



Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: Managing Relationships with Employers and Other Agencies

Unit code: H28Y 35

Superclass: AJ

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Unit purpose

This Unit is designed for those who work in a position of responsibility for an agency or organisation which provides Supported Employment. It is designed to develop the professional knowledge, values and skills required by those in a position of responsibility within a Supported Employment service or an agency in order to equip them to apply these skills in all aspects of their job. It offers these candidates an opportunity to apply their knowledge by supporting employers and other agencies: negotiating with them, and facilitating employment and career opportunities for clients. Candidates will also evaluate the effectiveness of the support offered to employers.

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

- 1 Develop a strategy to support employers to offer employment and career opportunities to clients.
- 2 Negotiate agreements with employers and other agencies to meet the support needs of clients.
- 3 Evaluate the effectiveness of support provided to an employer through collaboration other agencies.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Although entry is at the discretion of the centre, it is recommended that candidates should have good communication and interpersonal skills. Candidates must have experience of providing employment support to clients with additional support needs, and will normally be working in a position of responsibility. It would be beneficial if candidates have completed the following HN Units:

General information (cont)

H1HY 34	<i>Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support</i>
H1HX 34	<i>Supported Employment Practice: Engaging with Clients</i>
H1J1 34	<i>Supported Employment Practice: Values and Principles</i>

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 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

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.

The purpose of Supported Employment is to provide sustained employment underpinned by specialist, personalised, individualised in-workplace support for individuals who require additional help in finding work.

It should be noted that throughout the Unit the term 'Supported Employment' is used to mean supported employment for those with disabilities or those from other disadvantaged groups, and the term 'client' refers to the person with the disability or disadvantage.

This is a free-standing HN Unit at SCQF level 8 and is a component Unit in the PDA in Supported Employment Advanced Practice at SCQF level 8. It also provides progression from the PDA in Supported Employment Practice at SCQF level 7. It could also be used independently for purposes of Continuing Professional Development.

Normally candidates will have experience of working in a position of responsibility in Supported Employment services/agencies and will have worked directly with clients and employers or staff in other agencies.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: Managing Relationships with Employers and Other Agencies

Unit code: H28Y 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

Develop a strategy to support employers to offer employment and career opportunities to clients.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Benefits to employers
- ◆ Employer mentoring
- ◆ Workplace culture
- ◆ Relevant legislation
- ◆ Sources of funding
- ◆ Capacity building
- ◆ Engagement skills

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ explains the benefits of Supported Employment to employers.
- ◆ explains how engagement skills are used to support employers.
- ◆ explains the legal responsibilities of employers in relation to employees' rights and health, safety and wellbeing.
- ◆ outlines ways in which the service could advise and mentor employers on the needs of clients.
- ◆ analyses the culture of the workplace.
- ◆ researches the financial support available for employers.
- ◆ analyses the infrastructure of the organisation in relation to its ability to support clients with additional needs.
- ◆ identifies two opportunities for building the capacity of the organisation.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: Managing Relationships with Employers and Other Agencies

Outcome 2

Negotiate agreements with employers and other agencies to meet the support needs of clients.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Evidence-based Supported Employment model
- ◆ Negotiation skills
- ◆ Benefits of partnership working
- ◆ Range and types of support available for employers
- ◆ Roles and Responsibilities of those involved with supporting the
- ◆ Referral criteria of agencies
- ◆ Financial implications of employment for client and employer
- ◆ Natural supports
- ◆ Formal and informal networks
- ◆ Impact of multiple impairments
- ◆ Reasonable Adjustments

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ explain the evidence-based Supported Employment model.
- ◆ outline the referral criteria on one Supported Employment agency.
- ◆ explain the benefits of partnership working.
- ◆ provide three examples of types of support available to an employer to employ or offer a placement to a client with additional needs.
- ◆ explain the legal requirements for employers to make reasonable adjustments in the workplace or to the job role to accommodate the client's needs.
- ◆ use negotiating skills effectively to agree one formal support network and one informal support network.
- ◆ use negotiating skills effectively to determine one new opportunity to engage with an employer.
- ◆ analyse the financial implications (both positive and negative) for the employer and client.
- ◆ provide a report detailing roles and responsibilities of employer, client, other agencies and Employment Support worker.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: Managing Relationships with Employers and Other Agencies

Outcome 3

Evaluate the effectiveness of support provided to an employer through collaboration with other agencies.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Range of support and services provided
- ◆ Management of client's on-going and fluctuating needs
- ◆ Management of people and resources
- ◆ Effectiveness of support provided in relation to client needs and organisational needs
- ◆ Contribution of employer and other agencies to the evidence based Supported Employment model
- ◆ Development of Supported Employment service
- ◆ Evaluation techniques and evaluation tools

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ outline the support and services to one employer offered through collaboration with other agencies.
- ◆ critically analyse the effectiveness of the support provided to the employer by all agencies/services involved.
- ◆ explain how a client's on-going and fluctuating needs will be managed.
- ◆ identify management skills required to develop the employer/client relationship.
- ◆ evaluate the contribution of the employer and other agencies in relation to the evidence-based supported employment model.
- ◆ evaluate opportunities for clients to sustain and develop within employment.
- ◆ identify opportunities to expand the Supported Employment service.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: Managing Relationships with Employers and Other Agencies

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 is a free-standing Unit at SCQF level 8. It is a mandatory Unit in the PDA Supported Employment Advanced Practice at SCQF level 8. It has been designed to provide progression from the PDA in Supported Employment Practice at SCQF level 7. It could also be undertaken as a stand-alone Unit for purposes of Continuing Professional Development

This Unit is designed for those who work in a position of responsibility for an agency or organisation which provides Supported Employment. Candidates will normally be in a role which carries responsibility for instigating opportunities for Supported Employment clients with employers and other agencies; negotiating with external stakeholders, eg employers and other agencies involved in supporting clients; management/ supervision of staff, (particularly those who have direct contact with the clients), evaluating the effectiveness of the client's placement and the relationship with the employer.

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

Candidates will require underpinning knowledge relating to the background of Supported Employment. The candidate should be familiar with the following definition -

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.'

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 & 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.

Throughout the Unit candidates should be encouraged to draw on their knowledge and experience from their own work environment and to relate this to their investigations and evaluations.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: Managing Relationships with Employers and Other Agencies

Outcome 1

When developing a strategy to support employers, candidates should examine employer concerns, support needs, workplace culture and any barriers these may cause. In addressing these barriers, candidates will explore and promote the benefits to employers who employ candidates with additional support needs. Due attention must be given to relevant legislation. Candidates should also identify opportunities to build relationships and employer capacity.

Prospective employers will have natural concerns if they haven't employed a person with additional support needs before. Some of these concerns will create barriers to employment which the Supported Employment Worker should be able to overcome.

These barriers may include the employer expressing:

- ◆ low expectations of the clients ability or commitment to work.
- ◆ discrimination (which may not be intended but should be identified and addressed).
- ◆ lack of confidence in their own ability to support a worker with additional support needs.
- ◆ worry that they may be out of pocket due to a lack of financial advice.
- ◆ fear of overall lack of support; will they be expected to cope on an on-going basis without external support?

Candidates will examine the concerns and needs of the employer and the types of information and support that can be provided to them to facilitate the transition into work for the client.

The Supported Employment worker should promote the many positive aspects and benefits of employing a client with additional support needs through the Supported Employment service; eg

- ◆ ready access to a pool of potential employees.
- ◆ reduction in recruitment costs.
- ◆ reduction in staff turnover.
- ◆ to develop and enhance corporate and social responsibility.
- ◆ to broaden the experience of company employees.
- ◆ to bring a new dimension to the company while helping those from disadvantaged groups.

The service offered to an employer by a Supported Employment worker will:

- ◆ facilitate the recruitment and selection process by matching the right client to the right job in the interest of the company.
- ◆ help with workforce sustainability through the retention of the client/employee.
- ◆ assist with issues relating to finance and legislation.
- ◆ provide assistance on any training needs of the client/employee and on any specific support requirements on an on-going basis.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: Managing Relationships with Employers and Other Agencies

Supported Employment services can be accessed by both public and private sector employers, whether small or large. The amount and types of support required by employers will vary considerably depending on the size of the organisation and the employer's experience of Supported Employment.

Supported Employment workers should also take into account issues relating to workplace culture including the following factors:

- ◆ formal and informal organisational structures.
- ◆ dress code/ appearance.
- ◆ formal and informal rules.
- ◆ internal communication.
- ◆ hierarchy.

The Employers are also customers of the Supported Employment service and their needs and concerns must be addressed effectively to facilitate employment and career opportunities for the client.

The employer may need help on specific issues relating to the health and wellbeing of the client within the workplace such as risk assessment, reasonable adjustments, raising awareness of other staff to the needs and welfare of the client and any potential risk to staff.

Relevant legislation would include:

- ◆ Equality Act 2010
- ◆ Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

The impact of legislation on the provision of Supported Employment should be considered.

Sources of funding currently include Access to Work, European funding and Lottery funding.

Capacity Building in Supported Employment focuses on understanding the obstacles faced by employers and clients in accessing and sustaining employment and building capacity by enhancing the abilities that will allow them to achieve measurable and sustainable results.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: Managing Relationships with Employers and Other Agencies

Outcome 2

Outcome 2 deals with negotiating agreements with employers and other agencies. In order to undertake such negotiations, candidates will require an understanding of:

- ◆ the evidence-based Supported Employment model
- ◆ roles and responsibilities of employers, clients and Supported Employment workers and other agencies
- ◆ legal requirements for 'reasonable adjustments'
- ◆ possible impact of 'multiple impairments'
- ◆ the benefits of partnership working
- ◆ financial implications for both client and employer
- ◆ engagement skills and techniques

The evidence-based Supported Employment model promotes more joined-up working across services and tackles misconceptions such as 'disabled people do not want to work' and the notion that 'working could have a detrimental effect on health, particularly mental health'. The model emphasises rapid placement into employment rather than extended periods of vocational preparation before entering the competitive job market.

At this level candidates will understand that people with disabilities have the skills (or are prepared to develop the skills) to work, and also the desire to work. When engaging with prospective employers it is important that this ethos is promoted.

Candidates should meet the employer's needs by exploring the benefits of fostering partnership working.

Candidates should be aware of the importance of:

- ◆ relationship building,
- ◆ teamwork
- ◆ negotiation
- ◆ persuasion (the ability to win people over)
- ◆ good interpersonal skills

Candidates should be made aware of the range of agencies in the statutory and voluntary sector that can provide additional support to employers to provide and sustain employment for clients with additional support needs.

The list of agencies below is not exclusive.

Statutory Agencies:

- ◆ The Department for Work and Pensions
- ◆ NHS

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: Managing Relationships with Employers and Other Agencies

Voluntary Agencies:

- ◆ Royal National Institute for the Blind
- ◆ Action on Hearing Loss
- ◆ Scottish Association for Mental Health

Natural supports and formal/informal networks

Natural supports in the workplace include support from supervisors and co-workers. Such support could be in the form of mentoring, friendships, socialising at breaks and/or after work, providing feedback on job performance, or learning a new skill together at the invitation of a supervisor or co-workers. Natural supports can enhance the social integration between the employee with a disability and his/her co-workers and supervisor. Natural supports may be more readily available, permanent, and consistent and thereby facilitate long-term job retention.

Formal support may include initial negotiation between a senior Supported Employment practitioner and the employer but subsequently support may be given by the Supported Employment worker. However, situations may vary depending on a number of factors including:

- ◆ the nature of the support required.
- ◆ organisational infrastructure.
- ◆ additional sources of funding.
- ◆ availability of staff.
- ◆ commitment to (additional) staff training/awareness raising.
- ◆ degree of mentoring required.
- ◆ constraints/requirements such as the size of the organisation, whether there is a policy in place of employing/providing placement opportunities for individuals with additional needs.

Informal support could include mentoring and peer support. Peer support involves establishing natural supports in the workplace where a co-worker takes on a mentoring role to support the new employee at work. This can help eliminate any difficulties that people with disabilities or disadvantages may face at work.

It should be noted that the definition of multiple impairment is people with a combination of two or more disabilities, eg affecting mobility and communication and any impact on prospective employment should be taken account of.

Candidates should consider the employer's duty to make reasonable adjustments where arrangements or physical premises place the disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled. Supported Employment staff should negotiate with and support the employer to make the necessary reasonable adjustments

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: Managing Relationships with Employers and Other Agencies

Outcome 3

Candidates will require to use a range of evaluation techniques which could include reflection, questionnaires and interviews with employers, clients and co-workers.

The evaluation should consider the types of support available and how they are appropriately offered and/or effective in one particular situation.

Candidates should also consider the impact of the on-going and fluctuating needs of a client and the capacity of the employer to respond to any changes in the support requirements of these clients. These could be temporary or more permanent changes and the employer may need advice on the additional or different needs, ie some people require intensive support such as during an acute episode of a long-term condition, or needs may change due to progression of an illness. Other clients may require intensive support for a short- term period which can be withdrawn when recovery is complete Candidates should examine how the on-going and fluctuating needs of the client has been (or will be) managed and how collaboration with other agencies will effectively facilitate this process.

Candidates should also reflect on their own techniques for managing people and resources and the final evaluation should include reference to this.

Within their evaluation candidates should examine of the types of formal and informal support to which the client has access.

Candidates may investigate a particular employer/employee relationship and examine and evaluate the methods used to support the employer to sustain and develop the employment opportunity.

It is expected that within the final evaluation candidates will include identification of areas where there is opportunity to expand the Supported Employment service.

Guidance on the delivery of this Unit

The Unit has three Outcomes.

Candidates should be encouraged and supported to carry out their own research. They should also consult with colleagues and other stakeholders, including those with experience of using the Supported Employment service, and participate in group work. This approach will provide a basis of information for the analysis and evaluation required throughout the Unit.

The learning and teaching for all Outcomes could be complemented by group discussion, lectures from senior practitioners, self-study and investigation.

Throughout the Unit candidates should be encouraged to apply their learning to the experiences of the clients, organisation/agency, and employers with whom they work.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: Managing Relationships with Employers and Other Agencies

Delivery and discussion should focus on the principles of managing relationships to ensure an effective Supported Employment Service. This could include:

- ◆ mentoring, advising and supporting employers.
- ◆ negotiating agreements with and between clients, employers and other agencies.
- ◆ advising on legislation and health and wellbeing issues.
- ◆ finding new opportunities/new employers to expand the service.

Much of the learning will be achieved on an on-going basis and, where possible, should be based on naturally occurring workplace practice. Candidates should be encouraged to retain appropriate paperwork relating to all aspects of their work, and relating to personal reviews, as this could be useful for a portfolio of evidence. Confidentiality of clients and employers should be maintained appropriately.

Outcome 1

For Outcome 1, in order to develop a strategy, the focus should be on identifying and analysing ways in which the Supported Employment worker could find and secure the offer of employment and career opportunities through the Supported Employment service. This will include advising and supporting employers, examining the workplace culture, addressing barriers to employment and identifying opportunities for capacity building.

The strategy and related report should be a focussed piece of work relating to managing the process of supporting employers throughout the initial process, eg:

- ◆ engaging with an employer and addressing their concerns.
- ◆ supporting an employer to meet client's needs.
- ◆ identifying funding sources.
- ◆ managing resources.
- ◆ building employer's capacity.

Delivery of this Outcome should also cover the wider context of Supported Employment including:

- ◆ economic, political and legislative influences.
- ◆ impact of external factors.
- ◆ labour market trends.
- ◆ the importance of good communication and interpersonal skills in engaging with employers.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: Managing Relationships with Employers and Other Agencies

Outcome 2

In Outcome 2 tutors should prepare candidates by teaching negotiating skills and by mentoring candidates on what should be covered within a Negotiated agreement/contract. Teaching and learning should take place through varied activities which could include discussion groups where candidates could draw on their own experience and share best practice and by the use of case studies and role play.

Candidates should be encouraged to examine a range of agencies in the statutory and voluntary sector and identify their roles and responsibilities in supporting employers and They should consider opportunities for collaboration with these other agencies and the benefits of a multi - agency approach.

Outcome 3

This Outcome focuses on the development of evaluation skills and techniques, including reflection on own performance and self-evaluation. Tutors should introduce candidates to a range of evaluation techniques and tools and guide them on the most appropriate for their purpose.

Candidates should evaluate the effectiveness of the support provided to the employer through collaboration with other agencies.

A range of evaluation techniques and tools should be used, including reflecting on own and other's contribution to the process.

Candidates should be given guidance on what should be included in the final report; eg financial and statistical evidence to support their evaluation of the effectiveness of the process and identification of opportunities to further develop the service.

Guidance on the assessment of this Unit

There are three instruments of assessment for this Unit.

Assessment Guidelines

Outcome 1

Outcome 1 is assessed by a strategy document through which the candidate should demonstrate that they have investigated:

- ◆ the legal responsibilities of employers who provide Supported Employment.
- ◆ the support available to prospective employers.
- ◆ the benefits to employers of providing employment and career opportunities for clients with additional support needs.
- ◆ opportunities for capacity building.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: Managing Relationships with Employers and Other Agencies

Outcome 2

Outcome 2 is assessed by an assignment based on a case study. The case study could be based on the candidates experience of working in partnership with an employer and other agencies to meet the support needs of a client. Where this is not possible, the candidate could be presented with a scenario/case study.

Evidence should include an action plan which should set out the roles and responsibilities of employer, client, other agencies and the supported employment worker. It should also outline strategies for financial planning, Health and Safety requirements and support networks.

Outcome 3

Outcome 3 is assessed by an evaluation report of the effectiveness of the support provided to an employer by all agencies involved, including the Supported Employment worker. This should be measured against the intended Outcome - successful provision of employment and opportunities for sustaining employment and career development for a client with additional support needs. The report should include any recommendations based on identification of on-going support needs and opportunities to further develop the service. It should also provide an analysis of the financial implications for both client and employer which could include a cost/benefit analysis.

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.

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 Skill components.

There will be opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Communication* at SCQF level 6, *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6, *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* at SCQF level 5, *Numeracy* at SCQF level 5 and *Working with Others* at SCQF level 6 in this Unit.

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: Supported Employment Practice: Managing Relationships with Employers and Other Agencies

This Unit will suit you if you work in a position of responsibility for an agency or organisation which provides Supported Employment. It is a mandatory Unit in the PDA Supported Employment Practice at SCQF level 8. However, it is can also be taken as a stand-alone Unit to provide specialist skills and knowledge for skills top-up and Continuing Professional Development.

In this Unit you will develop the professional knowledge, values and skills required to work in a position of responsibility within a Supported Employment service or agency and to apply these skills in all aspects of the job. It offers an opportunity to apply your knowledge in negotiating with employers and in supporting employers and other agencies to facilitate employment and career opportunities for clients. You will also evaluate the effectiveness of the support offered to employers.

Upon completion of the Unit you will be able to:

- ◆ Develop a strategy to support employers to offer employment and career opportunities to clients with additional support needs.
- ◆ Negotiate agreements with employers and other agencies to meet the support needs of clients.
- ◆ Evaluate the effectiveness of support provided to an employer through collaboration with other agencies.

There are three assessments for the Unit.

For Outcome 1 you will develop a strategy to support employers to provide opportunities for clients to obtain and sustain employment and to develop within the employment opportunity. You will also examine the legal responsibilities of employers who provide Supported Employment and will consider the rights of clients and health, safety and wellbeing at work issues.

Outcome 2 is assessed by a case study which could be based on your experience of working in partnership with an employer and other agencies to meet the needs of a client. You will need to evidence the process of negotiating an agreement/contract and produce a report detailing your role and responsibilities and the roles and responsibilities of the employer, the client and other relevant agencies.

Outcome 3 is assessed by an evaluation of the effectiveness of the support provided to an employer by all agencies involved, including your own contribution. This could be based on an employer and client with whom you are working. You will produce a reflective review which includes recommendations for developing the service.