



Higher National Unit specification: general information

This Graded Unit has been validated as part of the HND in Veterinary Nursing. Centres are required to develop the assessment instrument in accordance with this validated specification. Centres wishing to use another type of Graded Unit or assessment instrument are required to submit proposals detailing the justification for change for validation.

Graded Unit title: Veterinary Nursing: Graded Unit 3

Graded Unit code: H110 35

Type of Graded Unit: Project

Assessment Instrument: Investigation

Publication date: July 2018

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 03

Unit purpose

This Graded Unit is designed to provide evidence that the candidate has achieved the following principal aims of the HND in Veterinary Nursing.

- ◆ to develop the ability to absorb, manage and evaluate large amounts of complex subject-specific information
- ◆ to develop and apply a broad range of specialised vocational knowledge and skills, some of which involve recent developments and specialisms
- ◆ to develop and apply skills to accurately document, evaluate and reflect on professional interventions
- ◆ to apply knowledge and understanding in both non-routine and complex contexts
- ◆ to develop transferable skills including Core Skills to levels expected by employers and/or for progression in higher education
- ◆ to develop candidates' abilities to communicate effectively with peers, staff and clients within the veterinary practice
- ◆ to develop an understanding of the inter-disciplinary links between subject areas within veterinary nursing
- ◆ to prepare candidates for professional registration and the allied responsibilities of the role of veterinary nurse
- ◆ to enable progression to further academic qualifications including progression within SCQF

General information (cont)

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

It is recommended that the candidate should have completed or be in the process of completing the following Units relating to the above specific aims prior to undertaking this Graded Unit:

- ♦ *Veterinary Nursing: Small Animal Health Conditions*
- ♦ *Veterinary Nursing: Advanced Nursing Skills*
- ♦ *Veterinary Nursing: Diagnostic Imaging Techniques*
- ♦ *Veterinary Nursing: Laboratory Techniques*
- ♦ *Veterinary Nursing: Anaesthesia*
- ♦ *Veterinary Nursing: Theatre and Surgical Practice*

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit 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 National 1 to Doctorates.*

Core Skills

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skills Problem Solving @ SCQF level 6

Core Skill component(s) None

There are also opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills which are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit Specification.

Assessment

This Graded Unit will be assessed by the use of an investigation. The developed investigation should provide the candidate with the opportunity to produce evidence that demonstrates she/he has met the aims of the Graded Unit that it covers.

This Graded Unit should be undertaken on an individual basis. Candidates should select an appropriate project that involves following a particular animal patient with a serious condition, or conditions, from initial diagnosis to the completion of treatment, including appropriate medical and surgical procedures and associated nursing. When selecting a patient, candidates should make sure that it will be a sufficient basis for an investigation and that it meets all the requirements of this Graded Unit. It is not mandatory that knowledge and skills relating to all Units listed above are included in the investigation since the scope for this will vary from patient to patient.

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Conditions of assessment

The candidate should be given a date for completion of the investigation. However, the instructions for the assessment task should be distributed to allow the candidate sufficient time to assimilate the details and carry out the assessment task. During the time between the distribution of the assessment task instructions and the completion date, assessors may answer questions, provide clarification, guidance and reasonable assistance. Reasonable assistance is the term used by SQA to describe the difference between providing learners with some direction to generate the required evidence for assessment and providing too much support which would compromise the integrity of the assessment. Reasonable assistance is part of all learning and teaching processes. In relation to the assessment of Higher National Project-based Graded Units, assessors may provide advice, clarification, and guidance during the time between the distribution of the project instructions and the completion date, ie at each stage of the project.

Remediation allows an assessor to clarify learner responses, either by requiring a written amendment or by oral questioning, where there is a minor shortfall or omission in evidence requirements. In either case, such instances must be formally noted by the assessor, either in writing or recording, and be made available to the internal and external verifier. In relation to Higher National Project-based Graded Units, learners must be given the opportunity for remediation at each stage of the project.

The evidence for a Higher National Project-based Graded Unit is generated over time and involves three distinct stages, each of which has to be achieved before the next is undertaken. This means that any re-assessment of stages must be undertaken before proceeding to the next stage. The overall grade is derived from the total number of marks *across all* sections, and should reflect the ability of the learner to work autonomously and the amount of support required. In relation to Higher National Project-based Graded Units, learners who have failed any stage of the project and have been unable to provide the necessary evidence through remediation must be given the opportunity for re-assessment of that stage.

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Instructions for designing the assessment task

The assessment task is a project. The project undertaken by the candidate must be a complex task which involves:

- ◆ variables which are complex or unfamiliar
- ◆ relationships which need to be clarified
- ◆ a context which may be familiar or unfamiliar to the candidate

The assessment task must require the candidate to:

- ◆ analyse the task and decide on a course of action for undertaking the project
- ◆ identify an animal patient appropriate for the investigation
- ◆ carry out research concerning the nature and aetiology of the condition(s)
- ◆ collate, interpret and analyse the information relating to the particular animal patient
- ◆ reflect on what has been done and draw conclusions for the future
- ◆ produce evidence of meeting the aims which this Graded Unit has been designed to cover

In selecting the animal patient for the investigation, care should be taken to identify an animal with significant medical or surgical treatment requirements. Either radiographic or other diagnostic techniques must be involved in establishing the nature of the condition(s) and the patient should normally require extensive nursing care. If more than one condition is found to exist, all must be included in the investigation together with possible inter-relationships.

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

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Guidance on grading candidates

Candidates who meet the minimum Evidence Requirements will have their achievement graded as C — competent, or A — highly competent or B somewhere between A and C. The grade related criteria to be used to judge candidate performance for this Graded Unit is specified in the following table.

Grade A	Grade C
<p>Is a seamless, coherent piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ has sufficient evidence for the three essential phases of the project, is produced to a high standard and is quite clearly inter-related♦ demonstrates an accurate and insightful interpretation of the project brief♦ is highly focused and relevant to the tasks associated with the project brief♦ is clear and well-structured throughout and language used is of a high standard in terms of level, accuracy and technical content♦ effectively consolidates and integrates required knowledge and skills	<p>Is a co-ordinated piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ has sufficient evidence of the three essential phases of the project, is produced to an adequate standard♦ demonstrates an accurate interpretation of the project brief♦ is focused and relevant to the tasks associated with the project brief♦ is satisfactorily structured and language used is adequate in terms of level, accuracy and technical content♦ consolidates and integrates required knowledge and skills but this may lack some continuity and consistency

The project will be marked out of 100. Assessors will mark each stage of the project, taking into account the criteria outlined. The marks will then be aggregated to arrive at an overall mark for the project. Assessors will then assign an overall grade to the candidate for this Graded Unit based on the following grade boundaries.

A = 70%–100%
B = 60%–69%
C = 50%–59%

Any learner who has failed their graded unit or wishes to upgrade their award must be given a re-assessment opportunity, or in exceptional circumstances, two re-assessment opportunities. In the case of project-based graded units, this must be done using a substantially different project.

The final grading given must reflect the quality of the learner's evidence at the time of the completion of the graded unit. Learners must be awarded the highest grade achieved —

whether through first submission or through any re-assessment, remediation, and/or reasonable assistance provided.

NOTE: The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified below for each stage of the project in order to achieve the Graded Unit.

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

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Evidence Requirements

The project consists of three stages: planning; developing; and evaluating. The following table specifies the minimum evidence required to pass each stage.

NOTE: The candidate must achieve **all of the minimum evidence** specified below for each stage of the project in order to pass the Graded Unit.

Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
Stage 1 — Planning	<p>Developing an Action Plan which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ the aims of the assessment task including research, development and evaluation◆ timescales for achieving these aims◆ the rationale for selecting the animal patient to be investigated◆ identification of the main issues for research◆ identification of the methods of research and sources to be used <p>Written evidence of the above should be presented. It may be supplemented by evidence provided orally by the candidate in discussion with the assessor. If this is done, a written record of the main points of the discussion should be provided.</p> <p><i>The action plan is worth 20% of the total marks for the investigation.</i></p> <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Planning stage.</i></p>

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Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
Stage 2 — Developing	<p>Preparing a written Investigation Report which must include evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ collection and collation of data from the relevant patient records, observing confidentiality, where appropriate ◆ interpretation/analysis of data ◆ summary of the procedures that have been used, including their effectiveness and the long-term prognosis for the patient <p>The report should also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ a contents page ◆ a list of acknowledgements of sources and references. <p>The report should contain appropriate tables and diagrams and should be approximately 1500 words in length.</p> <p><i>The report is worth 60% of the total marks for the investigation.</i></p>
	<i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Developing stage.</i>

Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
Stage 3 — Evaluating	<p>Providing an Evaluation Report which should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ briefly outline the investigation ◆ review and update the action plan in light of experience ◆ assess the effectiveness of the research methods used ◆ summarise any unforeseen events and how they were handled ◆ assess the strengths and weaknesses of the main body of the investigation report ◆ identify any knowledge and skills which have been gained and/or developed <p><i>The evaluation is worth 20% of the total marks for the investigation.</i></p>
	<i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Evaluating stage.</i>

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

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Support notes

The Graded Unit is designed to allow candidates to demonstrate and apply their ability to integrate knowledge and skills in a relevant veterinary practice setting. Candidates should select an appropriate investigation that involves following a particular animal patient with a serious condition, or conditions, from initial diagnosis to the completion of treatment, including appropriate medical and surgical procedures and associated nursing.

Planning stage

The planning stage includes the introduction and overview of what is required. Candidates need to identify timelines and clear aims for their project. An outline of how the investigation is to be tackled has to be supported by an action plan that includes objectives, timings and methodology, and research or information sources appropriate to the investigation. Candidates could be encouraged to outline contingency plans.

Development stage

Candidates should provide evidence of implementing their action plan by conducting research and clearly referencing sources. The case study report should include:

- ◆ Contents page
- ◆ Collection and collation of data
- ◆ Interpretation/analysis of the data
- ◆ Summary of all the procedures used and their effectiveness
- ◆ Long term prognosis for the patient
- ◆ Acknowledgement of sources and references

Evaluation stage

The candidate should present an evaluation that examines the effectiveness of the original planning as well as a personal reflection on progress against the action plan.

It is envisaged that the report including all stages will be no more than 4,000 words in length, or equivalent.

There may be opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Problem Solving*, *Information and Communication Technology* and *Communication*, all at SCQF level 6 in this Unit.

The nature of the investigation whereby candidates have to identify, develop and evaluate issues arising from a patient care case will provide candidates with the opportunity to meet all the components of the Core Skill of *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6, which include critical thinking, planning and organising, and reviewing and evaluating.

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The provision of a written report may provide candidates with the opportunity to develop the written component of the Core Skill of *Communication* at SCQF level 6.

Should candidates conduct research using the internet; and/or use *Information Technology* to process data, derive tables, graphs or diagrams this may provide the opportunity to develop the Core Skill of *Information Technology* at SCQF level 6.

This Unit has the Core Skill of Problem Solving embedded in it. This means that when candidates achieve the Unit, their Core Skills profile will also be updated to show that they have achieved Problem Solving at SCQF level 6.

Equality and inclusion

This graded unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Core Skill Problem Solving at SCQF level 6 embedded.	17/05/12
03	Update of Conditions of Assessment	17/07/18

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General information for candidates

Graded Unit title: Veterinary Nursing: Graded Unit 3

This is a one credit Graded Unit at SCQF level 8: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8).

This Graded Unit is a Project: Investigation, it is intended to be completed as you progress through your HND study. It is designed to assess your ability to integrate and apply knowledge and understanding from the following HN Units in order to meet the principal aims of the Veterinary Nursing HND:

- ◆ *Veterinary Nursing: Small Animal Health Conditions*
- ◆ *Veterinary Nursing: Advanced Nursing Skills*
- ◆ *Veterinary Nursing: Diagnostic Imaging Techniques*
- ◆ *Veterinary Nursing: Laboratory Techniques*
- ◆ *Veterinary Nursing: Anaesthesia*
- ◆ *Veterinary Nursing: Theatre and Surgical Practice*

You will be asked to plan, develop and evaluate a response to an investigation. This will require you to provide an action plan, implement your plan and develop the investigation then evaluate your progress against the original plan and assess the effectiveness of the methods used. You will be given a high degree of autonomy during all stages of the investigation, however your tutor is available for guidance and support. After submission of your investigation report, your tutor may interview you to probe your understanding of the content of your report and the validity of your evaluation.

You will need to pass the planning stage of your case study before you can progress to the developing stage, and pass the developing stage before you continue to the evaluating stage.

To pass you must achieve 50% of the total marks and meet all the minimum Evidence Requirements for each of the three phases of the work.

A = 70% — 100%

B = 60% — 69%

C = 50% — 59%

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Problem Solving, Information and Communication Technology* and *Communication*, all at SCQF level 6 in this Graded Unit.