



Higher National Unit specification

General information

Unit title: Assessment of Learners (SCQF level 10)

Unit code: HA6T 37

Superclass: PM

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Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to enable learners to make ethical and robust assessment decisions, taking relevant professional codes of practice into account and using appropriate standards and frameworks.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Assess learners through the use of ethical and robust processes.
- 2 Demonstrate accountability for assessment decisions.

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: 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.

Outcome 1

Assess learners through use of ethical and robust processes.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Roles and responsibilities in assessment process
- ◆ Views of relevant others including people using services
- ◆ Range of transparent and fair assessment strategies
- ◆ Evidence gathering and analysis
- ◆ Constructive formative and summative feedback

Outcome 2

Demonstrate accountability for assessment decisions.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Standards and frameworks for learning programmes
- ◆ Professional codes of practice
- ◆ Assessment regulations
- ◆ Complaints procedures
- ◆ Rationale for assessment decisions against agreed standards
- ◆ Reflection on own performance

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:

- ◆ Undertake a written reflection on their practice in around 1,500 words in which they evidence ability to:
 - identify and define the roles of those involved in the assessment process
 - critically assess the effectiveness of methods used to obtain views of relevant others including people using services
 - critically evaluate assessment strategies used.

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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- ◆ Using a pre-prepared checklist: A recorded observation of learner's ability to:
 - demonstrate ability to gather and analyse evidence from a range of resources at a professional level
 - formally present constructive formative and summative feedback to learners
 - critically evaluate the role of standards and frameworks for learning programmes in upholding professional codes of practice and assessment regulations including complaints procedures
 - critically define the rationale for making assessment decisions against agreed standards
 - critically evaluate own performance in demonstrating ability to reflect at a professional level.



Higher National Unit Support Notes

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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 suitable 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 learners 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 aims to, enable learners to contribute to the assessment process of learners, taking standards and relevant professional Codes of Practice into account, and use appropriate assessment frameworks. Successful learners will participate in the design, implementation and decision making relating to assessment strategies and frameworks and be able to explain and justify assessment decisions reached.

The knowledge and skills obtained from the Outcomes of this Unit will inform learners about the effectiveness of different assessment strategies and the building of professional relationships that underscore the processes of assessment. Learners will also learn about the uses, design and efficiency of different assessment frameworks, the roles and tasks of members of the learning delivery team and relevant standards for their area of practice education.

The overall purpose of the Unit is to provide learners with the ability to design and utilise appropriate methods of assessment for different learning purposes, to collect and interpret evidence and to make and communicate assessment decisions.

Learners will consider the characteristics of good assessment systems including relevance, validity and reliability, ease of administration, transparency, supportiveness and equity. Assessment strategies for example: naturalistic observation, simulation, oral questioning, assessment of products, testimony, self-assessment, assessment by service users; the use of assessment plans, schedules and contracts; the effectiveness of different methods of assessment, utilising standards documents and providing the rationale for assessment decisions.

Learners should reference writers on the theory and practice of assessment in practice learning such as; Mark Doel, Williams & Rutter, MacLean & Lloyd and the Scottish Organisation of Practice Teachers.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Reference should also be made to, guidance on assessing students against standards such as the Standards in Social Work Education and assessment guidance produced by Higher Education Institutions. This document can be located at:

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/47021/0025613.pdf>

The SiSWE bring together key elements of two previous standards documents for social work: the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education's Benchmark Statement and the National Occupational Standards for Social Work. The document looks at the following areas:

- ◆ The Framework for Social Work Education in Scotland
- ◆ Scottish Requirements for Social Work Training
- ◆ Introduction to the Standards in Social Work Education
- ◆ Standards in Social Work Education
- ◆ Annex 1 Project Group
- ◆ Annex 2 Standards in Social Work Education Working Group
- ◆ Annex 3 Practice Learning Working Group

SCiE have also produced some useful guidance for the assessment of learners these can be found at: <http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/positionpapers/pp02.asp>

Codes of Practice for all social services staff are available on the SSSC website <http://www.sssc.uk.com/about-the-sssc/codes-of-practice/what-are-the-codes-of-practice>

The SSSC website also includes guidance on policies and procedures all social workers must adhere to including the requirements for continuous professional development, complaints, and the qualification requirements for all aspects of social services.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

This Unit involves learners in a significant amount of experiential learning. Learners are required to critically analyse and critically reflect on this experience and to be able to make conclusions for their future behaviour and development.

It is expected facilitation of learning for this Unit will be through a range of approaches including face-to-face inputs, blended and other forms of directed and self-directed learning.

The delivery mechanisms adopted by centres should be flexible to allow comprehensive access and participation, including distance and e-learning. An Outcomes-based approach, centred round the learning needs of the individual, may best meet the requirement for flexible delivery. The delivery of the Unit must take account of its practical nature and of the occupational and professional backgrounds of learners.

At the outset, centres should make learners aware of the requirements of the Unit, including the need to gather evidence, critically analyse and report on their experiences. They should also inform learners at the outset about the type of evidence they will have to provide in order to complete the Unit successfully.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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It is likely that delivery will consist of some initial orientation and briefing sessions after which learners will manage their learning independently to a significant extent. Centres will make suitable arrangements to support and guide learners throughout. This could involve regular meetings with learners on an individual basis or in groups or through e-learning.

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.

Learners should demonstrate that they have achieved the Unit Outcomes by gathering evidence from a range of sources. As far as possible for most learners the evidence should be 'naturally occurring' during the course of their day-to-day activity.

Evidence produced by learners should demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to each Outcome.

Overall, this should encompass a demonstration of the learner's ability to:

- ◆ demonstrate ability to gather and analyse evidence from a range of resources at a professional level.
- ◆ formally present constructive formative and summative feedback to learners.
- ◆ critically evaluate the role of standards and frameworks for learning programmes in upholding professional codes of practice and assessment regulations including complaints procedures.
- ◆ critically define the rationale for making assessment decisions against agreed standards.
- ◆ critically evaluate own performance in demonstrating ability to reflect at a professional level.

- ◆ Direct observation of the learner will provide evidence of their ability to:
 - identify and define the roles of those involved in the assessment process.
 - critically assess the effectiveness of methods used to obtain views of relevant others including people using services.
 - critically evaluate assessment strategies used.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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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)*.

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

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In this Unit you have to achieve Outcomes that cover a range of knowledge and skills to design and implement assessment strategies and to make assessment decisions. They will involve you in learning about the effectiveness of different assessment strategies and frameworks and about building professional relationships, which underscore the processes of assessment.

You will also learn about the uses, design and efficiency of different assessment frameworks, the roles and tasks of all members of the learning delivery team and relevant standards for your area of practice education. You will gain the ability to use dynamic and constructive professional relationships with learners and others, to give and receive feedback, to ensure non-discriminatory and ethical practice, to develop and implement assessment frameworks, to utilise standards documents and to decide assessment levels.

The overall purpose of the Unit is to enable you to design and utilise appropriate methods of assessment for different learning purposes, to collect and interpret evidence and to make and communicate assessment decisions.

On successful completion of this Unit, you will be able to contribute to the development of the most appropriate assessment frameworks for the learning activities in which you are involved, utilise these in practice with learners whilst providing formative and summative feedback and communicate assessment decisions.

The assessment for the Unit requires you to produce evidence that you can devise and implement assessment frameworks for learning programmes and processes; critically evaluate the effectiveness of different methods of assessment; express fair, transparent and equal assessment of learner performance; collect and judge evidence and enable others to participate in the learning process and programme. It is important that you gather this evidence from your ongoing practice with learners 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, although it will be expected to meet a set of minimum required content criteria as advised by the centre and 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 learners and/or groups, such as through the facilitation of student supervision, study groups or planning, delivering and/or evaluating training events.