



Higher National Unit specification

General information

Unit title: Career Information, Advice and Guidance: Employability (SCQF level 7)

Unit code: H5XM 34

Superclass: GF

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Version: 01

Unit purpose

This specialist Unit has been designed to allow the candidate to develop knowledge of employability in the context of Career Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG), and to apply their knowledge to support customers to develop their employability. Candidates will investigate the development of employability in Scotland and examine key features and themes and the policy framework surrounding employability. They will have opportunities to support customers to further develop their employability and will examine how this could enhance the customers' career development. They will review their performance in providing the employability support.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Investigate the development of employability in Scotland.
- 2 Support customers in the development of their employability.
- 3 Reflect on and develop own practice in applying appropriate techniques to enhance employability for customers.

Credit points and level

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

Higher National Unit specification: General information (cont)

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Recommended entry to the Unit

Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, candidates would normally be expected to have competence in communication skills at Intermediate 2 (SCQF level 5) or equivalent. It would be beneficial if the candidate has some previous knowledge and experience of the career information, advice and guidance sector and the advisor's role within it.

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes for 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 is a mandatory Unit in the PDA in Career Information, Advice and Guidance: Customer Support at SCQF level 7 and is a component Unit of the HNC Career Information, Advice and Guidance Practice. It can also be taken as a stand-alone Unit for the purpose of continued professional development.

Equality and inclusion

This Unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of candidates 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.

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards

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Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

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

Investigate the development of employability in Scotland.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Current definition/s of employability
- ◆ Aspects of development of Employability in Scotland
- ◆ Key features
- ◆ Key themes
- ◆ Benefits to the customer/job seeker
- ◆ Socio-economic factors
- ◆ Current relevant legislation and policy

Outcome 2

Support customers in the development of their employability.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Range of customers
- ◆ Assessment of customers' existing employability
- ◆ Supporting customers to take forward agreed actions to meet identified gaps in their employability
- ◆ Delivery of appropriate interventions to enhance customer employability
- ◆ Signposting customers towards relevant support

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Career Information, Advice and Guidance: Employability (SCQF level 7)

Outcome 3

Reflect on and develop own practice in applying appropriate techniques to enhance employability for customers.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Application of Employability
- ◆ Principles underpinning reflective practice
- ◆ Evaluation techniques
- ◆ Evaluation tools

Evidence Requirements for this Unit

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

Outcome 1

- ◆ Explain current definition/s of employability
- ◆ Outline one current development in Scotland
- ◆ Explain the key features of employability
- ◆ Explain three key themes
- ◆ Describe the benefits to the individual
- ◆ Describe the benefits to the employer
- ◆ Outline socio-economic influences
- ◆ Outline current relevant legislation and policy which impacts on employability

Outcome 2

- ◆ Give two examples of customers with different life contexts
- ◆ Explain two methods of assessing a customer's existing employability
- ◆ Support two customers to take forward agreed actions to further develop their employability

Outcome 3

- ◆ Review one customer/adviser scenario and evaluate the effectiveness of the employability support provided
- ◆ Reflect on practice and analyse own strengths and areas for development in relation to supporting customers to develop their employability



Higher National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Career Information, Advice and Guidance: Employability (SCQF level 7)

Unit Support Notes are offered as guidance and 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 specialist Unit has been designed to allow the candidate to develop knowledge of employability in the context of Career Information Advice and Guidance (CIAG). Candidates will investigate the development of employability in Scotland and examine key features and themes and the policy framework surrounding employability. They will have opportunities to support customers to further develop their employability and will examine how this could enhance the customers' career development. They will review their own performance in providing the employability support.

Candidates will require considerable underpinning knowledge in order to understand the development and concept of employability.

They should therefore familiarise themselves with recent relevant policy. The most relevant document is: *Working for Growth: a Refresh of the Employability Framework for Scotland* published in September 2012 by the Scottish Government.

Other useful documents are: *The Scottish Government's CIAG Strategy* published in 2011 and the *Career Management Skills Framework for Scotland* published by Skills Development Scotland in 2012. The Scottish Government document *Skills for Scotland: Accelerating the Recovery and Increasing Sustainable Economic Growth* sets out the Scottish Government strategy for a successful, globally competitive economy against a backdrop of global economic downturn. Economic development is about delivering jobs and employability is about equipping people to fill them.

Outcome 1

The definition of employability in a CIAG context will include:

- ◆ Getting a job
- ◆ Keeping a job
- ◆ Progressing within the workplace
- ◆ Reaching potential in all areas

Employability is also transferable to lifelong learning and volunteering.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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The Scottish Government definition of employability within a CIAG context includes all things that enable people to increase their chances of getting a job, keeping a job and progressing within the workplace and reaching potential in all areas. It encompasses knowledge, behaviour and self confidence

The Scottish Government's Employability Development team is focussed on developing and growing the delivery infrastructure and building capacity in employability across Scotland through partnerships and collaboration with a broad range of stakeholders.

There is a particular focus on the needs of people with disability as disabled people and those with long-term health conditions, learning disabilities or mental health issues can face particular and complex barriers to sustained employment.

Key features affecting employability include:

- ◆ Socio-economic factors
- ◆ Current difficulties in relation to supply and demand for jobs
- ◆ Increasing culture of non-working families
- ◆ Impact of welfare reforms
- ◆ Current economic issues
- ◆ Factors influencing employability potential of job seekers-Knowledge/Behaviour/ Self Confidence/social situation

The key themes include

- ◆ Cross boundary working
- ◆ Early Intervention
- ◆ Employer Engagement
- ◆ Volunteering
- ◆ Welfare reforms

Key customers who are a particular focus for employability support in Scotland include:

- ◆ Carers
- ◆ People with disabilities
- ◆ Ethnic minorities
- ◆ People experiencing homelessness
- ◆ People with learning disabilities
- ◆ Lone parents
- ◆ People with mental health problems
- ◆ Offenders
- ◆ Older workers
- ◆ Substance users
- ◆ Young people in poverty
- ◆ Women

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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(This list is not exhaustive. A more comprehensive list can be found on the Scottish Government website under Employability).

Outcome 2

The life contexts set out in the CMS framework for Scotland are:

- ◆ Before starting work
- ◆ Moving beyond education towards work
- ◆ While in work
- ◆ When not working
- ◆ Preparing to leave or reduce work

Examples of support to take forward actions to meet identified gaps in employability could include:

- ◆ Job Search Skills
- ◆ Application Skills
- ◆ CV Development
- ◆ Interview Techniques
- ◆ National training programmes
- ◆ National Certificate Access Courses
- ◆ Accredited Courses
- ◆ Core Skills Development
- ◆ Access to volunteering opportunities

Employability support may be provided by other delivery agents. Such as training providers, schools, colleges, employers and the Department of Work and Pensions. Aspects of employability support may be embedded within national training programmes. There are also many web-enabled and commercially available employability resources which could be accessed as support material.

Candidates will explore ways/ models to deliver appropriate to enhance customer's employability. They should also be able to signpost customers towards relevant support.

Outcome 3

For Outcome 3 the candidate may need support on how to reflect on own practice and how to evaluate a customer/ advisor scenario.

Throughout the Unit, candidates will require to demonstrate analytical skills in order to review a customer/adviser scenario and to evaluate the effectiveness of the employability support provided.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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In addition, the candidate may require support on how to identify personal learning needs for on-going professional development in relation to providing employability support.

Throughout the Unit candidates should, where possible, use their knowledge and experience from their own work environment and relate this to their review and evaluation. Where this is not possible, case studies could be used.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

The Outcomes of this Unit should be delivered in the order presented. A candidate-centred participative and practical approach is recommended.

Delivery of this Unit could incorporate a variety of teaching and learning methods including:

- ◆ Formal lectures
- ◆ Group work and discussions
- ◆ Visiting speakers
- ◆ Individual and group research
- ◆ Internet searches
- ◆ Reflection

Distance learning may be appropriate for aspects of this Unit; this will be at the discretion of the delivering centre.

Delivery of Outcomes 1 provides opportunities for candidates to investigate the development, context and purpose of Employability in relation to CIAG. Candidates should examine current relevant policy documents including *Working for Growth: a Refresh of the Employability Framework for Scotland* and also *the Curriculum for Excellence*.

Outcome 2 allows for a practical application of candidate knowledge and understanding in supporting customers to further develop their employability. This preferably will be based on the use of candidates' own workplace practice or, where this isn't possible, case studies. The candidate should provide examples from their own experience on the provision of employability support, or, alternatively, could provide comments from research or case studies.

For Outcome 3 candidates will review one customer/adviser scenario and use this analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of the support given to develop employability, and to evaluate their own contribution.

Candidates should be made aware of how they can use reflection and evaluation to improve their work practice and should be able to explain why this is important. As part of the overall review, candidates should be encouraged to reflect upon their own performance in supporting customers to develop their employability. They should be introduced to various methods that can be used review the effectiveness of support given to customers. The review must include reference to how the support given to customers and the candidate's own practice ensured data protection and promoted equality and inclusion for the customer.

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Tutors/lecturers/deliverers should make reference to current relevant policies and legislation throughout the delivery of this Unit. References and background material may include:

Opportunities for All, Supporting all young people to participate in post-16 learning, training or work Scottish Government 2012 describes the aim, principles and delivery mechanisms of the Scottish Government's commitment to an offer of a place in learning or training for all 16-19 year olds who are not already engaged.

A Curriculum for Excellence: The Scottish Government. 1 November 2004.
The curriculum aims to help every candidate develop knowledge, skills and attributes for learning, life and work.

Skills for Scotland: Accelerating the Recovery and Increasing Sustainable Economic Growth
The Scottish Government 2010

The strategy is structured around four key priority themes of empowering people, supporting employers, simplifying the skills system and strengthening partnerships.

A Working Life for All Disabled People: The Supported Employment Framework for Scotland.
The Scottish Government 2010

The framework acknowledges that many disabled people in Scotland face substantial barriers in finding and sustaining work.

Getting it Right for Every Child: Scottish Government 2006

A national programme aimed at improving Outcomes for all children and young people in Scotland

Equalities Act 2010

The following UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) publications may be of use to candidates;

<http://www.ukces.org.uk/publications/employability-skills-research-and-policy-briefing>
(published April 2010)

<http://www.ukces.org.uk/publications/employability-challenge-full-report> (published Feb 2009)

<http://www.ukces.org.uk/publications/employability-challenge-case-studies> (published Feb 2009)

<http://www.ukces.org.uk/publications/employability-skills-project> (published June 2008)

References given are correct at the time of publication but centres should ensure that current and relevant background information is available for candidates.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to candidates.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where candidates experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

There are three instruments of assessment for this Unit.

Outcome 1 could be assessed by an investigation. Candidates should be provided with an investigation brief which covers all Evidence Requirements. The investigation will require candidates to gather information from a variety of sources which could include:

- ◆ Visiting speakers
- ◆ Internet research
- ◆ Library searches
- ◆ Journals

Candidates should organise and present findings in an appropriate format. It may be beneficial for candidates to work in groups and share information. However, the final investigation must be the candidate's own work.

The assessment for Outcomes 2 and 3 could be combined. The Outcomes could be assessed holistically in a portfolio of evidence. This evidence should be based on the candidate's real work practice or, where necessary, case studies could be used. The case studies could be based on candidates with whom the candidate is working. The portfolio of evidence must include a reflective account based on the customer/ adviser scenario, an evaluation of the support provided and an analysis of own strengths and areas for development.

Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Opportunities for developing Core and other essential 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 and *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 5.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for candidates

Unit title: Career Information, Advice and Guidance: Employability (SCQF level 7)

This section will help you decide whether this is the Unit for you by explaining what the Unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the Unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

Overview:

This specialist Unit has been designed to allow you to develop knowledge of employability in the context of Career Information Advice and Guidance (CIAG). You will investigate the development of Employability in Scotland and examine key features and themes and the policy framework surrounding employability.

This Unit has three Outcomes:

- 1 Investigate the development of employability in Scotland.
- 2 Support customers in the development of their employability.
- 3 Reflect on and develop own practice in applying appropriate techniques to enhance employability for customers.

You will learn about the development of Employability and the policy drivers underpinning the Scottish Government's strategy on increasing employability. You will have opportunities, perhaps from your own work experience, to support customers to further develop their employability and will examine how this could enhance the customers' career development. You will also gain skills in reflective practice by reviewing your own performance in providing effective employability support.

Assessment of this Unit could take the following forms:

Outcome 1 could be assessed by an investigation on the development and nature of employability and the key policy drivers. To facilitate this, you may be provided with an investigation brief.

Outcomes 2 and 3 are assessed holistically in a portfolio of evidence based on your work practice in supporting customers to further develop their employability. The portfolio of evidence will include a reflective account based on a customer/ adviser scenario, an evaluation of the support provided and an analysis of own strengths and areas for development.