



Higher National Unit specification

General information

Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: Engaging with Employers (SCQF level 7)

Unit code: H69J 34

Superclass: AJ

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Version: 02

Unit purpose

This Unit is designed for those who work, or wish 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 but can also be taken as a stand-alone Unit, perhaps for the purposes of continued professional development. In this Unit candidates will develop the knowledge and skills required by Supported Employment workers to engage effectively with employers to promote opportunities for clients with additional support needs.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Explain the importance of effective employer engagement in the context of supported employment.
- 2 Negotiate with an employer to secure an appropriate work opportunity for a client.
- 3 Reflect on the effectiveness of own engagement with an employer.

Credit points and level

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

Recommended entry to the Unit

Although entry is at the discretion of the centre, it is recommended that candidates should have good communication skills. In addition, candidates should preferably be either currently working in the Supported Employment sector or have access to an appropriate work placement.

Higher National Unit specification: General information (cont)

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Core Skills

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Complete Core Skills | None |
| Core Skill component(s) | Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6 |

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

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 Unit may be undertaken on its own, perhaps for the purposes of continued professional development, or as part of the Professional Development Award in Supported Employment Practice at SCQF level 7.

This Unit is one of five HN Units which comprise the PDA in Supported Employment Practice at SCQF level 7. This Unit is designed to develop the candidate's commercial awareness and the skills required to engage with employers to secure sustainable work opportunities for clients with additional support needs.

The Unit is designed primarily for those working in the Supported Employment sector.

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 employers with whom they work.

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

Explain the importance of effective employer engagement in the context of supported employment.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Definition of an 'employer' in the Supported Employment sector
- ◆ Importance of treating the employer as a customer
- ◆ Customer service standards
- ◆ Definition of 'selling' in the Supported Employment context
- ◆ Organisational targets and priorities

Outcome 2

Negotiate with an employer to secure an appropriate work opportunity for a client.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Employer expectations
- ◆ Promoting the features and benefits of the Supported Employment service
- ◆ Barriers to supported employment and how to overcome them
- ◆ Negotiation and sales skills
- ◆ Securing an appropriate outcome with an employer

Outcome 3

Reflect on the effectiveness of own engagement with an employer.

- ◆ Importance of reflecting on own performance
- ◆ Effectiveness of own employer engagement skills

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: Engaging with Employers (SCQF level 7)

Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge by showing that they can:

Outcome 1 — Explain the importance of effective employer engagement in the context of supported employment.

- ◆ Explain the importance of the employer to the Supported Employment sector and the expectations placed upon them.
- ◆ Explain the customer service standards that an employer will expect to experience within the worker/employer relationship.
- ◆ Describe how the Supported Employment worker can use persuasive communication skills to promote and 'sell' the service to employers.
- ◆ Explain how effective employer engagement can contribute to the achievement of organisational targets and priorities.

Outcome 2 — Negotiate with an employer to secure an appropriate work opportunity for a client.

- ◆ Outline the process used to ensure Supported Employment clients are matched to appropriate prospective employer/employment.
- ◆ Introduce the Supported Employment service to the employer.
- ◆ Explain the support that the employer will expect to receive from the Supported Employment worker during this process.
- ◆ Explain how the Supported Employment worker can positively influence the employer's decision.
- ◆ Explain techniques to secure an appropriate outcome with an employer for a client.

Outcome 3 — Reflect on the effectiveness of own engagement with an employer.

- ◆ Explain how, by reflecting on your own performance, you can benefit:
 - your own personal development
 - the Supported Employment service
 - the people with whom you work (colleagues, employers and clients)
- ◆ Review one worker/employer scenario and evaluate the effectiveness of the engagement skills applied. Review should include:
 - reflection on practice
 - effectiveness of skills used (negotiation, customer service, sales skills) and summary of the outcome



Higher National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: Engaging with Employers (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

The key 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. Supported Employment workers are trained in the first instance to be client-centred.

However, it must be recognised that a vital part of the Supported Employment worker's role is to actively engage with prospective employers in order to secure the best possible and most appropriate outcome for their clients. The context of this Unit places the prospective employer and their expectations and needs to the fore and shows how effective worker/employer engagement can benefit the Supported Employment client.

This Unit raises the candidate's awareness of why it is important to have an excellent working relationship with the employer and develops their confidence and skills in negotiation, customer service and the sales techniques required to secure appropriate employment for their client(s).

It would be beneficial if the candidate were to undertake assessment of this Unit concurrently with the following Unit:

Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support

Outcome 1

The European Union of Supported Employment (EUSE) recognises and acknowledges that employers play a crucial role in Supported Employment. Without employers there are no employment outcomes. It must be recognised that employers are in business primarily to make a profit. It is therefore essential that employers are treated in a professional and efficient manner throughout the process. Candidates should be encouraged to take an interest in the employers business and understand their needs in terms of staffing and training. Skills in 'persuasive communication' (selling) must be developed and utilised. It is important that employers are made aware of the benefits that can be had from a commercial viewpoint, not just that it is 'the right thing to do'. Establishing strong professional relationships and mutual trust and respect with employers takes time but will lead to opportunities for the worker to try to secure an employment outcome for their clients.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Outcome 2

Candidates should be encouraged to identify and negotiate with the key decision maker/s within the prospective employment provider.

When introducing the service to prospective employers the features and benefits to promote may include:

- ◆ The provision of a free and confidential recruitment service.
- ◆ Access to potential employees who have already been 'matched' to the job requirements.
- ◆ Continuing support, as appropriate, from a qualified and experienced Supported Employment worker.
- ◆ Advice and guidance on available incentives and grants.

It is important that the Supported Employment worker establishes the employer's recruitment requirements in order to provide relevant information and support. Candidates should be aware of current local and national funding initiatives and the importance of utilising a range of networking and communication tools, eg face to face meetings and professional and social media.

Professional boundaries in terms of relationship building should be considered. The ability to recognise a natural exit point in negotiations should be developed; it is not always possible to secure an employment outcome so an appropriate exit strategy should be prepared.

Outcome 3

In Outcome 3, the candidate will develop as a reflective practitioner by thinking about their own work performance. They will review the effectiveness of the information and support given by them to employers in terms of the outcome achieved. They will also consider how a positive outcome can benefit all stakeholders involved in the process.

Further information on Supported Employment and the role of the employer can be found on the following:

The Scottish Union of Supported Employment (SUSE) is a national umbrella organisation for those working in the field of supported employment, whether in the voluntary, public or private sector.

<http://www.susescotland.co.uk>

The European Union of Supported Employment (EUSE) was established in 1993 to facilitate the development of Supported Employment throughout Europe.

<http://www.euse.org>

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: Engaging with Employers (SCQF level 7)

Guidance on approaches to 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 supported employment.

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

Centres are advised to develop links with employers and sector representatives who may be able to offer support in terms of visiting speakers. Such visits will be helpful throughout the course but may be particularly helpful when considering the expectations of employers and the support and information they will need. The use of role-play and peer-group discussion will allow candidates to exchange experiences and share best practice.

The Unit has three Outcomes.

Delivery of **Outcome 1** should develop the candidates underpinning knowledge of the importance of the employer to the supported employment process. The candidate will need to understand the employer's role, the employer is an equal partner and should be consulted and invited to give advice. Commercial awareness will be raised by investigating, eg local labour market information in terms of identification of prospective employment opportunities. The delivery of this Outcome should include coverage of organisational and professional body quality standards on customer service. The context of 'selling' within Supported Employment should be discussed. It is important that candidates realise that they are offering employers access to a service that will enhance their business, they are not 'asking for a favour', and their professional attitude should reflect this.

Outcome 2 — Candidates should be encouraged to identify the appropriate person in an organisation with whom an employment opportunity can be discussed. They can then establish what the employer wants, needs and expects from the service. This information can inform negotiations. The importance of negotiation skills should be highlighted as promotion of the features and benefits of Supported Employment can help overcome any barriers that may arise. Supported Employment workers may not have the confidence or experience to secure an agreement for an employment opportunity with an employer (ie 'seal a deal'), therefore sales skills should be discussed. Strategies and techniques for bringing negotiations to a natural and amicable end, whatever the outcome, should be covered.

For **Outcome 3**, candidates should be made aware of how they can use reflection and evaluation to improve their work practice and why this is important. As part of the overall review, candidates should reflect upon their own performance in engaging with an employer and introduced to various methods that can be used review the effectiveness of their practice.

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 opportunities to integrate assessment of this Unit with assessment of the Unit *Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support*, however this will require careful planning by the delivering centre.

Outcome 1 can be assessed by a series of structured questions or one extended response to cover all of the Evidence Requirements.

Outcome 2 can be assessed by a report based on own practice or where appropriate a case study.

Outcome 3 can be assessed by a series of structured questions accompanied by a reflective account based on one worker/employer scenario. This scenario can be from the candidates own work practice or where appropriate a case study.

Since the Component of Critical Think at SCQF Level 6 is embedded in this Unit, it is strongly recommended that you follow the assessment guidelines given. If you wish to use a different assessment model, you should seek prior verification of the assessment instrument(s) you intend to use to ensure that the Core Skill is still covered.

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.

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

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

Communication at SCQF level 6 will be developed through a range of activities including group discussions and assessments (written and/or oral)

Problem Solving at SCQF level 6 will be developed as the candidate will work with the employer to identify and overcome barriers to supported employment

History of changes to Unit

| Version | Description of change | Date |
|---------|---|----------|
| 02 | Core Skills Component Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6 embedded. | 31/03/14 |
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General information for candidates

Unit title: Supported Employment Practice: Engaging with Employers (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.

This Unit will be of interest to you if you work or wish to work for an agency or organisation which provides Supported Employment. This Unit forms part of the Professional Development Award (PDA) in Supported Employment Practice at SCQF level 7.

In this Unit you will learn about the importance of the employer to the supported employment sector. The context of this Unit differs from the others in the PDA in that it places the worker/employer relationship to the fore and develops your commercial awareness, negotiation and selling skills.

You will complete 3 Outcomes:

- 1 Explain the importance of effective employer engagement in the context of supported employment.
- 2 Negotiate with an employer to secure an appropriate work opportunity for a client.
- 3 Reflect on own performance in engaging with an employer.

Assessments for the Unit will include structured questions, production of a report based on practice (or case study) and a reflective account.

You will also have the opportunity to develop your Core Skills in *Communication* and *Problem Solving* and your transferable skills in customer service, negotiating, networking and sales.