



Higher  
Course  
Specification



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# Higher ESOL Course Specification (C727 76)

**Valid from August 2014**

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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this Course Specification for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

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## Course outline

**Course title:** Higher ESOL

**SCQF:** level 6 (24 SCQF credit points)

**Course code:** C727 76

### Mandatory Units

**H24H 76 ESOL for Everyday Life (Higher) 9 SCQF credit points**

### Optional Units

The Course comprises the following optional Units:

**H4X6 76 ESOL in Work-Related Contexts (Higher) 9 SCQF credit points**

**H4X7 76 ESOL in Study-Related Contexts (Higher) 9 SCQF credit points**

**Course assessment 6 SCQF credit points**

This Course includes six SCQF credit points to allow additional time for preparation for Course assessment. The Course assessment covers the added value of the Course. Further information on the Course assessment is provided in the Assessment section.

## Recommended entry

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by the following or by equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ ESOL (National 5) Course or relevant component Units

## Progression

This Course or its Units may provide progression to:

- ◆ other SQA qualifications in ESOL or related areas
- ◆ further study, employment and/or training

Further details are provided in the Rationale section.

## Equality and inclusion

This Course 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. For further information, please refer to the *Course Support Notes*.

## **Rationale**

All new and revised National Courses reflect the Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

In this Course, and its component Units, there will be an emphasis on skills development and the application of those skills. Assessment approaches will be proportionate and fit for purpose and they will promote best practice, enabling learners to achieve the highest standards they can.

This Course provides learners with opportunities to continue to acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities as well as skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

All Courses provide opportunities for learners to develop breadth, challenge and application, but the focus and balance of the assessment will be appropriate for the subject area.

## **Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles**

Language and literacy are of personal, social and economic importance. Learners' ability to use language lies at the centre of the development and expression of their emotions, thinking, learning, and sense of personal identity.

The Course provides learners with the opportunity to develop personal, interpersonal and team working skills and independent learning; to enhance their enjoyment and their understanding of their own and other cultures; and to explore the interconnected nature of languages.

The Course provides learners whose first language is not English the opportunity to develop appropriate skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking, in practical and relevant contexts.

Learners encounter a wide range of different types of texts in different media. Building on the four capacities, the Course enables learners to communicate, be critical thinkers, develop cultural awareness, and be creative.

## **Purpose and aims of the Course**

The main purpose of the Course is to develop the skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, in order to understand and use English for learners whose first language is not English.

As learners develop their language skills, they will be able to process information more easily, apply knowledge of language in practical and relevant contexts, and gain confidence to undertake new and more challenging tasks in a variety of situations.

The Course offers learners opportunities to develop and extend a wide range of skills. In particular, the Course aims to enable learners to develop the ability to:

- ◆ read, write, listen, and speak in English
- ◆ understand and use English language, as appropriate to purpose, audience and context
- ◆ apply knowledge and understanding of English language

The Course contributes towards the development of literacy skills by providing learners with opportunities to read, write, listen, and speak in English.

## **Information about typical learners who might do the Course**

The Course provides flexibility, personalisation and choice, to enable learners to achieve in different ways and at different paces.

The Course provides opportunities for learners to build on prior learning experienced in a broad general education or in ESOL qualifications at a lower SCQF level.

The Course provides learners with the opportunity to develop skills in reading and writing, listening, and speaking, which are essential for learning, life and work; and to develop their ability to communicate their thoughts and feelings and respond to those of other people.

The Course provides learners whose first language is not English with the opportunity to use different media effectively for learning and communication, and to develop an understanding of how language works and use language to communicate ideas and information in English.

The Course is designed to be accessible.

The Course provides opportunities for vertical and lateral progression to National Courses, and to other SQA qualifications in ESOL and other related fields.

# Course structure and conditions of award

## Course structure

This Course is made up of one mandatory and one of two optional Units. The two Units include the four language skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The Course provides the opportunity to integrate these language skills across the Units.

Units are statements of standards for assessment and not programmes of learning and teaching. They can be delivered in a variety of ways.

### Mandatory Unit

#### **ESOL for Everyday Life (Higher)**

The purpose of this Unit is to develop the language skills needed for everyday life in familiar, and less familiar, personal, social and transactional contexts. This Unit provides learners with the opportunity to develop the skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, using detailed and complex English language.

### Optional Units

#### **ESOL in Work-Related Contexts (Higher)**

The purpose of this Unit is to develop the language skills needed for familiar, and less familiar, work-related contexts. This Unit provides learners with the opportunity to develop the skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, using detailed and complex English language.

#### **ESOL in Study-Related Contexts (Higher)**

The purpose of this Unit is to develop the language skills needed for familiar, and less familiar, study-related contexts. This Unit provides learners with the opportunity to develop the skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, using detailed and complex English language.

## Conditions of award

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all of the Units as well as the Course assessment. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

## Skills, knowledge and understanding

Further information on the assessment of the skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course is given in the *Course Assessment Specification*. A broad overview of the mandatory subject skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed in the Course is given in this section.

These include:

- ◆ reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in English in the familiar, and less familiar, contexts of everyday life, work or study
- ◆ knowledge and understanding required to understand and use detailed and complex English language, as appropriate to purpose, audience and context

Skills, knowledge and understanding to be included in the Course will be appropriate to the SCQF level of the Course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level ([www.sqa.org.uk/scqf](http://www.sqa.org.uk/scqf)).

## Assessment

Information about assessment for the Course is included in the *Course Assessment Specification*, which provides full details including advice on how a learner's overall attainment for the Course will be determined.

### Unit assessment

All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in the *Unit Specification*.

They can be assessed on a Unit-by-Unit basis or by combined assessment.

They will be assessed on a pass/fail basis within centres. SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgments are consistent and meet national standards.

The assessment of the Units in this Course will be as follows.

### Mandatory Unit

#### ESOL for Everyday Life (Higher)

Learners will be required to provide evidence of their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in English, using detailed and complex language, in one or more of the following contexts: familiar, and less familiar, personal, social or transactional contexts.

### Optional Units

#### ESOL in Work-Related Contexts (Higher)

Learners will be required to provide evidence of their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in English, using detailed and complex language, in a work-related context.

#### ESOL in Study-Related Contexts (Higher)

Learners will be required to provide evidence of their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in English, using detailed and complex language, in a study-related context.

Exemplification of possible assessment approaches for these Units is provided in the *National Assessment Resource*.

### Course assessment

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of [added value](#)<sup>1</sup>. At National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, the added value will be assessed in the Course assessment. The added value for the Course must address the key purposes and aims of the Course as defined in the Course Rationale. It will do this by addressing one or more of breadth, challenge or application.

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<sup>1</sup> Definitions can be found here: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html)

In the Higher ESOL Course, added value will focus on:

- ◆ challenge
- ◆ application

Learners will provide evidence of their listening and talking, reading and writing skills, and their ability to understand and use English in the contexts of everyday life, work or study. The Course assessment will take the form of a [performance](#)<sup>2</sup> through which learners will demonstrate their speaking and listening skills, and a [question paper](#)<sup>3</sup> through which learners will demonstrate their listening, reading and writing skills, in English.

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<sup>2</sup> Definitions can be found here: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html)

<sup>3</sup> See link above for definition.

# Development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

It is expected that learners will develop broad, generic skills through this Course. The skills that learners will be expected to improve on and develop through the Course are based on SQA's Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work and drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These must be built into the Course where there are appropriate opportunities.

## **1 Literacy**

- 1.1 Reading
- 1.2 Writing
- 1.3 Listening and talking

## **4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship**

- 4.6 Citizenship

## **5 Thinking skills**

- 5.3 Applying

Amplification of these skills is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Course. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work for the Course is given in the *Course Support Notes*.

## Administrative information

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### History of changes to National Course Specification:

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
	1.1	Page 8 – under 'Course assessment', the number of question papers has been changed from two to one	Qualifications Development Manager	April 2014

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