



Higher National Unit specification

General information

Unit title: Quality Improvement: Audit in a Health or Social Care Setting (SCQF level 8)

Unit code: H93R 35

Superclass: AK

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Version: 02

Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to enable learners to develop the competences required to lead an audit into an aspect of service/practice within a health or social care setting, applying knowledge and skills relevant to health or social care practice.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Plan and lead an audit.
- 2 Conduct an audit according to protocol.
- 3 Analyse results and produce an audit report.
- 4 Evaluate a completed audit.

Credit points and level

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

Recommended entry to the Unit

While entry to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, it is recommended that learners have good communication skills, both written and oral. These could be by the achievement of a nationally recognised qualification, for example English at SCQF level 6, or by pre-course interview and assignment. In order to undertake this Unit, learners should be working in a health or social care environment and should be carrying out the role of an enhanced support worker supervised by a recognised mentor.

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 Skill Problem Solving at SCQF level 6

Core Skill component None

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

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 was developed within the framework of the PDA Health and Social Care: Promoting Enhanced Professional Practice (SCQF level 8) and further develops content covered in Unit H29S 34 *Principles of Professional Practice which introduces learners to the concept of quality improvement. It is delivered (at SCQF level 8) as part of this Group Award*

Key aspects of learner performance at SCQF level 8:

- ◆ Level of support required by the learner
- ◆ Depth and application of literature review
- ◆ Analysis of data
- ◆ Evaluation of effectiveness

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 learners 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

Unit title: Quality Improvement: Audit in a Health or Social Care Setting (SCQF level 8)

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. Learners 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

Plan and lead an audit.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Select an aspect of service for audit
- ◆ Aims and objectives of audit
- ◆ Literature review
- ◆ Audit protocol
- ◆ Current ethical guidelines

Outcome 2

Conduct an audit according to protocol.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Audit process
- ◆ Data collection
- ◆ Professional standards

Outcome 3

Analyse results and produce an audit report.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Data Analysis
- ◆ Audit report format

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Quality Improvement: Audit in a Health or Social Care Setting (SCQF level 8)

Outcome 4

Evaluate a completed audit.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Process of evaluation
- ◆ Reflective practice

Evidence Requirements for this Unit

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

Outcome 1

- ◆ select one aspect of service related to the workplace
- ◆ use a literature review related to the selected aspect of service to support choice, using previously published sources
- ◆ produce a protocol which includes audit title, introduction (including evidence of literature review), aims, objectives, proposed methodology and timescales
- ◆ current ethical guidelines must be taken into consideration when selecting an aspect of service

Assessment will be carried out in conjunction with Outcome 2 in that the protocol developed will form the basis for Outcome 2's subsequent audit.

Outcome 2

- ◆ carry out an audit which follows the agreed protocol developed in Outcome 1 and which includes adherence to the agreed timescales. The data collected must be relevant to the aspect of service and protocol and reflect relevant professional standards
- ◆ produce a record of the audit process to include detailed logs and progress reports.

Assessment will be carried out in conjunction with the previous Outcome, in that the basis for the audit will be the agreed protocol developed in Outcome 1.

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Quality Improvement: Audit in a Health or Social Care Setting (SCQF level 8)

Outcome 3

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can produce an audit report which: includes an analysis and discussion of the data gathered from the audit and contains information under the following sections:

- ◆ — Title of audit
- ◆ — Aims and Objectives
- ◆ — Introduction including rationale for and application of literature review
- ◆ — Methodology
- ◆ — Results
- ◆ — Conclusion
- ◆ — Bibliography

Assessment will be carried out in conjunction with the previous Outcomes, in that the audit report will incorporate the earlier literature review and protocol developed in Outcome 1; and the data gathered in the audit process in Outcome 2.

Outcome 4

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can evaluate the audit process, including their own performance. Learners' evaluations must include:

- ◆ the extent to which the aims and objectives were met by the audit
- ◆ the strengths and weaknesses of the learners progress, including the organisation of the audit and adherence to timescales
- ◆ an explanation of what the learner would do differently if repeating the audit, including reasons why the learner would do things differently
- ◆ how improvements could be made in future audits

The assessment for this Outcome will be carried out in conjunction with Outcomes 1 and 2 and 3 in that the evaluation will be based on the protocol developed in Outcome 1; the record of the audit process in Outcome 2; and the audit report in Outcome 3.



Higher National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Quality Improvement: Audit in a Health or Social Care Setting (SCQF level 8)

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 Unit was developed within the framework of the PDA Health and Social Care: Promoting Enhanced Professional Practice (SCQF 8). It is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the context of this particular Group Award. This Unit further develops content covered in Unit Principles of Professional Practice (H29S 34) which introduces learners to the concept of quality improvement and the role of audit within this. It is delivered (at SCQF level 8) as part of this Group Award

Key aspects of learner performance at SCQF level 8:

- ◆ level of support required by the learner
- ◆ depth and application of literature review
- ◆ analysis of data
- ◆ evaluation of effectiveness

Outcome 1

The aim of this Outcome is to enable learners to select an aspect of service and plan and lead an audit. The learner must however gain approval from an appropriate mentor/line manager. The learner will be reminded that audit is a quality improvement tool used to inform best practice. It is important that during this planning stage that the learner considers, eg the Research Governance Framework for Health and Community Care (2006) or equivalent relevant documents. Considering such documentation when selecting a workplace-related aspect for audit will aid learners in developing planning and problem solving skills required to carry out an audit, within a given timescale and ensure consideration of current professional and legal issues and cognisance of ethical guidelines.

Learners must choose an aspect of service which relates to their workplace setting, where possible drawing on knowledge and skills acquired in previous related Units. The review of previously published literature must clearly relate to and support the aspect of service to be audited. A plan of the audit must be presented as a protocol.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Quality Improvement: Audit in a Health or Social Care Setting (SCQF level 8)

The protocol must include title, introduction (which should include evidence of the literature review), clearly stated aims and objectives, proposed methodology and timescales. Learners should respond to tutor/mentor feedback on the protocol and make changes as required. There could, for example, be advice on choice of topic and scale of audit. Support from mentor and tutor should be commensurate with SCQF level 8 development. That is the learner should be working independently and use supervision/ tutorials as affirmation rather than guidance.

Suitable aspects of service for audit might include eg an audit of Health and Safety systems within an treatment area, an audit of the promotion of health and exercise within mental health, an audit of a duty system, an audit of referral systems, an audit of provision of equipment, or an audit of the effectiveness of a traffic light system in medical wards. Other suggestions may include eg audit of hand hygiene procedures, documentation, planning protocols, etc.

Outcome 2

The aim of this Outcome is to enable learners to conduct an audit within the given timescale, as according to the agreed protocol produced for Outcome 1. Learners will develop skills in data collection relating to the audit. The methods used in the collection of data may be primary or secondary research. This could be either quantitative or qualitative data. The data collected must be relevant to the aspect of service chosen and the agreed protocol and reflect the relevant professional standards. Primary research could be from questionnaires and/or interviews with staff. Secondary research could be from case notes, records of referrals and literature. At all times current ethical guidelines must be observed. The results of the audit could be given in the form of tables or graphs, or simple percentages. Learners must maintain regular contact with their tutor/mentor during the audit process (see note in Outcome 1 above) and must provide evidence of appropriate action following feedback. This could be in response to, for example, advice regarding the choice of audit tool, the sample size or the collection of data. The audit conducted will follow the agreed protocol developed in Outcome 1 and adhere to agreed timescales. Learners must produce a record of the audit process, to include log sheets and progress reports (written or oral). Outcome 4 of this Unit requires learners to explain the importance of professional standards in relation to quality improvement and it should be clear throughout they are cognisant with relevant professional standards and the application of such.

Outcome 3

The aim of this Outcome is to enable learners to develop skills in audit report writing and data analysis. Learners must produce an audit report which: includes a detailed analysis of the data from the audit and contain the following sections: Title, Aims, Objectives, Introduction, and Literature review, Methodology, Results, Conclusion and Bibliography. It is recommended that the audit report is word processed.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Quality Improvement: Audit in a Health or Social Care Setting (SCQF level 8)

Outcome 4

Knowledge and skills required for this Outcome are an understanding of the process of evaluation (to appraise and monitor effectiveness) and reflective practice. The aim of this Outcome is to enable learners to evaluate the audit process with respect to its aims and objectives, and to identify any required improvements or extensions. They should also use reflection to identify and evaluate strengths and weaknesses of their progress, including the organisation of the audit and adherence to timescales. They must explain what would be done differently if repeating the audit, including reasons why any such changes would be made. There is potential here for learners to present their findings to colleagues, mentors and managers.

The assessment for this Outcome consists of an evaluation, which may be included with the report submitted for Outcome 3. It is recommended that the evaluation is word processed.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

This Unit was developed within the framework of the PDA Health and Social Care: Promoting Enhanced Professional Practice (SCQF level 8). It is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the context of this particular Group Award. This Unit further develops content covered in Unit *Principles of Professional Practice* (H29S 34) which introduces learners to the concept of quality improvement and the role of audit within this. It is delivered (at SCQF level 8) as part of this Group Award.

Key aspects of learner performance at SCQF level 8:

- ◆ level of support required by the learner
- ◆ depth and application of literature review
- ◆ analysis of data
- ◆ evaluation of effectiveness

Outcome 1

The assessment for this Outcome should consist of a protocol including a literature review relating to the aspect of service selected for audit. Assessment at SCQF level 8 will require depth and the application of the literature review to their own audit topic.

The assessment will be carried out in conjunction with Outcome 2 in that the protocol developed will form the basis for the subsequent audit.

Outcome 2

Assessment for this Outcome could consist of completed log sheets, evidence of attendance at meetings with tutor/supervisor and evidence of appropriate response to feedback. The assessment will be carried out in conjunction with Outcome 1 in that the basis for the audit will be the protocol developed previously. Assessment at SCQF level 8 should take account of the level of support required by the learner

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Quality Improvement: Audit in a Health or Social Care Setting (SCQF level 8)

Outcome 3

The assessment for this Outcome could consist of an audit report. It is recommended that the report is word processed, and a minimum of 3,000 words (maximum of 4000) or equivalent. Assessment at SCQF level 8 does expect a depth of analysis of gathered data.

The assessment for this Outcome will be carried out in conjunction with the previous Outcomes in that the audit report will be based on the protocol developed in Outcome 1, and the data gathered in the audit process in Outcome 2.

Outcome 4

The assessment for this Outcome could consist of an evaluation report, produced as part of the completed audit and report for Outcome 3. The assessment for this Outcome should be carried out in conjunction with Outcomes 1 and 2 and 3. Assessment at SCQF level 8 requires a depth of evaluation of reflection of personal effectiveness and use of the audit within the workplace. There is potential here for learners to present their findings to colleagues, mentors and managers.

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 learners.

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

This Unit is assessed via production of a report (Outcome 3) in a set format along with a protocol (Outcome 1), regular attendance at meetings with a workplace mentor, regular contact with the college tutor (Outcome 2) and an evaluation of the audit process (Outcome 4).

Outcome 1

The assessment for this Outcome will consist of an agreed protocol. The protocol should include evidence/ references gathered through the literature review.

Outcome 2

The assessment for this Outcome should include completed log sheets, evidence of attendance at meetings with tutor/mentor (progress reports) and evidence of appropriate response to feedback.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Quality Improvement: Audit in a Health or Social Care Setting (SCQF level 8)

Outcome 3

The assessment for this Outcome consists of an audit report. It is recommended that the report is word processed.

Outcome 4

The assessment for this Outcome consists of an evaluation, which may be included with the report submitted for Outcome 3. It is recommended that the evaluation is word processed.

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 learner 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

The delivery and assessment of this Unit may offer opportunities to develop the Core Skill of *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 5. Its three components Critical Thinking, Planning and Organising and Reviewing and Evaluating require learners to be able to analyse a situation or issue plan, organise and complete a task review and evaluate a problem solving activity.

Learners will be required to use these skills throughout the Unit, with analysis and planning particularly relevant to fulfilling Outcomes 1 and 2, and reviewing and evaluating necessary for successful completion of Outcomes 3 and 4.

Critical Thinking and Planning and Organising will be developed by learners when fulfilling the requirements of Outcome 1, where they must consider which aspect of service to work on, consider the relevant literature, ethical guidelines and other factors, and then formulate a protocol which will be used for an audit. Having planned the audit, the task will then be carried out by learners in Outcome 2, before the process is extensively analysed and evaluated across Outcomes 3 and 4. Evaluation will include conclusions based on the data and method, and about the audit itself, such as what changes to the process might be made, were a new audit to be carried out.

The delivery and assessment of this Unit may contribute towards the Core Skill of *Communication* at SCQF level 5.

This Unit has the Core Skill of Problem Solving embedded in it, so when candidates achieve this Unit their Core Skills profile will be updated to show that they have achieved Problem Solving at SCQF Level 6.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Quality Improvement: Audit in a Health or Social Care Setting (SCQF level 8)

The general skills of the Written Communication component are 'read, understand and evaluate written communication' for its reading element and 'produce well-structured written communication' for its written element. Specific reading skills required by learners at SCQF level 5 include identifying and summarising significant information, ideas and supporting details in a written communication, and evaluation of the effectiveness of the communication in meeting its purpose; and specific writing skills include 'presenting all essential ideas, information and supporting detail in a logical and effective order, and use of a structure which takes account of purpose and audience, emphasising the main points'.

Learners may need to utilise these skills throughout the Unit, for example when considering relevant literature and producing a literature review, in Outcome 1, and when producing an audit report and collating data in Outcome 3.

It is also possible that learners could develop the Oral Communication component to SCQF level 5, if for example, using oral progress reports in Outcome 2, or delivering an oral report or presentation.

Reliant on particular activities undertaken, the delivery and assessment of this Unit may provide opportunities to develop the Core Skill of *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* at SCQF level 5, the general skill of which is to use 'an IT system effectively and responsibly to process a range of information.'

The delivery and assessment of this Unit may contribute towards development of the Core Skill of *Numeracy* at SCQF level 5. The component Using Number may be developed during the audit process when dealing with quantitative or qualitative data, and with its analysis and subsequent presentation in the audit report. The general skill for this component is 'apply a wide range of numerical skills in everyday and generalised contexts.' In so doing, learners may need to perform the component's specific skills as follow: work confidently with a numerical concept decide on the numerical operations to be carried out carry out complex calculations or a number of sustained calculations.

The general skill required by the component Using Graphical Information is the ability to 'interpret and communicate graphical information in everyday and generalised contexts'. Specific skills include the interpretation of information from tables, graphs, etc and communication of information by appropriately incorporating such tables and graphs. Again, learners may meet these criteria where dealing with data collected for and during the audit process, the results of which may illustrated via tables, graphs, or percentages.

Specific skills required at SCQF level 5 include carrying out processing and searches, using applications in depth and integration of different types of data in a piece of work. Learners may use IT systems and specific applications when researching, planning and managing their audit, formulating its protocol and when subsequently reporting on and evaluating its results.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Core Skill Problem Solving at SCQF level 6 embedded	28/07/2015

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General information for learners

Unit title: Quality Improvement: Audit in a Health or Social Care Setting (SCQF level 8)

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 should enable you to develop the competences required to evaluate an aspect of service within your workplace setting, applying knowledge and skills relevant to your practice. The purpose of this Unit is to enable you to apply knowledge and skills relating to quality improvement which may have been gained from previous Units or other study and within your workplace setting.

You should take into account the ethical guidelines in the Research Governance Framework for Health and Community Care (2006) or equivalent relevant documentation. It is also important to take cognisance of relevant professional standards.

On completion of the Unit you should be able to:

- 1 Plan and lead an audit.
- 2 Conduct an audit according to protocol.
- 3 Analyse results and produce an audit report.
- 4 Evaluate a completed audit.

The overall requirements for assessment will be the production of a report (Outcome 3) in a set format along with a protocol (Outcome 1), regular attendance at meetings with a workplace mentor/college tutor (Outcome 2) and an evaluation of the audit process (Outcome 4).

Over the course of this Unit there may be opportunities to develop important Core Skills, in the areas of *Communication*, *Problem Solving*, *Numeracy* and *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*.