



## Higher National Unit specification: general information

**Unit title:** Learning and Professional Development

**Unit code:** FN64 35

**Superclass:** GE

**Publication date:** July 2011

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 01

### Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to enable candidates to contribute their knowledge and experience to the delivery of learning experiences, taking relevant codes of practice and standards into account. It also prepares candidates to participate in the provision of feedback to learners about their progress, and to enable candidates to continue to develop their own learning.

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

- 1 Contribute to own and others learning needs using knowledge of good practice.
- 2 Provide feedback to learners and those who support and assess learners.
- 3 Evaluate professional learning of self and others within a continuous learning framework.

### Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Candidates should have good communication skills, both written and oral, preferably through achievement of Higher English or a *Communication* Unit at SCQF level 6.

Ideally the candidate should have achieved a relevant qualification equivalent to SCQF level 7 to ensure they have the underpinning knowledge to work at SCQF level 8. Exemplary candidates may still be considered through the completion of a pre-course interview part of which could take the form of a written assignment. The skills to undertake this Unit could also be demonstrated through an employer's reference or the process of application and interview in the absence of certified learning.

## General information (cont)

### Credit points and level

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

*\*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

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit Specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

### Context for delivery

This Unit is a mandatory Unit included in the framework for HND Care and Administrative Practice. It may also be suitable for delivery as a stand-alone Unit for candidates with a specific interest in this area.

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

The focus of this Unit is on the development of competence to use a range of approaches and skills to contribute to the quality of the learning experience and take responsibility for learning activities. The recommended assessment mechanism is a collection of practice evidence gathered from a range of sources. The collection of evidence approach allows candidates flexibility in relation to evidence gathering and scope to present their evidence in a way that best fits with their learning needs and styles. The evidence gathered to demonstrate that a candidate has achieved the Outcomes should be naturally occurring during their day to day activity, therefore encouraging candidates to reflect on the nature of what they do on a daily basis.

Candidates practice evidence of their ability to contribute to the quality of the learning experience and take responsibility for learning activities can be drawn from a variety of sources including feedback from managers, registered practitioners or learners. This will be collated alongside evidence of the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the topics covered by the Unit. Also within their collections of evidence candidates should provide two reflective accounts which identify their learning for the Unit, including what they might have done differently and what they need to work on in the future. Each reflective account should be written under open-book conditions and be between 1,000–1,500 words. It should also be evidenced using a standard referencing system, eg Harvard referencing system.

## Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

**Unit title:** Learning and Professional Development

**Unit code:** FN64 35

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

Contribute to own and others learning needs using knowledge of good practice.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Ethical issues in day to day practice
- ◆ Relevant codes of practice and standards
- ◆ Theories of learning and the factors involved in creating an effective learning environment
- ◆ Awareness on own knowledge and skills and how to model good practice

#### Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ explore ethical issues in day to day practice in relation to learning and assessment
- ◆ investigate relevant codes of practice and standards
- ◆ investigate the factors necessary to create an effective learning environment
- ◆ apply and evaluate one theory of learning and how this has enabled the learner to develop knowledge and skills
- ◆ evaluate different types of learning activities
- ◆ assess the advantages and disadvantages of a range of training methods
- ◆ critically evaluate own knowledge and skills
- ◆ understand the importance of evidence based practice on the learning experience.

#### Assessment Guidelines

See Outcome 2.

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

**Unit title:** Learning and Professional Development

### Outcome 2

Provide feedback to learners and those who support and assess learners.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Effective feedback skills
- ◆ Criteria used to assess learners
- ◆ Timescales for the learning programme feedback
- ◆ Feedback to learners and others involved in the learning process
- ◆ Evaluation of learning
- ◆ Lifelong learning

#### Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide two reflective accounts and evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can support the learner to:

- ◆ understand the importance of good practice using relevant examples
- ◆ explore appropriate research into evidence based practice.

In addition candidates must:

- ◆ describe the assessment criteria used for assessment
- ◆ describe what feedback was provided to the learner and relevant others
- ◆ reflect on the quality of feedback provided to the learners and others involved in the learning process
- ◆ describe and evaluate two learning activities
- ◆ compare and contrast positive and negative aspects of a learning environment
- ◆ evaluate their contribution to the preparation and delivery of the overall learning experience
- ◆ evaluate the quality of a learning experience
- ◆ demonstrate an awareness of the wider support network available to the learner.

#### Assessment Guidelines

It is suggested that Outcomes 1 and 2 may be best assessed through a variety of evidence.

Candidates could submit a minimum of two reflective accounts of 1,000–1,500 words to reflect learning, these should be supported by for example: records of meetings between candidate and learner, formal and informal, feedback from others, activities and/or assignments.

It is a requirement that there is evidence of direct observation of the candidate's current practice with a learner or learners, eg these may be in the form of two witness statements from, for example a practice educator or registered practitioner.

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

**Unit title:** Learning and Professional Development

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

### Outcome 3

Evaluate professional learning of self and others within a continuous learning framework.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Current legislative and policy requirements for continuous professional development
- ◆ Principles of professional development planning
- ◆ Personal and organisational responsibility for professional development planning and use of recording systems
- ◆ Setting and achievement of personal goals

#### Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ critically analyse current legislation and policy requirements for professional development planning and evaluate the impact this has on one's own professional practice
- ◆ evaluate personal development strategies within your own professional practice
- ◆ critically evaluate examples of recent professional development in terms of their impact on practice and meeting organisational objectives
- ◆ identify and evaluate personal learning goals through a process of training needs analysis.

#### Assessment Guidelines

This Unit stands alone and can be assessed in its own right (preferably holistically). However, when delivered as part of the HND Care and Administrative Practice it may be appropriate for candidate evidence including observation to span more than one Unit. Outcome 3 could be assessed by an unsupervised, academically written and referenced report. The report should be approximately 1,500 words.

## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes**

### **Unit title:** Learning and Professional 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 has been designed as a stand-alone Unit. It can be delivered as a stand-alone Unit if a centre has determined that the knowledge and skills developed within this Unit are all that are required to enhance the capability of candidates. Alternatively, the Unit can be delivered as part of the HND Care and Administrative Practice Award. This Unit is intended for candidates from a range of situations relating to health settings, social services and education. Examples include people whose role involves supporting learners, such as staff members (eg assistant practitioners, first line managers, residential care officers, housing support workers). This list is not exhaustive but provides a flavour of the diversity of people who might wish to access this Unit from a health or social care setting.

The knowledge and skills obtained from the Outcomes of this Unit will form the foundation for the candidate's work with learners. In order to support the learning and development of others with regard to legislation, policy and research, it will be important for candidates to ensure that their own knowledge is current.

The overall purpose of the Unit is to provide candidates with an understanding of what needs to be in place to create a supportive learning environment and to enable them to take appropriate responsibility for the delivery of learning experiences within an ethical and professional learning environment. The knowledge and skills obtained from the Outcomes of this Unit will enable candidates to support another person's learning about good quality practice underlined by codes of practice, standards and research. The focus of the Unit is on enabling other people's learning and development. Candidates will be able to share their enthusiasm or expertise about their role or perspective on service delivery. They will also learn how to take responsibility for the provision, with others, of learning activities and how to give effective feedback to learners about their learning from these activities. They will also learn how to contribute to the evaluation of the quality of the learning experience.

The overall purpose of the Unit is to provide candidates with knowledge of how to support learners in exploring ethical and sound practice and methods for supporting the learning of others. It will also provide candidates with the knowledge and skills to contribute to the design and evaluation of learning activities and to give effective feedback to learners.

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

**Unit title:** Learning and Professional Development

### Outcome 1

Candidates will need knowledge of the Codes of Practice and standards relevant to practice, how to develop their own practice and the relevance of research within the learning experience. Candidates will need to demonstrate the methods they have used to make knowledge of the agency Codes of Practice and standards accessible to learners (eg shadowing, discussion, attendance at meetings). Topics should include what constitutes a learning experience and how it can be planned and delivered. Candidates should explore the influence of organisational systems and networks and how to adjust and improve the environment for learner. Candidates will explore methods for the identification of learning needs relevant for themselves and the learning needs of others. Examples would be the work of Kolb, Gardner, Bloom and Honey & Mumford. Advantages/disadvantages of different training methods and when to use them, eg use of exercises, demonstration. One-to-one coaching, information and communications technology (ICT), case studies, simulation, discussion, role-play.

How to pace and sequence training in a way likely to foster and maintain learners' enthusiasm and motivation Strategies to promote independent learning: responsibility, ways and styles of learning, attitudes and behaviour.

Methods of enabling candidates to work effectively on their own and the place of these methods in learning. The impact of professionalism and ethics: should be discussed in relation to the trainer as a positive role model for learners also tutorials should examine lecturers' and learners' individual behaviours and attitudes.

Factors which enhance/detract from learning in practical situations should be discussed; tutorials should include environment, attitude, opportunity language used, shadowing and supervision.

### Outcome 2

Candidates need to understand the role of communication in providing effective feedback to the learner and others involved in the learning process such as service users, carers, college personnel and other professional colleagues.

Candidates will need knowledge about criteria to be used in assessing the learner's practice. They will also need knowledge of effective feedback skills (eg conciseness, clarity, specificity, concentration on behaviour not the person) and adult learning theory and the assessment of the quality of learning experiences. Candidates will also need the practical skills of being able to provide this constructive feedback to the learner to aid the learner's development. Additionally candidates will need to provide feedback about the learner's practice to others involved in supporting and assessing the learner and to demonstrate capacity to work within agreed timescales.

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

### Unit title: Learning and Professional Development

Candidates will need to describe to others involved in the earning programme the learning experience offered. They will need knowledge about the criteria to be used to evaluate the quality of the learning experience (eg how the learning experience helped the learner to demonstrate the desired Outcome, whether the learning activity was sufficient on its own or whether further learning activities would be required in future). Additionally candidates will need to demonstrate that they have provided the required information about the quality of the learning experience and done so effectively. Tutorials should also include importance of lifelong learning.

### Outcome 3

Candidates will need to identify where the need for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) originates and should pay specific attention to regulatory bodies such as the NMC, HPC and SSSC in relation to the continuous learning framework. Exploration CPD will. Like professional accountability, need to explore the historical content from which it has arisen.

Comment should also be sought over the ever changing needs and demands of the context within which the candidate may find him/herself, including the implicit requirements to respond with appropriate training.

Within this Unit it is important that candidates are able to evaluate their organisation's response to the use of CPD; its accessibility, planning and perceived benefit will be some of the key areas that should be discussed. In addition candidate should, where possible be able to refer to their experiences of organisational strategies that have been implemented to meet the requirements of CPD. In instances where candidates are unfamiliar with or have not experienced specific strategies it would be expected that different approaches are reviewed in order to allow the candidate the opportunity to evaluate their benefit in terms of suitability to their personal situation. It would be expected that in evaluating approaches to CPD some consideration is given to the type of culture that exists within the organisation; notably its approach to offering training and supervision. Hawkins and Shoet (2006) critique in some detail the various organisational cultures that can exist in care environments, proposing that the 'Learning Culture' is the most beneficial to all parties. Within this Outcome the candidate is expected to evaluate the systems used for documenting CPD and the correlation with the performance review. The candidate should demonstrate an understanding of why documentation needs to be relevant and accessible as well as recognising the requirement for appropriate confidentiality and data protection. Specifically they need to evaluate how CPD is reviewed and its place within the staff appraisal/performance review/supervision process. Professional review is central to the successful implementation of CP and should exist within the organisation's quality assurance process. The process of developing planning provides the basis for staff to continue to seek improvement in the quality provision through self-, this should be evaluation, identification of priorities and targets and action planning, this should be done in partnership with their managers.

Candidates may wish to consider how technology is starting to play a more significant part in this process as many organisations begin to make use of online CPD portfolios.



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

**Unit title:** Learning and Professional Development

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

This Unit involves candidates in a significant amount of experiential learning. Candidates are required to critically analyse their experiences and to be able to make conclusions for their future behaviour and development. The delivery mechanisms adopted by centres should be flexible to allow comprehensive access and participation, including distance and e-learning. A holistic approach centred round the learning needs of the individual, may best meet the requirement for flexible delivery. The delivery of the Unit must take account of its practical nature and of the occupational and professional backgrounds of candidates.

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

Candidates should demonstrate that they have achieved the Unit Outcomes by gathering evidence from a range of sources, eg assignments, video, audio, oral presentation, witness statements etc. As far as possible for most candidates the evidence should be 'naturally occurring' during the course of their day to day activity. Some candidate swill not be able to rely solely on naturally occurring evidence, in which case supplementary assessment activity such as role play or simulation will need to be developed by centres. The approach aims to encourage candidates to critically analyse what they do on a daily basis.

Centres should provide advice and guidance to candidates on gathering evidence. The evidence should be presented as a coherent and logical whole rather than a collection of disparate items.

Essentially it is a record of the learning journey undertaken by candidates.

Whilst it is recognised that the collection of evidence methods will be suitable for most candidates undertaking this award the individual Unit specifications do not require this as a mandatory approach. It is important to recognise that dependant on individual candidate needs other methods may be equally applicable.

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

### Unit title: Learning and Professional Development

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

- ◆ the professional performance improvements that candidates have achieved as a result of participating in this learning and related practical activities
- ◆ candidates' ability to critically analyse and review their own and their learners' experiences.

### **Collection of evidence**

The collection of evidence should offer candidates flexibility in relation to evidence gathering against the Unit Outcomes. Each candidate's collection of evidence will be unique. Although unique, all collections of evidence will be expected to meet a set of minimum required criteria as advised by the centre. Candidates are encouraged to offer fewer rather than more pieces of work to evidence the three Outcomes. This is not intended to deter candidates from taking a rigorous approach to their assessment tasks, but rather to allow them scope to focus their evidence. It is likely that content will include items covering both product and process. Evidence of support for learning can be drawn from any context across health, education and social services and involve work with individual learners and/or groups, such as through contributions to group supervision, or contributing to training events.

Evidence can come in a variety of forms including assignment, video, audio oral presentation, witness statements etc.

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

- ◆ Formal and informal feedback on practice from a learner or learners with whom the candidate has been working.
- ◆ Formal and informal feedback on practice from an appropriate, mentor, assessor, a service user, carer peer managers or other professional.
- ◆ A self-assessment, including reflection by the candidate on feedback received.
- ◆ product evidence to specifically demonstrate knowledge gained, eg plan for learning activity, specific feedback format utilised, assignments, reports, extracts of minutes, supervision notes, practice documents etc.
- ◆ Two reflective accounts of the learning from each Outcome as a whole. This is the candidate's summary of how the evidence they have provided meets the Outcomes. It can include a clear map indicating where the evidence provided links to the Outcomes. It is likely that this will also describe what they might have done differently and what they need to work on in the future.
- ◆ The necessity of observation in the learning process.

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

**Unit title:** Learning and Professional Development

### Open learning

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

Candidates will also need access to guidance and support throughout the learning and development process. However, this would require to be managed effectively with the organisation to ensure the authenticity of the candidate's work.

### Opportunities for the use of e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or e-checklists. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Further advice is available in *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education (AA1641, March 2003)*, *SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools (BD2625, June 2005)*.

### Opportunities for developing Core Skills

**Communication** (at SCQF level 6): could be evidence through reporting, assessments and use of effective communications with learners, colleagues and other professionals. For example, analytical communication skills will be practiced through presentations, negotiations and collaborations with learners and other professionals.

**Working with Others** (at SCQF level 6): could be evidence through feedback and critical analysis of collaborations with learners, colleagues and a wide range of professionals.

**Problem Solving** (at SCQF level 6): critical thinking, planning and organising, reviewing and evaluating could be evidenced through supervised practice, assessments and discussions with supervisor or mentor about the most appropriate courses of action for learning for an individual or group of learners.

**Information and Communication Technology (ICT)** (at SCQF level 6): could be evidenced through the use of technology to research, critically analyse and present complex reports. Further IT skills may be developed if a candidate opts to submit assessments in the form of an e-portfolio.

### 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](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).

## History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2011

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged.

Additional copies of this Unit specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. Please contact the Business Development and Customer Support team, telephone 0303 333 0330.

## General information for candidates

### Unit title: Learning and Professional Development

The Unit is designed to enable you to support another person's learning about good quality practice, underlined by Codes of Practice, standards and research. You will be able to share your enthusiasm or expertise about your role or perspective on service delivery. You will also learn how to take responsibility for the provision, with others, of learning activities and how to give effective feedback to learners about their learning from these activities. In addition you will learn how to contribute to the evaluation of the quality of the learning experience. You will also learn skills to improve learning environments and about roles, responsibilities and effective communication with those involved in the delivery of learning.

In Outcome 1 you will gain knowledge of the Codes of Practice and standards relevant to agency practice and how research informs practice. You will look at how to adjust and improve the environment for learners. You will explore methods for the identification of learning needs relevant for yourself and the learning needs of others. Examples would be the work of Kolb, Gardner, Bloom and Honey & Mumford. You will gain knowledge about how your role fits into the overall provision of the learning programme and how you can contribute learning activities for learners. You will learn to communicate clearly with others in relation to your own responsibility and to demonstrate how you have delivered the aspect of the learning programme for which you are responsible. You will learn how to use leadership skills to enable the learning of others.

In Outcome 2 you will gain knowledge about criteria to be used in assessing the learner's practice. You will gain knowledge of feedback skills (eg conciseness, clarity, specificity, concentration on behaviour not the person). You will also develop the practical skills to be able to provide this constructive feedback to the learner in order to aid the learner's development. Additionally you will learn how to provide feedback about the learner's practice to others involves in supporting and assessing the learners and to demonstrate capacity to work within agreed timescales. Additionally you will learn how to provide the required information about the quality of the learning experience. You will also learn about the skills required for lifelong learning.

In Outcome 3 you will identify where the need for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) comes from and should pay specific attention to the requirements of bodies such as NMC, HPC and SSSC with regard to the continuous learning framework. Evidence for this Outcome could be generated through a report of 1,500 words.

The overall purpose of the Unit is to provide you with an understanding of what needs to be in place to create a supportive learning environment and to enable you to take appropriate responsibility for the delivery of learning experiences within an ethical and democratic learning relationship. It will also prepare you to support the enhancement of the learning environment to meet learner need. In addition, it will provide you with knowledge of how to introduce issues of ethical practice and considerations of the abuse of power into practice learning experiences.

## General information for candidates

### Unit title: Learning and Professional Development

The assessment for the Unit requires you to produce evidence that you can investigate and compile relevant examples of good practice and explain their importance for learners, use alternative methods (eg provisions of agency documents, discussion with learners, learner's observation of others' practice) to help learners find out about Codes of Practice, standards and good agency practice, explore appropriate research into evidence based practice and enable others' to learn its relevance, evaluate your provision of at least two learning activities, explore the feedback provided to a learner, and to those who support and assess learners and evaluate your contribution to the preparation, delivery and quality of the overall learning programme. It is important that you collect this evidence from your ongoing practice with learners and build a collection of evidence of your work. This tool should offer you flexibility in relation to evidence gathering against the Outcomes. Your collection of evidence will be unique, although it will be expected to meet a set of minimum required content criteria as advised by the centre and will include evidence of knowledge, values and skills. You can draw evidence from any context across health, education and social services and involve work with individual learners and/or groups, such as through contributions to group supervision, or contributing to training events. You may already have some of this evidence from previous experience. You can discuss credit transfer and RPL when you devise your plan of action with your tutor.

Centres will advise you about any specific requirements. Some examples of evidence you might provide are

- ◆ two reflective accounts of how you have met each of the Outcomes
- ◆ Witness testimony from others involved in the learning process (learners, colleagues, service users, assessors, other professionals, university or college tutors etc)
- ◆ Product evidence to specifically demonstrate knowledge gained, eg plan for learning activity, specific feedback format utilised, assignments, reports, extracts of minutes, supervision notes, practice documents etc
- ◆ A reflective narrative of learning from the Unit as a whole
- ◆ Video, audio, oral presentations
- ◆ Role play and simulations
- ◆ Direct observation of practice is mandatory.

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