



Higher National Unit Specification

General information

Unit title: Create an Environment for Learning (SCQF level 10)

Unit code: HA6N 37

Superclass: PM

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Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to enable learners to contribute to the creation of a learning environment at an organisational and individual level for their students. It aims to develop an understanding of the importance of learning organisations and cultures and to develop the skills required to plan and deliver programmes for students that promote ethical practice.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Contribute to the creation of a learning environment.
- 2 Apply critical understanding to models and methods of learning.
- 3 Evidence an understanding of ethical practice.

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 10: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 10)

Recommended entry to the Unit

Learners should have well developed communication and inter-personal skills and be able to demonstrate their ability to critically review and consolidate knowledge, skills, practices and thinking in their disciplines. This may be demonstrated by: relevant professional qualifications at SCQF level 9 (or equivalent) or above with relevant experience in a social services or other related setting. Acceptance of relevant equivalent qualifications and experience will be at the discretion of the centre.

Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

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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.

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: General information (cont)

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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.

Outcome 1

Contribute to the creation of a learning environment.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Learning organisations
- ◆ Learning cultures
- ◆ Organisational context
- ◆ Theories of organisational change
- ◆ Individual learner programmes

Outcome 2

Apply critical understanding to models and methods of learning.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Theories of adult learning
- ◆ Teaching and learning styles
- ◆ Resources to support learning for self and different learners

Outcome 3

Evidence an understanding of ethical practice.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Power dynamics in professional practice
- ◆ Current legislation and policy on discrimination and equality
- ◆ Empowerment and anti-oppressive practice

Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

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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: contribute to the creation of a learning environment that enables and supports learning for self and others and where practice is valued and developed. The evidence will demonstrate the application of knowledge, sources of Knowledge and a critical understanding of principal theories and concepts relevant to this Unit.

Assessment for this Unit may be through a critical evaluation assignment of 1,500–2,000 words that evidences:

- ◆ Define and explain the meaning of learning organisation and learning culture in relation to your own organisational context.
- ◆ Critically evaluate three principle theories of change in the creation of a learning environment.
- ◆ Critically evaluate two approaches to the preparation of learning programmes for students.
- ◆ Critically evaluate of two models and two methods of adult learning and the role they have in managing the changing circumstances and learning needs of students
- ◆ Identify and evaluate three principle resources required for students at each stage of their learning journey.
- ◆ Critical evaluation of the process used to create ethical learning conditions for one particular student or group including attention to legislation, oppression and empowerment.



Higher National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Create an Environment for Learning (SCQF level 10)

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 is intended for learners from a range of occupational and professional situations within social services, education or health settings. Examples include first line managers supervising staff, people in a variety of posts delivering training courses to staff, those supervising students in practice learning and workplace assessors. This list is not exhaustive but provides a flavour of the diversity of people who might wish to access this Unit from a social services or other relevant setting.

The Unit purpose is to enable learners to provide demanding learning environments to support learning for themselves and others where practice is valued and advanced. Successful learners will be able to tailor learning opportunities and selected work with other professionals to meet the needs and abilities of individual students whilst managing and adapting to the complexity of change.

The knowledge and skills obtained from the Outcomes of this Unit will form the foundation for learners' work with students. Learners need to demonstrate their ability to work at someone else's pace and devise learning programmes to suit different students styles (eg activists or theorists) and learning needs (eg purpose of learning, stage of learning, disabilities/additional support needs).

Self-aware practice is also important to create an ethical learning environment where there is no discrimination or misuse of power. Working with other people within their own setting and work with other professionals across sectors (eg health and education) and settings (eg fieldwork, residential, day care) is also central to the Outcomes of this Unit. Critical selection of learning opportunities taking into account changing requirements, patterns of work or government drivers will be vital.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

The purpose of the Unit is to provide learners with a critical understanding of how to work effectively with their students within the changing context of health, education and social services. It will provide knowledge of how to promote equal opportunities for students and an understanding of how to work anti-oppressively.

Creating an environment for learning will enable learners to demonstrate that they have acquired the knowledge to develop sound working relationships with students and other professionals and an understanding of how to promote student's rights to choice. It will also support learners in the acquisition of knowledge about the design and development of learning programmes and selection of learning opportunities (eg identifying student's needs, the process of planning learning programmes, methods of delivery, choice of materials, monitoring learning programmes, adapting learning programmes). An understanding of adult learning theories (eg Kolb, Knowles, Bloom) will also support the learners in facilitating the learning of others whilst coping with a changing environment.

By undertaking this Unit learners will demonstrate and gain a range of skills to support the creation of optimum learning environments. These include the ability to provide effective learning opportunities and programmes for students with different skills and capacities and the ability to practice in ways that demonstrate an awareness of other people's roles and responsibilities whilst acknowledging their own impact on the learning environment. Critically reviewing appropriate learning methodologies and designing creative programmes in the light of up to date research, attention to standards and strategies to enable others' learning will also be included. Critically analysing and adapting to change will also be a feature of the learning from this Unit as well as working with other professionals to enhance delivery of the learning programme.

Current theories related to individual and organisational learning are central to this Unit. In relation to individual learning, adult learning theories such as Knowles and Kolb are relevant to consider. Learners should be able to understand and reflect on adult learning from their own perspective and as applied to the students they are working with. Understanding learner differences and styles can be related to tools, for example Honey and Mumford's Learning Styles Questionnaire and other exploratory resources. Approaches to supporting adult learning in the workplace, can also be linked with communication theories and application of these to practice.

From an organisational learning perspective the work of Senge, Argyris, and Schon are relevant to consider. Learners are expected to explore how learning cultures can be promoted throughout teams and services, and understand their role in contributing to this. Knowledge should be considered and applied to the practice context of the learner, debates about the nature of learning and education, for example from the work of Saljo, should also be considered.

Theories about transition and change in relation to individual and organisational learning may include Fisher's Transition Curve model and generic theories about attachment, loss and behavior change. Theories and ideas about professional resilience are also relevant to apply to the learning process.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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The following resources can be considered:

Argyris, C., & Schön, D. (1978) *Organizational learning: A theory of action perspective*, Reading, Mass: Addison Wesley

Honey P. & Mumford A. (1986) *Manual of Learning Styles* London Honey Publications

Knowles, M. S. (1970, 1980) *The Modern Practice of Adult Education. Andragogy versus pedagogy*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall/Cambridge

Kolb, D. A. (1984) *Experiential Learning*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.: Prentice Hall

Säljö, R. (1979) 'Learning in the learner's perspective. I. Some common-sense conceptions', *Reports from the Institute of Education, University of Gothenburg*, 76

Senge, P. et. al. (1994) *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organization*

Smith, M. K. (2001) 'Peter Senge and the learning organization', *the encyclopedia of informal education*. [<http://infed.org/mobi/peter-senge-and-the-learning-organization>]

Smith, M. K. (2002) 'Malcolm Knowles, informal adult education, self-direction and andragogy', *the encyclopedia of informal education*, www.infed.org/thinkers/et-knowl.htm.

Smith, M. K. (2003). 'Learning theory', *the encyclopedia of informal education*. [<http://infed.org/mobi/learning-theory-models-product-and-process/>]

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.

The evidence produced by learners should demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to each Outcome. Overall, this should encompass a demonstration of the professional performance improvements that learners have achieved by participating in the learning and in all related practical activities.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Create an Environment for Learning (SCQF level 10)

Assessment for this Unit may be through a critical evaluation assignment of 1,500–2,000 words that evidences the following areas:

- ◆ Define and explain the meaning of learning organisation and learning culture in relation to your own organisational context.
- ◆ Critically evaluate three principle theories of change in the creation of a learning environment.
- ◆ Critically evaluate two approaches to the preparation of learning programmes for students.
- ◆ Critically evaluate of two models and two methods of adult learning and the role they have in managing the changing circumstances and learning needs of students.
- ◆ Identify and evaluate three principle resources required for students at each stage of their learning journey.
- ◆ Critical evaluation of the process used to create ethical learning conditions for one particular student or group including attention to legislation, oppression and empowerment.

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

All elements of the Core Skill of *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6, namely planning and organising, critical thinking, and reviewing and evaluating could be developed and enhanced. Support in developing an effective research strategy for accessing and critically evaluating paper based and electronic sources of complex information will be of value.

The production and discussion of initial draft documents for the completed range of evidence is a useful way to ensure the development of skills in presentation and collation of relevant materials. Although communication skills are not formally assessed learners should be expected to produce and present written work to a professional standard, and to communicate essential ideas and concepts effectively.

Terminology and spelling used in annotation should be technically accurate. As such, opportunities exist to develop *Communication* at SCQF level 6. The availability of suitable software to support an effective professional presentation could further assist the development of Core Skills *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Learners may have the opportunity to develop the Core Skill of *Working with Others* as they undertake group work, and one to one supervision with their learner. Learners should be made aware of techniques to put subjects at ease, or to create appropriate environments, using reflective listening and non-verbal communication, including making eye contact and relaxed body language. They should know how to initiate actions confidently and in a way that progresses communication and they should continually modify and adapt their approach to produce desired effects.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for learners

Unit title: Create an Environment for Learning (SCQF level 10)

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 is designed to enable you to influence and shape demanding learning environments that facilitate and support learning for yourself and others and where practice is valued and advanced. It will develop your capacity to tailor learning opportunities for individual and group needs and enhance your work with others in order to meet programme requirements and address the abilities of individual learners whilst managing and adapting to the complexity of change.

In the Unit you have to achieve three Outcomes.

- 1 Contribute to the creation of a learning environment.
- 2 Apply critical understanding to models and methods of learning.
- 3 Evidence an understanding of ethical practice.

Collectively these Outcomes cover a range of skills to create effective learning environments and programmes whilst managing change. They will involve you in the critical selection and negotiation of planned and managed learning opportunities for individuals or groups whilst taking account of individual student differences and managing changes in the learning environment. You will be able to work closely with others who are involved in supporting students. You will also network with other professionals to broaden the range of opportunities and learning available. You will be able to work ethically in a way that does not oppress the student and acknowledges the power differences inherent in the learning situation.

The overall purpose of the Unit is to provide you with a critical understanding of how to work effectively with students within the changing context of health, education and social services. It will give you knowledge of how to promote equal opportunities for students and design appropriate learning programmes as a result. You will be able to demonstrate that you have gained the knowledge to develop sound working relationships with students and other professionals and an understanding of how to promote their rights to choice. You will be supported in the acquisition of knowledge about the design and development of learning programmes and the selection of learning opportunities. An understanding of adult learning theory will also guide you in facilitating the learning of others whilst coping with a changing environment.

On successful completion of this Unit, you will be able to create optimum learning environments to enhance others' learning. You will also be able to: access plan and manage, a range of learning opportunities. Critically devise learning programmes suitable for students with different learning needs and abilities, support students through the process of their learning. Create an ethical learning environment that does not oppress the student, manage change within the learning environment, provide opportunities for students to work with, and learn from others within your own and other professions, recognise and critically review your own impact on the learning process.

General information for learners (cont)

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The assessment for the Unit requires you to produce evidence that you can create an ethical learning environment to enable others' learning. It is important that you gather this evidence from your ongoing practice with students and build a collection of evidence of your work. This tool should offer you flexibility in relation to evidence gathering against the Outcomes. Your collection of evidence will be unique.

You will meet a set of minimum required content criteria that will include evidence of knowledge, values and skills. You can use evidence from any context across health, education and social services and involve work with individual students and/or groups, such as through the facilitation of student supervision, study groups or planning, delivering and/or evaluating training event.