

NATIONAL CERTIFICATE MODULE: UNIT SPECIFICATION**STATEMENT OF STANDARDS****UNIT NUMBER:** 7110055**UNIT TITLE:** COMMUNICATION 4

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

OUTCOME

1. DEMONSTRATE AN UNDERSTANDING OF COMPLEX WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) A correct identification of the type and purpose of a communication is made and justified in terms of its main conventions.
- (b) An accurate account is given of significant information, ideas and supporting details and the relationship between these is demonstrated.
- (c) Acceptable inferences are drawn from a communication about the writer's stance and are justified with reference to the text.
- (d) A full evaluation is made of the effectiveness of a communication in meeting its purpose.

RANGE STATEMENT

Type of communication: written communication which mainly explores an issue from several perspectives; written communication which is mainly concerned with the presentation, analysis and synthesis of information.

Complexity: using a paragraph structure that allows the writer to amplify, modify, exemplify and draw conclusions; making substantial use of sentences which are internally complex; using complex language; using written cues that make clear the relationship between different aspects of content.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Oral and/or written evidence that the candidate has met all of the performance criteria and each aspect of the range statement.

The candidate must read a minimum of two pieces of complex communication. On each occasion the candidate must achieve all of the performance criteria.

OUTCOME**2. PRODUCE COMPLEX WRITTEN COMMUNICATION****PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

- (a) The conventions adopted for the communication are appropriate to the writer's purpose, used consistently and effectively and adapted as necessary for the intended readership.
- (b) All essential information and supporting detail are presented accurately and coherently within the communication and are given varied emphasis according to their importance.
- (c) The structure of the communication is appropriate to purpose and audience, clearly delineates the various points it presents, yet aids identification of linkages.
- (d) Spelling, syntax and vocabulary are accurate and syntax and vocabulary are varied to suit the writer's purpose and audience.
- (e) Clear distinctions are made in the communication in terms of facts, opinions, arguments and conclusions.

RANGE STATEMENT

Type of communication: writing which mainly presents, analyses and evaluates a substantial body of information; writing which mainly develops a point of view in relation to an issue which is explored in depth.

Complexity: using a layout that makes clear how information has been categorised and evaluated; using a paragraph structure that makes clear the distinctions between facts, opinions, arguments and conclusions; using sentences which are internally complex in terms of main and subordinate clauses; using sentences, phrases and single words which highlight the relationship between the different aspects of content; using some specialised vocabulary; using complex language.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Written evidence which shows that the candidate has achieved all of the performance criteria and each aspect of the range statement.

The candidate will produce a minimum of two items of written communication, enhanced as appropriate with graphical/pictorial material. On each occasion the candidate must achieve all of the performance criteria.

OUTCOME

3. DEMONSTRATE AN UNDERSTANDING OF COMPLEX SPOKEN COMMUNICATION

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) A correct identification of the purpose and audience of a communication is made and the conventions of delivery are justified in terms of its purpose.
- (b) An accurate account is given of significant information, ideas and supporting details and the relationship between these is demonstrated.
- (c) Acceptable inferences are drawn from a communication about the speaker's stance, and are justified with reference to the spoken communication.
- (d) A full evaluation is made of the effectiveness of a communication in meeting its purpose.

RANGE STATEMENT

Type of communication: spoken communication during which a speaker develops a particular viewpoint through the presentation and analysis of information; a discussion during which several speakers express their views and build on the contribution of each other.

Degree of complexity: the speaker offers evidence in support of an argument; makes statements which clearly synthesise, and build on points previously expressed; uses verbal cues that make clear the relationship between different aspects of content; uses language and features of delivery in an integrated way.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Written and/or oral evidence which shows that the candidate has listened to two types of complex spoken communication which between them cover the range statement. On each occasion the candidate must achieve all of the performance criteria.

OUTCOME

4. DELIVER AND PARTICIPATE IN COMPLEX COMMUNICATION IN FORMAL SETTINGS

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) The conventions adopted for the communication are at an appropriate level of formality for the speaker's purpose and audience and are used consistently and effectively.
- (b) All essential information with supporting detail is presented accurately and coherently and given varied emphasis.

- (c) The structure and delivery of the communication make clear both the distinctions between the different ideas it presents and the interrelation between them.
- (d) Deliberate use is made of register, syntax and vocabulary to support the speaker's purpose.
- (e) Responses to the reactions or contributions of the listener(s) or other speaker(s) are made so as to promote and develop interaction.

RANGE STATEMENT

Type of communication: a formal presentation; formal interaction with one or more people.

Complexity: in the presentation employs a structure that allows him or her to present, analyse and evaluate information; shows a clear and developing line of thought; reaches a conclusion that summarises and builds on what has gone before; uses language and features of delivery in an integrated way; employs complex language; in the formal interaction with one or more people the speaker intervenes appropriately to modify or develop the contribution of other speakers.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Spoken evidence which shows that the candidate has achieved all of the performance criteria and each aspect of the range statement.

The candidate must make a minimum of one formal presentation and interact in at least one formal setting with one or more persons. On each occasion the candidate must achieve all of the performance criteria.

ASSESSMENT RECORDS

In order to achieve this unit, candidates are required to present sufficient evidence that they have met all the performance criteria for each outcome within the range specified. Details of these requirements are given for each outcome. The assessment instruments used should follow the general guidance offered by the SQA assessment model and an integrative approach to assessment is encouraged. (See references at the end of support notes).

Accurate records should be made of assessment instruments used showing how evidence is generated for each outcome and giving marking schemes and/or checklists, etc. Records of candidates' achievements should be kept. These records will be available for external verification.

Although there is no mandatory requirement for centres to produce taped evidence for each candidate it would be helpful if such evidence were available in relation to a sample of candidates for each module.

SPECIAL NEEDS

In certain cases, modified outcomes and range statements can be proposed for certification. See references at end of Support Notes.

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NATIONAL CERTIFICATE MODULE: UNIT SPECIFICATION**SUPPORT NOTES**

UNIT NUMBER 7110055
UNIT TITLE COMMUNICATION 4

SUPPORT NOTES: This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. None of the sections of the support notes is mandatory.

NOTIONAL DESIGN LENGTH: SQA allocates a notional design length to a unit on the basis of time estimated for achievement of the stated standards by a candidate whose starting point is as described in the access statement. The notional design length for this unit is 80 hours. The use of notional design length for programme design and timetabling is advisory only.

PURPOSE This unit is designed to develop English Language skills with particular reference to vocational contexts. It represents a level of communication which is valuable for intermediate posts in business, administration and technician occupations. Communication 4 is the entry level for certain courses in advanced and higher education.

The module is intended to articulate with SEB and other courses in English and to provide a post-compulsory alternative to Standard Grade and, in certain cases, to Higher Grade English. It may be advisable in this connection to combine this unit with a unit in Literature. The unit offers a national framework within which centres can devise programmes and develop skills in formal uses of English to meet the needs of a wide range of post-16 candidates and users.

Alternative outcomes for candidates with special educational needs such as those arising from sensory impairment can be certificated by arrangement with SQA. Details of the procedures involved are set out in the Council's Guidelines for Candidates and Trainees with Special Needs.

SQA publishes summaries of NC units for easy reference, publicity purposes, centre handbooks, etc. The summary statement for this unit is as follows:

On completion of this unit you will be able to use and understand formal, complex English in a variety of written and spoken forms.

CONTENT/CONTEXT Corresponding to Outcomes 1-4:

In a Communication module, Content/Context is best defined as the situations, media and activities through which the skills related to the outcomes are practised and developed.

The Communication module should provide opportunities:

- to use language for a variety of purposes with a balance between productive and receptive uses appropriate to the individual needs of the candidate: eg conveying information; describing one's feelings; arguing and persuading; giving assistance; gathering information; organising one's thoughts; keeping a record; questioning; recognising the needs of others; reading and listening for pleasure.
- to use language in a range of settings, personal, social and vocational: eg keeping a diary; making plans in a group; listening to instructions.
- to read a variety of texts and graphical and pictorial representations which offer a range of reading demands: eg books; newspapers and magazines; pamphlets; notices; advertisements; instructions; graphs; diagrams; tables; charts; reports.
- to use a range of written, graphic and pictorial forms: eg notes; business letters; logs; posters; annotated sketches; graphs and diagrams; tables; reports; essays.
- to listen to a variety of messages which offer a range of listening demands: eg working in a group; listening to a speaker; listening to a radio or television broadcast. (Items of oral communication which are suitable for summative assessment will deal with topics which are familiar to the candidate in terms of format, subject, vocabulary and purpose.)
- to use a range of forms of oral communication: eg communicating in a group; taking part in an interview; reporting.

APPROACHES TO GENERATING EVIDENCE Learning and teaching in Communication must be active and candidate-centred. Candidates should have the opportunity to plan and make decisions for themselves, to show initiative and independence, and to work co-operatively in groups. Induction to the activities should ensure that the candidates have a clear understanding of the nature and purpose of the work.

There should be a variety of activities undertaken, some individual, some in small groups and some with the whole class. These should provide opportunities to use language in real situations for real purposes and may be part of projects or practical exercises set within the Communication unit or drawn from activities in other vocational or social contexts.

Teaching groups should be small enough to allow for practical activities of this kind to be undertaken, and to allow candidates to be involved in activities which stretch their capabilities and offer both the chance of success and the risk of failure.

It is recommended that Communication should be timetabled in blocks of time which are long enough to allow candidates to engage in realistic combinations of communication skills both in and out of the centre.

The provision of opportunities for rewriting, reviewing, revising and evaluating by the candidate, by peers and by the tutor/trainer should be seen as an essential feature of all formative activities.

Units of work in Communication should be designed to engage candidates in the varied and purposeful use of inter-related skills of language. Units can be of variable length and may allow for several different learning and teaching approaches. It is recommended that these units should be negotiated and planned in such a way that the evidence required for assessment is generated in the course of ongoing work rather than as a separate and discrete exercise.

Group work is to be encouraged as it gives candidates practical experience of the co-operation necessary in real life, particularly in vocational situations. However, work completed by candidates as members of a group or in a group project should be carried out without the aid of other members of the group where this work is to be submitted as evidence for that candidate's summative assessment.

Combining Communication with Other Modules: The content of other modules a candidate is taking can be drawn on to provide activities which involve the practice and development of communication skills. Communication units may be devised which are cross-unit and aim to develop communication skills in contexts drawn from other units. It is also possible to combine a Communication unit with another unit to create an enhanced learning and teaching programme. For example, a Communication unit could be combined with a PSD unit to provide particular contexts for the development of communication skills. In such a case, adequate time must be allowed to ensure that all important aspects of both units can be covered.

Open Enrolment: A special arrangement for enrolment applies to the Communication series 2-4. NC6 completion arrangements have been revised. Details of this will be found in the Council's current *Guide to Procedures*.

N.B. The statement of satisfactory performance for each outcome indicates the minimum required for the purpose of summative assessment. However, the number of activities undertaken by the candidate should not be limited to those specified under Instrument of Assessment.

Tutor/trainer Support: Tutors/trainers should remember to distinguish between their differing roles in formative and summative assessment. In the former, as much help and support as is required by the candidate may legitimately be given by the tutor/trainer. Tasks which are intended to provide evidence for summative assessment must be completed by the candidate unaided. However, it would be acceptable for the tutor/trainer to draw the candidate's attention to any general area of error in relation to particular performance criteria or to redirect him or her to the task in hand.

Use of Dictionaries: This should be encouraged at all stages. Communication modules enable an 'open-book' policy to be adopted by centres as far as use of resources by candidates is concerned.

Use of Computers: Word processors, including those which can make use of spelling check type software, may be used by candidates.

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES Centres should note the following before designing assessment instruments:

Purpose

To an extent the purpose of the Communication is defined by the Range Statement "Type of communication". Nevertheless texts may have more than one purpose, and at this level candidates will be expected to clearly identify those sections of texts which convey different purposes. These may reasonably include exposition, persuasion, expressing feelings and reactions, sharing an experience, entertaining or evaluating.

Conventions

At this level candidates should not only identify purpose by referring to the main content, but also to likely audience and those aspects of the form which make clear what type of text it is. In practice candidates may reasonably be expected to make detailed reference to aspects of layout, including any graphic material, key phrases that help to identify the purpose, words that convey an appropriate formality, and any other aspects of style. Literary conventions will not normally be covered.

Conventions of Delivery

These should include choice of vocabulary and register as well as articulation, tone, pace, modulation and non-verbal signals.

Centres may use the Instruments of Assessment which are considered by tutors/trainers to be the most appropriate. Examples of Instruments of Assessment which could be used are as follows:

Outcomes 1 and 3 Restricted Response Questions. Restricted response questions should only be set which address significant aspects of a text. It follows from this that all questions should be answered correctly if the candidate is to demonstrate coverage of the performance criteria.

Outcomes 2 and 4 Assignments.

EXEMPLARS For Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 the Range Statement "Type of communication" does not specify a particular form. This has been done intentionally to ensure that the centre can exercise maximum flexibility when devising appropriate summative assessments. Nevertheless, taken together the range statements make clear which types of text would be acceptable, and which would not.

Outcome 1

Journalism/
Feature Articles

As with Communication 3 the more substantial type of newspaper is likely to yield suitable summative material. However as the range statement makes clear, at this level the internal structure of the article should be noticeably complex.. It is likely that sentence length will

be varied for effect and emphasis, it is also likely that journalistic writing suitable for summative purposes will be characterised by a stylistic richness; there may indeed be an intentional discrepancy between a chosen style and the ostensible purpose of the writing. The writer may choose to insert colloquialisms into a formal context to highlight the point being made. Overall, scrutiny of the text may well reveal a sustained but subtle attempt to manipulate the reader's response through irony, humour, other rhetorical devices.

Journalism/
Specialised
Reporting

Certain types of newspaper or journal are likely to include forms of communication which are concerned with the "the presentation, analysis and synthesis of information". But here the subject matter may well be of a technical rather than a statistical nature. The likelihood is that the reader will be presented with a substantial volume of new, perhaps statistical information in connection with a comparatively specialised area of knowledge. For example, the writer may be concerned with new EEC regulations relating to an aspect of food production; or describing in detail how a legal precedent has been established as a result of a particular court case; or analysis of speculative trends in the stock market; or a survey of house prices in relation to geographic or demographic factors; or developments relating to the institution of new procedures or working practices in a specialised vocational context.

Non-fiction:

A book-length treatment of for example, women's changing role in society may contain part of a chapter which is specifically concerned with the media representation of women. If the writing explores an issue from several perspectives and meets the range statement concerned with complexity then it would be appropriate for summative purposes. It is likely then that many text books dealing with aspects of the social sciences would be useful in this context.

Fiction

The use of fiction for summative purposes is essentially problematic, and is virtually precluded by the range statements. In addition there is also the requirement to justify the identified purpose in terms of the main conventions. As the advice under "Assessment Procedures" makes clear these would not normally include literary conventions. A further difficulty is presented by the requirement of PC(c) to draw

acceptable inferences from a communication about the writer's stance and justify them by reference to the text; we cannot assume that a writer's point of view is necessarily apparent in the authorial voice, or in the thoughts and observations of fictional characters.

Outcome 2

The Range Statement "Type of communication" has been written to give maximum flexibility to the candidate who should nevertheless produce two types of writing which are appreciably different in terms of purpose and form. There follows some of the more obvious types of writing which could fulfil the performance criteria; the list is illustrative, and is by no means definitive.

The Report The most obvious recognised format for the presentation, analysis and evaluation of a substantial body of information is the Report. At this level it is reasonable to expect that the terms of reference would require the writer to make firm recommendations based on the evaluation of preceding information. The format itself may reasonably include features which are not necessarily a requirement for level 3. These may include graphic materials such as diagrams, tables, charts and graphs. The various parts of the report should be clearly designated with a consistent numbering or lettering system. Candidates may also demonstrate that they can make correct use of appendices. At this level candidates should be able to write a synopsis which precedes the introduction if this is the format being followed.

**Project/
Practical
Investigation** Various curricular and vocational training areas require candidates to carry out a project or practical investigation that enables them to demonstrate the skills, and apply the knowledge that has been gained in a specialised context. It is important that any such work being considered at this level should also follow a recognised format and as such is likely to include several of the features already mentioned in connection with the report. Writing which falls into this category should be informed by a consistent sense of purpose and audience. In several cases the format itself will be clearly prescribed, eg candidates may be required to incorporate a planning record and investigation diary as part of the final product. These may include lists of investigating activities and sources, etc.

**The Discursive
Essay** The discursive essay is a type of writing which would allow the development of a point of view in relation to an issue which is explored from several perspectives. It is important that the internal structure of such an essay reflects the requirements to conduct quite a sophisticated level of argument. Although it is a difficult concept to define, it is not unreasonable to expect that

at this level the candidate can write with a noticeable flair or panache. This may be reflected in the articulacy of the piece, the confident handling of figurative language, the ability to sustain a particular tone of voice, or introduce the occasional rhetorical device into the writing.

A Paper

A variant on the discursive essay is "the paper". Candidates may be required to produce a paper as stimulus for discussion in a tutorial or teaching group. In vocational contexts managers often require that new ideas be submitted to them "in a paper". As a form or genre it is difficult to define. In practice such writing is likely to be characterised by combination of succinct summary perhaps expressed as "bulleted" statements and paragraphs of substantial exposition, in support of a clearly defined proposal.

The Personal/ Reflective Essay

Could also be appropriate at this level. It may well be necessary however for the candidate to employ a specified structure or agreed plan to ensure that the final piece includes facts, opinions, arguments and a suitable conclusion. If this type of writing is to be suitable for Communication 4 it should be consistently articulate and characterised by insight and a sense of style.

Outcome 3

A formal presentation or lecture may well be the best vehicle for a speaker to develop a particular viewpoint through the presentation, evaluation and analysis of information.

Equally acceptable would be a documentary style television programme where a complex issue is explored. If the programme is being used to meet the requirements of the first class within the Range Statement "Type of communication", ie during which a speaker develops a 'particular viewpoint', it is important that the programme itself is characterised by a sustained authorial or editorial stance.

The second class within the Range Statement "Type of communication" is concerned with the candidate's ability to listen to a discussion. In practice the most likely source of stimulus material may well be provided by television programmes. If the part of the range statement concerned with speakers "building on the contributions of others" is to be met it would be important to avoid the type of studio debate which is characterised by a series of emotional but often unrelated contributions. The ideal discussion would leave the listener with a sense that one or more points of view was being steadily modified and developed, even if agreement or consensus is not finally reached.

For the purposes of assessment a televised interview between two people would meet the range statement if it were of sufficient duration to demonstrate "building on the contributions of others". Many training videos incorporate an element of discussion as part of the overall presentation. Again it would be acceptable to focus on this element if the discussion covered the range statement.

While recognising that listening is rarely a discrete activity, it is important that the assessment is primarily concerned with the spoken aspect of the video and not exclusively with messages covered by other aspects of the medium.

A complete television play or an episode of a soap will generally not be suitable for summative purposes because of the likely complexity of messages and levels of communication running concurrently. In addition the "obvious characteristics" are likely to be of a specialised nature and will not be covered in the range statement.

Outcome 4

At this level the formal presentation may well incorporate audio, visual support materials. Because of the evidence requirement that all PCs must be met by the same task, it may be necessary to insist that having delivered a talk the speaker invites and responds appropriately to at least one question from the audience. This will ensure coverage of PC(e).

A meeting convened for a definite purpose would clearly qualify as formal interaction with one or more people. A discussion or tutorial whose purpose was to explore ideas in an academic or vocational context would also be appropriate. In both of these cases it will be necessary to ensure that individual candidates can demonstrate coverage of the performance criteria which relates to structure. This can be done in one of two ways:

1. If the form of the discussion enables each participant to talk at some length then it should be possible to assess the extent to which each contributor makes clear the interrelation between the ideas being presented. This approach is easier if the participants at a formal meeting are each required to speak to a particular agenda item.
2. The second way is to consider the overall shape of the discussion. If the candidate being assessed intervenes at an appropriate point to modify or develop a point of view previously expressed, or is able to summarise what has been said up to that point, then it can be reasonably argued that he or she is contributing to the overall structure of the discussion and accordingly meets the performance criteria.

The interview format which is frequently used to generate evidence at this level would clearly meet the definition of a form of interaction with one or more people.

PROGRESSION The Open Enrolment arrangement for the Communication series 2-4 has significant implications for progression in relation to teaching methods and assessment procedures. A candidate who fails to achieve all four outcomes for Communication 4 can receive recognition of performance at a lower level in up to three outcomes. This means that candidates can be working consistently within a differentiated framework.

Because the range statement for Outcome 1 of both Communication 3 and 4 describes types of text which differ in terms of complexity, it will not usually be possible to recognise flawed answers on a Communication 4 text as evidence of having achieved at the lower level. The same applies to Outcome 3.

However, because of similarity between the types of communication appropriate to Outcome 2 at both Communication 3 and 4, it is technically possible for a piece of written work produced by a candidate studying for Communication 4 to be acceptable as evidence of having achieved at the lower level. The same applies to Outcome 4.

For this to happen it is important that the assignment be explained in a precise but not self-limiting way, and that the candidate appreciates the different levels of performance required for Communications 3 and 4.

RECOGNITION Many SQA NC units are recognised for entry/recruitment purposes. For up-to-date information see the SQA guide 'Recognised and Recommended Groupings'.

REFERENCES

1. Guide to unit writing.
2. For a fuller discussion on assessment issues, please refer to SQA's Guide to Assessment.
3. Procedures for special needs statements are set out in SQA's guide 'Students with Special Needs'.
4. Information for centres on SQA's operating procedures is contained in SQA's Guide to Procedures.
5. For details of other SQA publications, please consult SQA's publications list.

A support pack for this unit is available from SQA. Please call our Sales and Despatch section on 0141-242 2168 to check availability and cost. Quote product code B067.

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