidates must meet all the Evidence Requirements in order to achieve the Unit.

Assessment Guidelines

The evidence generated may be presented in any appropriate format but should ensure that all aspects of the Evidence Requirements are covered. Pro forma designed by the centre would help to provide an appropriate format.

1 Reflective Report on Assessment

The reflective report can be completed in the candidate's own time and should be presented in continuous prose with appropriate sample tasks, charts, tables and bullet points.

The report must include the candidate's evaluation of different assessment types and instruments, highlighting key similarities and differences.

Candidates should make reference to relevant frameworks and levels, such as SQA's NQ ESOL framework, the SCQF, CEFR, etc.

The structure of this report is flexible (eg candidates choose to discuss general aspects of assessment and then focus on the specific examples they have selected, or use these specific examples to explore assessment issues in general).

Assessment types could include initial, formative, summative, informal, formal, internal and external. Samples of appropriate assessment instruments could include:

- Work-based ESOL assessment tasks
- Cambridge ESOL main suite examination papers
- IELTS tasks
- SQA NQ and HN ESOL assessments
- ESOL Skills for Life assessment tasks
- Progress tests from coursebooks
- ESOL Initial Assessment Pack (or other Initial assessment tools)

Centres should encourage candidates to choose contrasting samples of assessments (eg comparing internal and external assessments); different ways in which an aspect of language or skill is assessed (such as a focus on grammatical accuracy, range and/or fluency).

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: ESOL Assessment and the Scottish Framework

The analysis of different assessment instruments provides a wide and varied area for candidates to focus on. The analysis could include information on:

- content (eg skills, contexts, etc)
- delivery of the assessment (eg the mode of delivery, timing and organisation)
- format and task types (eg open/closed question types, written response/performance based tasks, individual/paired, etc)

It may be necessary for the candidate to use past papers or sample tasks when they do not have access to an original assessment instrument. Centres can provide copies of alternative assessment instruments for candidates wishing to analyse NQ ESOL assessments who do not have access to the NABs.

It is recommended that candidates have the opportunity to discuss a plan of their report with a Course tutor before beginning the first draft and a further opportunity to discuss the draft report before submitting their final version.

2 Assessment of ESOL Speaking and Writing

The evidence is based on one speaking and one writing task, each of which has been undertaken by an authentic ESOL learner at the appropriate level. The candidate must provide a copy of all writing drafts completed by the ESOL learner (with any feedback) and an audio or video recording of the speaking assessment.

The tasks used must be chosen from the alternative assessment instruments provided by SQA. These allow for assessment of the speaking and writing Outcomes of SQA NQ ESOL Units. Candidates must ensure that the Evidence Requirements for the relevant NQ Unit in relation to timings, length of writing, etc are followed. The candidate will assess the learners' writing and speaking using the appropriate Performance Criteria from the relevant NQ ESOL Unit.

Candidates must base their account and records on appropriate learner samples for one writing task with a learner at a particular level and one speaking task with a learner at a different level. The evidence for each can be generated in two ways:

- candidates who have access to ESOL learners in their own teaching context can carry out the assessments with these learners, using the alternative assessment instruments provided
- where candidates do not have access to learners, the centres must provide access to appropriate learners to carry out the assessments

(A combination of the above may be required where the candidate has access to only one level of learner.)

The candidate should ensure that the learners are aware that the assessment is for the purposes of the candidate completing this Unit and will not allow the learner to achieve an Outcome of an NQ ESOL Unit.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: ESOL Assessment and the Scottish Framework

The evidence will include accurately completed Assessment Checklists for both the writing and speaking task. Candidates should also complete and submit the more detailed Observation Checklists which provide a breakdown of the Performance Criteria. These are both provided by SQA in the SQA NQ ESOL assessment packs, and supplied with the alternative assessment instruments.

The evidence must include an account of the feedback (written and/or spoken) given to the learners after the assessment, and also, for the writing assessment, any feedback between drafts.

The candidate should make reference in their account to preparatory work, if any, carried out with the learner prior to assessment. This might include learner training for assessment such as practice of similar task types. Ideally, this would be conducted by the candidate. However, it is also possible that another practitioner may have already prepared the learner for this type of assessment. In this case, the candidate should check what preparation, if any, has taken place. It is not necessary for the candidate to detail all the learning which has been delivered to cover the Unit Outcome.

The candidate should also include an evaluation of the tasks used and the practicalities of carrying out the assessments. This might include information on any difficulties in arranging the assessment; clarity of instructions; appropriateness of timing; use of dictionary/notes; the practicalities of recording; the potential impact recording has on learner performance; when to do redrafting; how other people involved in the speaking assessment may affect learner performance, and so on.

Where a candidate does not accurately assess the learner, they will be required to undertake a further assessment task with a learner to meet the Evidence Requirements.

3 Design of Assessment Instrument (Reading/Listening)

The assessment instrument submitted will be either a listening or a reading task (text, questions, instructions and answers) which has been created by the candidate themselves, or based on authentic source material. Candidates should not use published ELT teaching and learning material for this assessment.

Assessors could provide candidates with prior verification application forms for the candidates to use as a checklist when designing the assessment task. If they have used source material they may not need to adapt the text, but the rationale should justify the amount and type of adaptation, including any instances where the original material was used without adaptation.

The rationale might also highlight a specific context and/or group of ESOL learners the instrument would be most suitable for, ie the instrument could be contextualised or more generic. For example, an instrument could be designed for school-age learners in the context of a mainstream school subject; an instrument could focus on the types of communication found in particular work environments; an instrument could be designed to suit a wide variety of adult ESOL learners.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: ESOL Assessment and the Scottish Framework

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 ESOL practitioners delivering ESOL in a variety of teaching contexts. It is especially relevant for candidates who have, or anticipate having, responsibility for assessing ESOL learners within the Scottish framework. The Knowledge and Skills candidates will acquire through this Unit will be directly applicable to the planning and carrying out of SQA NQ ESOL Unit assessments.

The principal context will be an ESOL teaching environment. The candidate should have access to an environment where the required evidence can be generated. Integration of the Outcomes throughout delivery of the Unit is recommended.

The following topic areas provide recommended content for a taught programme. While centres will use their own judgement as to the content appropriate to the delivery context, candidates will need to have been introduced to a wide variety of ESOL assessment types and instruments and have been given opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills to assess ESOL learners using the SQA NQ ESOL Framework.

Indicative content on a taught programme:

The following list of topics gives a suggested content for a taught programme. The list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive and should be used as a guide only.

(Please note that there is overlap across individual areas and the information below provides only examples of areas to focus on.)

Outcome 1

Candidates will develop their understanding of the role of assessment in ESOL teaching and learning. They will build an awareness of the range of different assessment types and frameworks and their advantages and disadvantages.

Purposes of assessment — placing the learner at the correct level for teaching and learning; checking progress of learner's English language development; identifying strengths and weaknesses; for certification/qualification; to meet institutional, local, national and international requirements (eg related to immigration rules, citizenship, access/articulation onto other courses, employment); links to funding (such as further and higher education funding, projects funded according to successful outcomes).

Types of assessment — national and international ESOL/EFL qualifications and assessments (eg SQA ESOL qualifications/equivalent qualifications in the rest of the UK; Cambridge ESOL, Trinity, IELTS, TOEFL); initial/placement; diagnostic; progress/ formative; summative; informal methods within the classroom, including monitoring, concept checking; external/internal assessment; continuous; peer; self; objective, subjective; open/closed-book assessment.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: ESOL Assessment and the Scottish Framework

Assessment instruments — test and task types; content; delivery of assessment; role and impact of the assessor/examiner/other candidates; assessment of productive and receptive skills, (eg how different instruments test different speaking and writing skills); question types, (eg multiple-choice, multiple response, gap-fill, matching, short/long/open/closed question); specific testing of grammar, lexis, etc; candidates should be exposed to a range of instruments which test the four skills.

Qualification frameworks and levels — national and international frameworks; regulations which dictate qualifications within particular frameworks should be discussed; developments that have taken place within different frameworks and those which may happen in the future (eg Curriculum for Excellence, Skills for Life; UKBA regulations); issues of assessment reliability and validity; types of provision (eg work-related, ESOL literacies), types of learners and the range of sectors within which ESOL is assessed (eg college, community-based, private sector, voluntary, workplace).

Progression routes — learners' motivations for undertaking assessment, (such as an assessment taken to evidence learning, or to gain certification required for prospective employment); linking learner goals and relevant progression routes to appropriate assessment types; access to education, further study, employment and promotion.

Learning and assessment — integrating assessment into the learning process, how formative assessment is linked to summative assessment: washback effect (ie the positive/ negative effect assessment can have on the learning process); feedback to and from learners; learner training and developing learner strategies for particular assessments (eg understanding task types and instructions, Performance Criteria).

Outcome 2

Candidates will develop an understanding of the SQA ESOL assessment framework. Candidates will explore the process of assessment; including selecting, scheduling, managing, giving feedback, and remediation. The candidates will develop their understanding of Quality Assurance procedures (standardisation/internal verification, external verification and central verification, prior verification, approval, etc). They will also relate assessment to national and international levels (eg SCQF, CEFR).

Initial assessment — the ESOL Initial Assessment Pack (developed for Scotland) including assessment tools, procedure and criteria and placement; comparison with other initial assessment tools.

National qualifications and developments — the NQ ESOL framework; ESOL for Work; HN ESOL Units; analysis of level, Performance Criteria and grading; four skills approach; developments that have taken place within the SQA framework and which may happen in the future, (eg Curriculum for Excellence, developments in e-assessment, resources provided by SQA and other organisations).

Assessment process and Quality Assurance — including Unit specifications procedures; National Assessment Bank; Assessment Exemplars; remediation; standardisation; verification processes; record keeping; malpractice, (eg plagiarism, security and confidentiality); appeal and re-assessment procedures; guidelines for the grading of Outcomes 1 and 2 as part of Intermediate 2 and Higher Course assessment.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: ESOL Assessment and the Scottish Framework

Teacher roles in assessment — teacher; assessor; interlocutor; verifier; record keeper; the relationships between different roles; complexities and responsibilities of different roles (eg subjectivity/objectivity in assessment); assessment delivery and (classroom) management, especially for speaking assessments.

National and international standards — mapping to principally SCQF and CEFR levels; comparison with other national frameworks.

Outcome 3

Candidates will focus on following assessment processes to correctly assess ESOL learners using the Performance Criteria within the SQA NQ ESOL framework. This will include assessment preparation, learner feedback and evaluation of assessment instruments.

Planning for assessment — creating an assessment plan, building on formative work, timescales; incorporating assessment tasks into teaching and learning; classroom management issues.

Applying Performance Criteria — interpreting Performance Criteria; using detailed checklists and answer keys; comparing assessment performance with exemplars.

Making consistent and fair assessment decisions — consistency with Performance Criteria; task fulfilment; information given to learners prior to assessment; standardisation.

Recording achievement and providing feedback — paperwork used; evidence files; audio recordings of speaking assessments; processing results; methods of providing feedback; using detailed checklists; relating feedback to the Performance Criteria and task fulfilment; feedback on drafting of written work; re-assessment.

Evaluating the effectiveness of assessment instruments — validity of instrument and its impact on learner performance during the assessment (does it test what it is intended to assess/is it properly designed/clarity of questions, ambiguity, etc; additional skills required and developed above those assessed within the Performance Criteria); washback effect; the appropriateness of the tasks (eg related to level, context, culture, age, etc).

The reflective practitioner — candidates' self evaluation of knowledge and skills related to assessment, developing awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses in this area; identifying potential and realistic goals to inform and improve future practice.

Outcome 4

Candidates will focus on designing assessment instruments based on the SQA NQ ESOL framework Unit specifications. Candidates will need to have an understanding of how Performance Criteria can be met through specific tasks. They will also explore ways in which the effectiveness of particular tasks can be evaluated.

Creation, adaptation and contextualisation of assessment instruments — design effective assessment instruments within SQA NQ ESOL Framework specifications; evaluating effectiveness and relevance of existing texts/assessment instruments, recognising changes required and adapting text and questions as necessary; taking into account context, target groups and/or circumstances; possible risks of learners' previous access to text if using published material to create assessments.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: ESOL Assessment and the Scottish Framework

Performance Criteria in assessment design — ensuring assessment text and questions/ task satisfy relevant Performance Criteria; matching question types to particular Performance Criteria.

Validity and reliability — validity versus reliability; validity related to Performance Criteria; prior verification process.

Copyright considerations — copyright issues when selecting/amending published texts.

Evaluation of instruments — different methods for evaluation (eg trialling of instruments, peer review); amendments with reference to Performance Criteria, validity and reliability, relevance and context, etc.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This Unit focuses on the knowledge and skills required to understand and apply the principles and processes of ESOL assessment in order to effectively assess ESOL learners across the four language skills within the Scottish Qualifications Authority's ESOL framework. Outcome 1 considers the roles and types of assessment in ESOL, Outcome 2 focuses on the ESOL assessment framework in Scotland, and Outcomes 3 and 4 develop knowledge and skills of the processes needed in order to assess ESOL learning using the SQA NQ ESOL framework specifications.

Candidates should be encouraged to generate evidence within an appropriate ESOL learning environment. Oral questioning, written and audio/audio-visual evidence are appropriate methods of evidence gathering for this Unit.

It is suggested that centres use a wide range of delivery methods appropriate to training ESOL teachers. This could include: ice breaker activities, case studies of learners being assessed within different qualification frameworks, reading and discussion on different assessment types from the wide range of materials available, research activities to access different assessment instruments, group discussions (both face-to-face and also online), workshop activities. Use of assessment exemplars (ie video and written samples of ESOL learner performance), should be incorporated into the delivery of this Unit. Time should be spent looking at the SQA ESOL and ESOL Scotland websites to access the resources available, as well as looking at other ESOL examination board websites.

Centres will need to put procedures in place to ensure the authenticity of the evidence generated. The use of professional discussion would be appropriate. Before any assessment of learners takes place, candidates should be given sufficient input and practice in establishing ESOL levels in order to assess learners appropriately; this may include using the ESOL Initial Assessment Pack to establish level.

While an integrated approach to delivery is recommended, the sequence of the Outcomes follows a logical order. Assessments should be set at an appropriate stage of the Course with time given for candidates to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills. Centres are advised not to leave all assessments until the end of the taught Course. A suggested order for assessments is given in the Evidence Requirements of the Unit. However, it would be appropriate for candidates to work on the Reflective Report throughout the Course, completing this towards the end. This will provide candidates with greater opportunity to explore assessment in its wider sense.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: ESOL Assessment and the Scottish Framework

1 Reflective Report on Assessment

Candidates should be introduced to published articles on different assessment types and also have access to assessment instruments from a variety of sources which reflect the current range within ESOL qualifications. Centres can provide candidates with access to coursebooks, past papers, and web-based resources from the many awarding bodies/test providers in the field. However, candidates are expected to undertake independent research into assessment types and instruments and should be able to work autonomously on the report. Candidates will have different experiences of using a variety of assessment instruments, which can be incorporated into the taught programme, eg through group discussion and presentation.

Centres may wish to organise tutorial times with candidates to allow discussion on the planning and drafts of their reflective report.

2 Assessment of ESOL Speaking and Writing

In order to develop the skills needed for the assessment of ESOL learning, candidates should be given opportunities to focus on and practise assessment procedures within the training environment. This should include oral and written feedback, language grading, using Performance Criteria. The candidates will need to learn not only what procedures to follow, but also the practical skills needed to assess performance effectively. While centres need to cover all knowledge and skills, the focus is on using the SQA NQ ESOL framework specifications to assess ESOL learners.

Use of a wide variety of resources, such as video and audio recorders, checklists, record sheets may help familiarise candidates with the kinds of resources they will be expected to use as part of the assessment process. Centres should provide candidates with appropriate pro forma to be used in assessment. Candidates should be given opportunities, within delivery sessions, to assess completed tasks by authentic ESOL learners, which exemplify national standards.

The centre should provide guidance to candidates with regards to where and when it is appropriate to meet with the learners. Candidates should be made aware of issues related to working one-to-one and setting up assessment tasks. It would be useful for the centre to provide, where necessary, a neutral space for the candidate and ESOL learners to meet.

3 Design of Assessment Instrument (Reading/Listening)

Centres should include formative tasks aimed at developing skills in assessment design. Candidates should consider the different contexts in which ESOL learning takes place and how assessment instruments can be designed to reflect these situations and address learner needs. Candidates will need to develop an understanding of the format and content of SQA ESOL assessment instruments, prior to designing their own. It is recommended that centres use appropriate models of these instruments during delivery.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: ESOL Assessment and the Scottish Framework

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Communication*, *Problem Solving* and *Working with Others* at SCQF level 6, and *Information and Communication Technology* at SCQF level 5, in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components. It can also support the development of other transferable skills, such as report planning and writing, analytical and critical skills.

Candidates undertaking this Unit will have a high standard of *Communication* Skills. However, there are opportunities to develop these further within the delivery and through the process of producing the Evidence Requirements.

It is possible to develop **Communication: Written Communication at SCQF level 6** within this Unit. The General Skills for **Written Communication at SCQF level 6** are **'Read, understand, and evaluate complex written communication'** and **'Produce well-structured written communication on complex topics'.** The candidate will explore and analyse complex topics (eg when focusing on and contrasting a range of assessment types and instruments for the reflective report, and when designing an assessment instrument). Delivery of this Unit could, therefore, include tasks which help develop a range of appropriate techniques and skills necessary in producing effective written communication, from being able to organise complex written content and use specialist terminology, including and acknowledging relevant sources, to grading language appropriately for different ESOL levels and ensuring clarity of instructions/questions. Candidates will also develop skills in assessing written communication at different levels. Candidates should be given opportunities to assess pieces of writing, which will entail focusing on accuracy (eg spelling), grammatical complexity, range and appropriateness of lexis, register and so on. Working on these areas will help to build the candidates' knowledge of how written language is developed and constructed and should have a direct affect on their own effectiveness when communicating in a written mode.

For **Oral Communication at SCQF level 6** the skill is **"Produce and respond to oral communication on a complex topic"**. Well-developed oral communication skills are essential in any communication with ESOL learners. When setting up ESOL assessments, communication needs to be appropriate for the purpose (eg giving instructions, explaining tasks, giving feedback) and the audience (level of learners, prior English language knowledge, spiky profiles). Candidates should be given the opportunity to participate in tasks which develop oral assessment techniques (such as asking questions to clarify understanding) and explore the value and impact of open and closed questioning. Candidates will also have the opportunity to discuss and evaluate a range of interrelated themes relevant to ESOL assessment (eg different assessment types and instruments, reliability and validity of assessment) with peers and their Course tutor. This communication could also be conducted through an online forum. For this communication to be effective the acquisition and use of a wide range of specialist terminology linked to this field will be required.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: ESOL Assessment and the Scottish Framework

The elements of the Core Skill of **Problem Solving at SCQF level 6** are **Planning and Organising, Critical Thinking, and Reviewing and Evaluating**. These elements are developed throughout this Unit, particularly during the research, planning and writing of the analytical report and the design of an assessment instrument, which includes its evaluation. For **Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6**, the general skill is "**Analyse a complex situation or issue"**. When assessing ESOL learners candidates must relate performance to specific criteria and make professional judgements on task fulfilment based on potentially complex evidence. Formative tasks focusing on assessments of different language skills will help candidates develop this ability. The skill of **Planning and Organising a complex task** is developed as the candidate must create or adapt an assessment task taking account of a variety of criteria, such as context, learner need, level, Performance Criteria, Unit specification, etc, and justifying the design decisions made. Throughout delivery centres can focus on activities and tasks which allow candidates to break down the different components of assessment design logically and effectively. The skill of **Reviewing and Evaluating** is integral to the development of a reflective ESOL practitioner; candidates will draw on and develop this skill when evaluating and justifying their own assessment decisions and those made when designing assessment tasks.

Opportunities to develop **Working with Others** can be incorporated into the delivery of the Unit and will contribute towards the general skills **'In complex interactions, work with others co-operatively on an activity and/or activities'** and **'Review work with others in a co-operative activity and/or activities' at SCQF level 6**. The key theme of collaboration to ensure standards of assessment should be explored (eg feedback to learners, peer review, internal and external verification and so on). Candidates will be working with at least two learners in the course of assessing writing and speaking. When setting up assessments candidates will need to ensure that learners are aware of the Performance Criteria and are prepared for the assessment task. The onus is on the candidate to support assessment by offering encouragement and giving appropriate feedback. During delivery, candidates could work in pairs/small groups to come to standardised assessment decisions, exploring the subjective nature of language assessment and validity/reliability issues. Formative work related to assessment design could also be undertaken as collaborative activities. Candidates could be given the opportunity to discuss ideas on different assessment instruments with other candidates and with their Course tutor.

Opportunities to develop **ICT** skills can be incorporated into the delivery of the Unit and will contribute towards the general skills **'Use ICT independently, effectively, and responsibly to access information within a range of tasks'** and **'Use ICT independently, effectively, and responsibly to carry out a range of processing tasks' at SCQF level 5.** The candidate can be supported in producing high quality assessment materials using ICT, and carrying out safe and effective searches for information or resources. Candidates will have to use recording equipment, such as MP3 players, to provide evidence of learner achievement and if creating a listening assessment instrument. Centres could provide opportunities to practise using such equipment in the training environment. Candidates will be required to produce any written assessments to a high quality and should use word processing, embedded links, images, graphs and tables where appropriate to improve style and layout.

The use of VLEs could provide opportunities for peer discussion, or to upload relevant documents, and along with web conferencing, could be very useful where delivery takes place in an open/distance mode. VLE/DVD could also be used for formative observation of ESOL learners during (speaking) assessments.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: ESOL Assessment and the Scottish Framework

Open learning

This Unit is suitable for open and blended learning delivery. However, centres must ensure that candidates are given sufficient opportunities for discussion, collaborative working and feedback. The use of a VLE would allow for peer discussion on relevant topics, tutor contact and feedback on assessments. Candidates will also need access to ESOL learners to achieve the Unit. Where candidates are undertaking the Group Award, the *Assessment Strategy* should be applied.

Disabled candidates and/or those 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 whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website **www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements**.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for candidates

Unit title: ESOL Assessment and the Scottish Framework

What this Unit is about

ESOL Assessment and the Scottish Framework is a mandatory Unit in the PDA in Applied Practitioner Studies in TESOL at SCQF level 9. However, the Unit can also be taken as a freestanding Unit as professional development for ESOL and EAL practitioners. This Unit is relevant to you if you are assessing, or plan to assess, ESOL learning in a variety of contexts. It has particular relevance for practitioners working within the SQA NQ ESOL framework in Scotland.

This Unit is designed to develop knowledge and skills related to ESOL assessment and its application. It will enable you to reflect on the purposes and types of assessment and carry out effective assessment in an ESOL context, particularly within the Scottish Framework.

What you will learn

In this Unit, you will have opportunities to explore and reflect on issues which relate to ESOL assessment, increase your awareness and understanding of the Scottish ESOL qualifications framework and build your skills in assessing learners. You will:

- explore the role of assessment in ESOL learning and teaching.
- investigate the range of different assessment types/frameworks and their advantages and disadvantages.
- learn about the SQA ESOL assessment framework, process of assessment and quality assurance procedures.
- develop skills in assessing ESOL learners effectively.
- evaluate the effectiveness of assessment instruments.
- develop skills in designing assessment instruments using SQA specifications.

How you will be assessed

You will be assessed using analytical and practical Instruments of Assessment. Assessment takes the form of:

- a reflective report to include analysis of different types of assessments and different assessment instruments, giving specific examples to support your analysis.
- a written account and assessment records for one speaking and one writing assessment of learner language at two distinct levels within the SQA NQ ESOL framework.
- the production of one reading or listening summative assessment task which you have designed, or adapted from source material.

On completion of the Unit you will be able to:

1 Critically analyse the roles and types of assessment in ESOL.
2 Describe and evaluate the ESOL assessment framework in Scotland.
3 Assess ESOL learning effectively using the SQA NQ ESOL framework specifications.
4 Design effective summative SQA NQ ESOL assessment instruments.