



## Higher National Unit specification: general information

**Unit title:** Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support

**Unit code:** H1HY 34

**Superclass:** AJ

**Publication date:** October 2013

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 02

### Unit purpose

This Unit is designed for those who work, or plan to work, for an agency or organisation which provides Supported Employment. This Unit will normally be delivered as part of the Professional Development Award in Supported Employment Practice at SCQF level 7. In this Unit candidates will develop their knowledge of the principles of on and off the job support and will apply this knowledge by working with a client in a work experience opportunity.

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

- ◆ Provide on and off the job support for the client in a Work Experience opportunity
- ◆ Support the employer and other employees in a Work Experience opportunity
- ◆ Agree level of aftercare and produce an exit strategy based on client needs.

### Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Although entry is at the discretion of the centre, it is recommended that candidates should have good communication skills. In addition, candidates should preferably have undertaken some real work experience of providing employment support to clients with additional support needs.

### Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7\*)

*\*SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

## **General information (cont)**

### **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**

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 may be undertaken on its own or as part of the PDA in Supported Employment Practice.

This Unit is one of four HN Units which make up the PDA in Supported Employment Practice at SCQF level 7. This Unit provides the candidate with the knowledge and skills required to support the client, the employer and other employees in a Work Experience opportunity.

The Unit is designed for those working in the field of Supported Employment.

It should be noted that throughout the Unit the term 'Supported Employment' is used to mean Supported Employment for those who are disabled or for those with other disadvantages.

Throughout the Unit candidates should be encouraged to apply their learning to the experiences of the clients with whom they work.

## Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

**Unit title:** Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support

**Unit code:** H1HY 34

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

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

### Outcome 1

Provide on and off the job support for the client in a Work Experience opportunity.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Employment Experience model.
- ◆ Process and types of job support that can be offered.
- ◆ Action planning.
- ◆ Providing on and off the job support.
- ◆ Practical skills to work with client.

#### Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ Describe a model of work placement experience.
- ◆ Describe the job support process and identify types of support that can be offered.
- ◆ Provide client with on and off the job support in a Work Experience opportunity which may lead to work or open employment.
- ◆ Identify needs of the client.
- ◆ Complete an action plan detailing on and off the job support based on client's needs.

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

**Unit title:** Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support

### **Outcome 2**

Support the employer and other employees in a Work Experience opportunity

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

- ◆ Supported Employment worker's role in the work experience opportunity.
- ◆ Employer's and other employee's role and responsibilities in the work experience opportunity.
- ◆ Setting up and sustaining a Work Experience opportunity.
- ◆ Work experience placement recording requirements.

#### **Evidence Requirements**

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

- ◆ Identify the role and responsibilities of the Supported Employment Worker in a Work Experience opportunity
- ◆ Identify the roles of the employer and other employees in a Work Experience opportunity
- ◆ Work with the employer and other employees to set up and sustain the Work Experience opportunity for the client
- ◆ Record Outcomes, progress, incidents and decisions regarding the client.

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

**Unit title:** Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support

### **Outcome 3**

Agree level of aftercare and produce an exit strategy based on client needs.

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

- ◆ Components of an exit strategy.
- ◆ Role of the Supported Employment worker in the provision of client aftercare.
- ◆ Role of the employer and other employees in the provision of client aftercare.
- ◆ Contingency planning.
- ◆ Identification of potential problems or changes for client.
- ◆ Methods to overcome problems and changes, and, when necessary, prevent or diffuse a crisis.

#### **Evidence Requirements**

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

- ◆ Negotiate and agree an exit strategy with the client, other employees and the employer
- ◆ Implement an exit strategy with the client, other employees and the employer
- ◆ Apply crisis management techniques
- ◆ Evaluate the effectiveness of the exit strategy.

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

### **Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support**

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 forms part of a PDA that is primarily designed to provide candidates with professional knowledge, values and skills related to working in the field of employment support. Throughout the Unit candidates should be encouraged to apply what they are learning to the experiences of the clients with whom they work.

This Unit provides the candidate with the knowledge and understanding of on and off the job support and allows opportunities to apply these skills in their own working environment.

The candidates should be introduced to the aims and key principles of on and off the job support, and should understand how it differs from other job seeking programmes. Effective support on and off the job is one of the core elements of Supported Employment which makes it different from traditional placement services.

The provision of good on and off the job support is crucial for people with disabilities or other disadvantages to obtain and maintain paid employment in the open labour market.

The Support Worker, in collaboration with the employer and staff, should aim to provide a specialised, personalised, individualised programme of help and support for the candidate, and the aim should be to withdraw this support gradually, and only when the client is able to cope.

On and off the job support is related both to starting a new job and maintaining the job over a period of time. It should be organised, developed and monitored within the traditional values and principles of Supported Employment.

There should be a recognition that for some clients work readiness may take a considerable time, and that in some cases, and hopefully not many — it will be an aspiration rather than a realisation.

The candidate should have an awareness of the following definitions:

The Scottish Union of Supported Employment (SUSE) definition of Supported Employment is:

‘Supported Employment Services provide individualised support to secure people with disabilities, long term conditions and multiple barriers to work in a sustainable paid job in the open labour market.’

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

### Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support

The European Union of Supported Employment (EUSE) definition of Supported Employment is:

'Providing support to people with disabilities or other disadvantaged groups to secure and maintain paid employment in the open labour market'.

Supported Employment is a method of intervention which assists individuals with disability or disadvantage to access paid jobs in the open labour market.

The following document is suggested as suitable background information.

*'A Working Life for All Disabled People: The Supported Employment Framework for Scotland'* was released by the Scottish Government and COSLA in February 2010. The Framework acknowledges that many disabled people in Scotland face substantial barriers to gaining and sustaining work and that more needs to be done to support those who want to work.

### Guidance on the delivery of this Unit

This Unit forms part of a PDA that is designed to provide candidates with professional knowledge, values and skills related to working in the field of employment support. Throughout the Unit candidates should be encouraged to apply their learning to the experiences of the clients with whom they work.

Centres are encouraged to develop links with employers and industry representatives who may be able to offer support in terms of visiting speakers. Such visits will be helpful throughout the Course but maybe particularly helpful when investigating different job roles and will provide candidates with a realistic view of jobs, conditions and barriers to be overcome within the sector.

The Unit has 3 Outcomes.

**Outcome 1** allows the candidate the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge while working with the client. The candidate will require underpinning knowledge of the nature of a Workplace Experience opportunity and the practical skills to work with a client.

The practical skills required include:

- ◆ Communication skills
- ◆ Coaching and mentoring skills
- ◆ Effective relationship building
- ◆ Action planning process

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

### Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support

Candidates should understand the importance of the Action Plan and will prepare a real Action Plan or one based on a case study or simulation. The format of the Action Plan will vary for different organisations, but should be client- centred – specialised, personalised and individualised. There must be an agreement by the support worker and the jobseeker/client, in consultation with the employer, on the terms and conditions of the Work Experience placement. This agreement should cover issues such as:

- ◆ placement objectives
- ◆ support to be provided
- ◆ duties to be undertaken
- ◆ limitations
- ◆ insurance cover
- ◆ reporting procedures
- ◆ evaluation

Supported Employment promotes a variety of workplace experience opportunities. The most likely model is 'Place and Train'. 'Place and Train' recognises that for many people learning on the job is an effective model with a key element of this being the building of natural supports in the workplace.

Candidates should be made aware that the place-train-maintain model is an effective tool but is not the only model to support clients. All models should provide support for a client in a realistic workplace with on-site training which may lead to formal employment. This may be paid employment but the client could have a voluntary placement.

Candidates should have an understanding of the stages involved in the process of job support which are:

- ◆ introduction and orientation
- ◆ getting to know the job and the company culture
- ◆ stabilisation
- ◆ fade out
- ◆ follow up

There should be regular consultation with employer and co-workers to ensure that the support is effective and valued.

Candidates should be able to identify the different types of support needs — personal/vocational/educational, and to identify individual learning needs within these types. They should be aware of the wide range of possible clients for Supported Employment- clients who could be disabled or have other disadvantages, or who could have multiple problems



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

### Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support

Candidates will need to know:

- ◆ factors which inhibit learning, and possible ways of overcoming them
- ◆ how individual learning is affected by social, cultural or emotional factors
- ◆ how to structure individual coaching programmes based on learning needs, learning style and learner's aspirations
- ◆ methods of eliciting the job seeker/client's personal views
- ◆ different learning styles
- ◆ how to put job seeker/client at ease
- ◆ how to build the client's confidence and self esteem
- ◆ how to give constructive feedback
- ◆ individuals
- ◆ how to sequence and pace information and gauge appropriateness of language

They should be aware that clients will often have personal difficulties to overcome. The client may have a minor personal difficulty, or may have several difficulties which could be from mild to severe. Candidates will not require an in- depth knowledge of these but should be aware of the range of disability/ disadvantages and of how they are often interlinked.

The type of support will vary from client to client. Some clients will require more help than others, but all support will be specific, personalised and individualised. Some will require mentoring only, while others may require intensive mentoring. In such cases a 'buddying' approach may be helpful to the client. The programme/Work Experience opportunity will also have to sit comfortably with the culture of the organisation and the employer should be involved at the planning stage.

They should have an awareness of a learning support strategy which should include:

- ◆ identification of type of coaching/mentoring
- ◆ identification of personal support needs/personal objectives
- ◆ person-centred plan Identification of pathways/main steps to progress
- ◆ how to build an effective helpful relationship
- ◆ strategies to maximise positive aspects of client
- ◆ goal setting
- ◆ personal boundaries

They should know about the types of resources required:

- ◆ human resources — such as co-workers, who could be 'buddies', and specialist
- ◆ physical resources — specialist equipment and its uses in supporting learning

For example — technical tools such as a calculator, special computer or help for structuring, eg symbols or photographs instead of writing.

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

### Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support

The learning style should be appropriate to the needs of the client. Whatever the style, candidates should be able to demonstrate good Communication skills. These should not only relate to written skills for reports and recording, but should include good oral communication — candidates will require to develop a confident speaking manner and, most importantly, will require to develop good listening skills

Candidates should be able to apply a wide range of skills while engaging with the job seeker. These could include: establishing a rapport; observing; listening; reflecting; questioning; goal setting; action planning and management of silence.

The learning, training and mentoring could take place on or off the job. It is, however, important that the setting is appropriate and comfortable for the job seeker/client.

Sometimes the support worker will take total responsibility for the coaching and mentoring, and at other times he/she will require to enlist additional specific help. A skill of the support worker is to be able to identify when this extra help is needed and to access this help for the client.

During a mentoring/learning session the candidate should work with the job seeker taking heed of the following factors:

- ◆ The style of negotiation of the learning plan should be appropriate to the needs of the learner/job seeker
- ◆ Information and advice should be given in a way which promotes anti-discriminatory practice.

When the type and level of support has been agreed with the client, it will normally be documented in an individual action plan. This action plan should be recorded and should state who is responsible for what actions, and should give a time-scale. The plan should be agreed on by all parties involved. It should be revised and updated regularly according to the employee's development and needs.

On and off the job support is related to both starting a new job and maintaining the job over a period of time. The support provided is dependent on the individual needs of the employee.

The candidate will need to understand the importance of the skills required to develop an effective working relationship and will use them when appropriate.

These include:

- ◆ building confidence and self esteem
- ◆ timing and pacing
- ◆ tact and observing confidentiality
- ◆ listening skills
- ◆ how to check job seeker's understanding and progress
- ◆ managing the process of change.

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

### Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support

When appropriate and where possible, the support worker should develop contacts and inter-agency partnerships with groups such as health professionals, social workers, teachers Jobcentre Plus staff and benefits experts.

**Outcome 2** focuses on the way that the support worker works with the employer and co-workers in the organisation/company.

The candidate will need to understand:

- ◆ The employer's role; the employer should be seen as an equal partner and should be consulted, and should be invited to give advice.
- ◆ The company culture should be observed and will influence how the client/job seeker can be best placed in the company.

Where and when the support should be provided and by whom is dependent on the client needs and the employer's resources. Wherever it is provided, the candidate should be aware of the need for:

- ◆ confidentiality
- ◆ equal opportunities
- ◆ how to preserve the dignity of the job seeker
- ◆ values and principles that underpin Supported employment
- ◆ confidence building
- ◆ negotiating skills
- ◆ reporting and recording

The Support Worker should use good communication and interpersonal skills to explain the needs of the client to the employer, and they should discuss ways by which both parties could get most out of the experience. An example of good practice would be that a 'buddy' is used to support the client in the workplace.

The Support Worker should explain the specialised and personalised nature of any work opportunity and work with the employer to find ways of managing this.

There should be procedures in place for recording progress and reporting any difficulties.

The employer, and the client's line manager, should be involved in feedback, review and evaluation.

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

### Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support

**Outcome 3** gives the candidate the opportunity to provide aftercare for the client, when required, and agree an exit strategy. The amount of time and the resources involved here will vary depending on the client's needs.

Aftercare and future action should be agreed by both the employer and the support worker, and the client should be involved in discussions.

Normally the support worker will negotiate an exit strategy with both the client and the employer. This should be done as part of the action planning process but may occasionally be as a result of a crisis which necessitates the termination of the agreement.

Candidates should understand the need for contingency planning. There could be a need to deal with unexpected occurrences such as changes to personal circumstances. They should not just react to a problem/crisis when it occurs. It is important to recognise in advance the possible causes of crisis points and be able to take steps to help prevent them occurring. Therefore candidates should recognise the benefits of having a contingency plan in place to:

- ◆ assess risk to help prevent problems or personal changes escalating to a crisis
- ◆ deal with a problem should one occur

The support worker, in collaboration with the employer, should identify, negotiate and agree the exit strategy — including provision of appropriate aftercare.

In order to negotiate an exit strategy the candidate will:

- ◆ use evaluation skills — the candidate must ask the job seeker/client to give feedback to help inform the review of their needs
- ◆ give constructive feedback
- ◆ record any meetings/produce a report
- ◆ evaluate own performance — using a checklist/diary/competence grid
- ◆ evaluate the activity/experience/company feedback — reports/questionnaires
- ◆ know how to 'fade out' — including when to give the job seeker more independence

The exit strategy should be handled in a sensitive and tactful manner so that the support worker can withdraw from the client without destroying their confidence. By using appropriate 'fade-out techniques' the support worker should be able to acknowledge that not all workplace experience opportunities/work placements are successful, and he/she should know when it is advisable not to continue, and accept that it is right to start again. The candidate should have the skills to prepare the client/job seeker for any disappointments.

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

**Unit title:** Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support

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

There are three instruments of assessment for this Unit.

They assess the candidate's knowledge of on and off the job techniques, and also the practical skills required.

When practical assessment/observation of practice is being implemented, this should occur in as natural a way as possible. Candidates should gather evidence to support the observation/assessment. This could include notes of meetings/diaries/recordings and/or a portfolio of evidence.

Practical assessment may not always be possible, and analysis of case studies could be used as an alternative form of assessment.

### **Assessment Guidelines**

#### **Outcome 1**

Outcome 1 should be assessed by an Action Plan accompanied by structured questions or a report.

#### **Outcome 2**

Outcome 2 could be assessed by observation of performance supported by a report or work diary or portfolio, or, alternatively, by a series of structured questions based on a case study.

#### **Outcome 3**

Outcome 3 could be assessed by observation of performance supported by a report or work diary or portfolio, or, alternatively, by a series of structured questions based on a case study.

### **Online and Distance Learning**

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

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

**Unit title:** Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support

### Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There are opportunities to gather evidence towards Core Skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Candidates will have the opportunity to develop the following Core Skills:

**Communication at SCQF level 6:** will be developed by candidates through a range of activities and assessments (written and oral) as well as class and small group discussions (oral)

The Core Skills of *Problem Solving* and *Working with Others* will be developed at SCQF level 6 as the candidate will produce evidence of crisis management techniques, including the role of others when dealing with client problems and also contingency planning.

The Core Skill of *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* at SCQF level 6 will be developed as the candidate will likely utilise a computer when developing the Action Plan.

### 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
02	Additional guidance on the use of visiting speakers during the delivery of the Unit.	25/10/13

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## General information for candidates

### Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support

This Unit will be of interest to you if you work, or plan to work, for an agency or organisation which provides Supported Employment. This Unit is one of four Units in the Professional Development Award in Supported Employment Practice at SCQF level 7.

In this Unit you will gain knowledge of the principles of on and off the job support and will apply this knowledge by working with a client in a workplace experience opportunity. It will provide you with professional knowledge, values and skills related to working in the field of employment support

This Unit develops your knowledge and understanding of how to prepare a client for a work experience opportunity, and how to support the candidate through this placement. It also provides an opportunity to reflect on your own skills. Throughout the Unit you will be encouraged to apply what you learn to the experiences of the clients with whom you work.

On completion of the Unit you should be able to:

- ◆ Provide on and off the job support for the client in a Work Experience opportunity
- ◆ Support the employer and other employees in a Work Experience opportunity
- ◆ Agree level of aftercare and produce an exit strategy based on client needs

Assessment for this Unit will normally consist of some observation of practical work, and an Action Plan for the client with whom you are working. Alternatively, assessment could be responses to structured questions based on case studies, along with the Action Plan.