# Higher National Unit specification: general information

**Unit title:** Risk and Case Management in a Multi-agency Context

**Unit code:** H2X4 34

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| **Superclass:** | EC |
| **Publication date:** | November 2012 |
| **Source:** | Scottish Qualifications Authority |
| **Version:** | 01 |

## Unit purpose

This Unit focuses on the risk management of high risk domestic abuse clients, including risk identification and safety planning in a multi-agency context, with particular emphasis on risk assessment conferences. The Unit also covers case management, including the tools and processes advocacy services need to provide an effective and accountable approach.

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

♦ Identify and understand risk factors of serious physical harm and homicide.
♦ Apply risk management tools.
♦ Identify the value of a multi-agency approach to managing risk.
♦ Understand case management systems and how they relate to practice.

## Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Candidates should work in the domestic abuse sector in a capacity that allows them to demonstrate the Evidence Requirements for this Unit through work activities, and it is assumed that they will have prior knowledge of the dynamics of domestic abuse.

Candidates should have good communication skills, both written and oral and be able to use IT proficiently. We recommend these core skills to be at SCQF level 5.

This can be evidenced by the course application process/interview and/or by an employer's reference. Entry will be at the discretion of the delivering centre.

## General information (cont)

## Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit(s) 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.*

## 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.

# Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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

## Outcome 1

Identify and understand risk factors of serious physical harm and homicide.

### Knowledge and/or Skills

♦ Risk factors of serious physical harm and homicide.
♦ Methods of risk identification.

### Evidence Requirements

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

♦ describe the context and value of risk identification
♦ identify risk factors specific to serious physical harm and homicide
♦ describe the difference between alternative methods of risk identification/assessment

## Outcome 2

Apply risk management tools.

### Knowledge and/or Skills

♦ Risk identification in practice.
♦ Safety planning in practice.

### Evidence Requirements

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

♦ apply a risk identification tool
♦ evaluate the use of risk identification tools in their practice
♦ apply a safety planning tool
♦ evaluate the use of safety planning tools in their practice
♦ describe the link between risk identification and safety planning

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

**Unit title:** Risk and Case Management in a Multi-agency Context

## Outcome 3

Identify the value of a multi-agency approach to managing risk.

### Knowledge and/or Skills

♦ Multi-agency risk management structures.
♦ Multi-agency risk assessment conferences.
♦ Role of the advocate in the multi-agency risk management environment.

### Evidence Requirements

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

♦ identify multi-agency structures that relate to risk management
♦ describe the purpose of multi-agency risk assessment conferences
♦ evaluate the multi-agency risk assessment conference process
♦ describe the role of the advocate within the multi-agency risk assessment conference


## Outcome 4

Understand case management systems and how they relate to practice.

### Knowledge and/or Skills

♦ Referral criteria and processes.
♦ Case prioritisation and allocation.
♦ Case files contents.
♦ Legislation relating to storage and sharing of information.
♦ Case documentation and accountability.
♦ Information sharing and confidentiality.
♦ Case reviews and closure.

### Evidence Requirements

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

♦ identify referral criteria for advocacy services
♦ describe referral processes
♦ evaluate processes for prioritising and allocating referrals
♦ describe the contents of a client case file
♦ describe effective practice in relation to case documentation
♦ explain the principles of information sharing
♦ describe best practice in relation to confidentiality
♦ explain the purpose of case reviews
♦ evaluate case closure procedures

# Higher National Unit specification: support notes

**Unit title:**     Risk and Case Management in a Multi-agency Context

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

The domestic abuse advocate has a specialised role working with clients who are at high risk of serious harm or homicide. The role is highly specialised, and entails the provision of intensive support to support clients in achieving long-term safety.

Advocates require a wide-range of skills and knowledge to enable them to identify and address immediate safety concerns, and to implement practical plans that will protect clients and their children. Advocates are independent, but work within a multi-agency context alongside both statutory and voluntary agencies, to offer the widest range of options and solutions.

Key elements of the advocacy role include the application of various skills, risk management knowledge and an understanding of the criminal justice and civil legal system. This Unit is part of a Professional Development Award that is designed to provide a formal and nationally recognised qualification for domestic abuse advocates that covers each of these elements.

By undertaking this Unit candidates should develop knowledge and expertise on risk identification, safety planning and multi-agency risk management.

This Unit is suitable for those who are:

♦    currently working as an independent domestic abuse advocate or domestic abuse practitioner
♦    about to start work as an independent  domestic abuse advocate or domestic abuse practitioner
♦    a manager of domestic abuse service with a caseload

## Guidance on the delivery of this Unit

This Unit should be delivered as part of a Professional Development Award in domestic abuse advocacy. This would be part of a holistic course that covers the role, skills and knowledge required of a domestic abuse advocate. The course would be delivered primarily in-room using a variety of training methods, and supported by comprehensive materials for candidates. There is potential to offer a blended learning environment by offering some on-line learning opportunities.

# Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Risk and Case Management in a Multi-agency Context

### Outcome 1

The emphasis of this Outcome is to provide context to risk management and methods of risk identification. Candidates will benefit from an overview of how the research into domestic homicide developed, in particular the studies in London and Cardiff that identified the common risk factors. These risk factors should be explained and explored, ideally in an interactive session to enable candidates to build their knowledge on why certain factors are particularly pertinent when working with high risk domestic abuse clients.

Consideration should be given to the different types of risk assessment, such as clinical, professional and actuarial, and how they compare. This should then be linked to the current work of the advocate in managing risk, with emphasis on what tools they need to facilitate their work with clients, for example, risk identification and safety planning tools. This would link to the role of the advocate session from Unit 1.

### Outcome 2

Here candidates will be introduced to risk identification tools and given an opportunity to apply these in practice. Emphasis should be placed on relating theory to practice, with opportunity to evaluate and reflect on using recommended tools. Candidates should be encouraged to bring along their own tools for comparison and discussion.

Copies of the CAADA Domestic Abuse Stalking Honour-based violence Risk Identification Checklist (DASH RIC) should be distributed, and candidates given an opportunity to apply it in a role play session. Candidates would be encouraged to consider how this tool compares to others, its usability, strengths, weaknesses, etc.

Candidates will also be introduced to safety planning tools and given an opportunity to apply these in practice, again with emphasis on reflecting on practice. Candidates should be encouraged to bring along their own tools for comparison and discussion. Copies of the CAADA Independent Support and Safety Plan (ISSP) would be distributed, with an explanation of its purpose, and candidates should given an opportunity to use it.

It would be useful to have a plenary discussion on the links between risk identification and safety planning, the need to combine these two processes, and what this means to advocates in practice in relation to risk and case management.

### Outcome 3

Candidates would benefit from an introduction to the coordinated approach to risk management, as set out in the Duluth model, with links to the multi-agency partnerships discussed in Unit 1. Emphasis should be placed on the multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC), including the research and evaluation underpinning this method.

Candidates would benefit from a practical demonstration of a multi-agency case conference, with opportunity to discuss and reflect on the method. It is recommended this takes the form of a real-time MARAC, with the entire group given an opportunity to participate either in role-play or structured observation. Particular emphasis should be placed on the role of the advocate within a conference, with a discussion on what this means in practice and what it offers clients.

# Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Risk and Case Management in a Multi-agency Context

Candidates should be given an opportunity to discuss how the MARAC compares to local risk management arrangements, with a practical question and answer session to allow for considerations, suggestions and reflections.

**Outcome 4**

Ideally the case management session would take the form of an ongoing hypothetical case from referral to closure, with a combination of trainer-led discussion, group and individual work that candidates can work with and build-upon. Consideration should be given to referral procedures and what this means in practice, with discussion around the need to identify and prioritise high risk domestic abuse clients and how to manage and communicate this locally. It is recommended that there is emphasis on identifying means of prioritising and allocating case loads pertinent to risk levels and the skills of advocates within their teams.

Candidates should also have opportunity to develop a client case file, considering best practice in terms of structure, content and storage. This will include an overview of the legal requirements of information sharing, and how this relates to practice. Individual sessions might include comparing suitable and inappropriate case notes, discussing the contents of a comprehensive file, and listing they key elements of data protection legislation.

Emphasis should be placed on the need for regular case reviews and systems that can facilitate this, such as using the RIC/ISSP introduced in Outcome 2, case supervision, peer discussion, etc. In particular, candidates will benefit from an overview of case closure procedures, especially when it is appropriate to close a case, with opportunity to reflect on effective exit strategies.

The key focus of the case management session is to relate it to the role of the advocate (Unit 1), reinforce the importance of identifying client risk level, and linking this closely to Outcomes 1–3 of this Unit.

## Guidance on the assessment of this Unit

Assessment of this Unit should be carried out by the candidates submitting assignments that include reflective accounts, ranging from a maximum of 200 to 1,000 words each, based on real work activities (where possible) and in-room exercises. They would also have to answer a number of short response questions.

Assignments could be assessed electronically using a web-based system where tutors can provide feedback electronically to the candidate, or it could be assessed via a paper-based system where candidates submit written assignments.

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## Assessment Guidelines

**Outcome 1**

It is recommended that candidates explain how risk identification techniques evolved in the context of high risk domestic abuse, for example, by naming the key research studies and listing the key risk factors of serious harm and homicide. It would be useful to compare the different forms of identification/assessment, for example, clinical and actuarial measures, and what the outcomes mean in a short account of no more than 200 words.

**Outcome 2**

Ideally candidates should submit sample risk identification (CAADA DASH RIC) and safety planning tools (ISSP) from their practice, or from a hypothetical example. This would include an evaluative and reflective account (of no more than 1,000 words) of their experience with this, including the skills they apply to this process, and show an understanding of the correlation between risk and safety.

**Outcome 3**

It is recommended that candidates name a variety of risk management structures, with particular emphasis on the multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC). Ideally candidates would provide a description of the MARAC process, for example, referral procedure, structure, etc, and compare this to local processes. They should provide evidence of their knowledge around the role of the advocate to this process, for example, by answering short response questions describing what they do, what skills they use, how this relates to their wider remit of addressing high risk domestic abuse.

**Outcome 4**

It is recommended that candidates describe and reflect on case management procedures and how this relates to the remit of their role using a combination of short response and reflective account questions. They would describe effective referral procedures, implications for practice and what happens following referral, perhaps comparing best practice to what happens in their own service. They should provide evidence of a workable case file and show an understanding of information sharing requirements and how this relates to accountability. Candidates should ideally provide a reflective and evaluative account (of no more than 200 words) of case review and closure procedures.

## Online and Distance Learning

Whilst the majority of this course will be delivered through in-room learning, an emphasis should be placed on blended learning as the assignments and supporting materials could be delivered through a web-based learning package.

# Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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## Opportunities for developing Core Skills

You will be given opportunities to develop your Core Skills in the following areas although these will not be certificated:

**Communication:** written communication skills could be developed through the production of assignments. Oral communication skills may be demonstrated and developed within in-room exercises and through reflective consideration on how this relates to practice. Communication skills will be practiced and developed through in-room discussion and assignment writing.

**Working with Others**: could be developed through working as part of a team, within the training and work context, such as participating in group exercises, and interactions with other staff involved in the delivery of the course. It can also be developed by working with clients and colleagues.

**Problem Solving:** could be developed through reflective evaluations of how you applied skills to practice. Problem solving methods used in assessing risk and applying safety planning could also develop Problem Solving skills.

**Information and Communication Technology (ICT):** could be developed through using information technology to participate in the course and submit assignments.


## 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:**    Risk and Case Management in a Multi-agency Context

This Unit has been designed as part of the Professional Development Award for Domestic Abuse Advocacy. It will be useful to you if you are:

♦ currently working as an independent domestic abuse advocate or domestic abuse practitioner
♦ about to start work as an independent domestic abuse advocate or domestic abuse practitioner
♦ a manager of a domestic abuse service with a caseload

In this particular Unit you will learn about the development of risk identification processes for serious physical harm and homicide in the context of domestic abuse. You will have the opportunity to practice using risk identification and safety planning tools. Then you will explore a multi-agency approach to risk management, with particular emphasis on your role within a multi-agency risk assessment conference. Furthermore, you will review and reflect on case management procedures, and the impact this has on client safety and advocate accountability.

On completion of the Unit you will be able to:

♦ identify and understand risk factors of serious physical harm and homicide
♦ apply risk management tools
♦ identify the value of a multi-agency approach to managing risk
♦ understand case management systems and how they relate to practice

You will be assessed on these outcomes by submitting assignments that will include a number of written reflective accounts about your work practice (ranging from a maximum of 200–1,000 words) as well as answering short response questions.