



National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT	Language (Higher)
NUMBER	F3F1 12 Cantonese D339 12 French D465 12 German D471 12 Italian F3CV 12 Mandarin(Simplified) F3CP 12 Mandarin(Traditional) D477 12 Russian D483 12 Spanish F183 12 Urdu
COURSE	Cantonese/French/German/Italian/Mandarin (Simplified)/Mandarin (Traditional)Russian/Spanish/Urdu (Higher)

This is a component unit of Higher Cantonese/French/German/Italian/Mandarin (Simplified) Mandarin (Traditional)/Russian/Spanish/Urdu.

SUMMARY

This unit aims to continue the progressive development of candidates' knowledge about language, their competence in the four skills of Speaking, Writing, Reading and Listening, and their ability to use these skills in appropriate ways within defined contexts. The assessment for this unit will focus on the skills of Speaking, Listening and Reading. The skill of Writing in the target language will not be assessed discretely, but will continue to be integral to the development of the other skills.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Make an oral presentation and engage in discussion in the target language.
- 2 Demonstrate understanding of the target language in spoken form.
- 3 Demonstrate understanding of text written in the target language.

Administrative Information

Superclass:	FK
Publication date:	March 2009
Source:	Scottish Qualifications Authority
Version:	07

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National Unit Specification: General Information (cont)

UNIT Language (Higher)

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry to the unit is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained:

- Intermediate 2 in the appropriate language or its component units (with the exception of Urdu).
- Standard Grade in the appropriate language at Grade 1 or 2 and Writing award at Grade 1 or 2*
- or equivalent qualification.

* Candidates holding a Standard Grade in the appropriate language at Grade 1 or 2 and Writing award at Grade 3 or 4 may be advised to follow the Intermediate 2 course (with the exception of Urdu).

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National Unit Specification: General Information (cont)

UNIT Language (Higher)

CREDIT VALUE

2 credits at Higher (12 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

CORE SKILLS

There is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components in this unit.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Language (Higher)

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 the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

Note on Coverage of Themes and Topics

Evidence that the candidate has reached the required level to pass a unit will be generated by the completion of tasks and activities related to the specified outcomes. For each level, a number of prescribed themes and topics have been elaborated and it is by using language within the context of these themes and topics that candidates will display their level of performance. An assessment instrument used by a centre to show that the candidate has reached the level of the unit may be devised by the centre according to set criteria or may be drawn from the National Assessment Bank. Such an instrument may cover only one of the prescribed themes. If a candidate gains a pass no other proof of attainment of the outcome with respect to other themes is necessary. However, the centre should retain evidence (eg teaching notes, texts, plans, records of work, candidate notes), which can indicate that, by the end of the unit, all prescribed themes have been covered by the candidate.

The justification for such an approach to gathering evidence of candidate performance lies in the nature of language development. The prescribed themes and topics provide the language contexts within which learners develop and then display their level of competence in the various skills of language use. It is not the context itself which defines a candidate's level of competence. The same topic can provide the context for levels of overall competence ranging from the near beginner to the native speaker. It is the level of performance in component competences - grammatical, socio-linguistic, cultural, strategic, discourse-related - which distinguish: a candidate operating at a certain level within one context (ie prescribed theme or topic) will be able to operate at the same level within another context. He or she may have to look up more words in a dictionary, or ask the interlocutor for help (both strategic competence-related activities) but the level of language used will be the same. Thus it is not necessary to require candidates to prove that they have reached the level of competence of the unit in each of the prescribed themes. Once they have reached it in one, they have proved their ability. All that remains is to extend their coverage. Of course, many candidates will have to work through all the prescribed themes as they improve towards the level of the unit and so early attempts at achieving the outcomes may not be successful.

The grade descriptions are context-free, but for some candidates at this level the context will continue to be important because the notion of recycling and transferring of language competence may not yet have been sufficiently developed.

The performance criteria for a pass for each skill should be interpreted, where appropriate, as being the same as the Grade C description in the course specification.

Content relates to the prescribed themes and topics outlined in Appendix 1.

OUTCOME 1

Make an oral presentation and engage in discussion in the target language.

Performance criteria

- a) Makes an oral presentation which has appropriate structure and content.
- b) Sustains discussion, even though prompting or repetition may be necessary.
- c) Employs appropriate language with sufficient clarity and accuracy to achieve communication with a sympathetic speaker of the target language.
- d) Uses vocabulary and sentence structure to allow some flexibility of expression.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Language (Higher)

Evidence requirements

A performance of oral work (approximately 6-8 minutes' duration) recorded on audio cassette and incorporating a presentation on a topic chosen by the candidate followed by a face-to-face discussion with a speaker of the target language. The discussion must develop from the original topic and theme and continue into at least one of the other prescribed themes.

Notes consisting of a maximum of 5 headings, each with up to 8 words in the target language, may be referred to during the presentation.

OUTCOME 2

Demonstrate understanding of the target language in spoken form.

Performance criterion

Demonstrates understanding of the main content and specific points of detail of the text.

Evidence requirements

Written work in English or other appropriate evidence, demonstrating understanding of text, recorded or spoken live, of 2-3 minutes' length and heard up to 3 times.

The task will be done under controlled conditions as specified in Appendix B, normally within one teaching block/period. Use of a dictionary is not permitted.

OUTCOME 3

Demonstrate understanding of text written in the target language.

Performance criterion

Demonstrates understanding of the main content and specific points of detail of the text.

Evidence requirements

Written work in English, or other appropriate evidence, demonstrating understanding of a text of 400-450 words or 500-600 Chinese characters. A glossary of terms likely to prove difficult may be provided at the end of the reading text.

The task will be done under controlled conditions as specified in Appendix B, normally within one teaching block/period. Use of a dictionary is permitted.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Language (Higher)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 80 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

Language development could be encouraged in the following ways:

Language use – productive/interactive/mediating:

- by extending the candidate's ability to recount and discuss orally events and issues of personal and topical interest in the target language, with increased emphasis on communicating views and opinions
- by extending the candidate's ability to recount and discuss in writing events and issues of personal and topical interest in the target language, with increased emphasis on communicating views and opinions.

Language use – receptive/interactive/mediating:

- by extending the candidate's ability to listen to the target language and demonstrate understanding of language of increasing complexity related to the prescribed themes
- by extending the candidate's ability to read texts in the target language related to the prescribed themes, for gist and detailed understanding.

Knowledge about language:

- by improving the candidate's grasp of key aspects of grammatical structure
- by extending the range of grammatical structure which the candidate can deploy.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

The unit builds on existing good practice by encouraging an integrated teaching approach, which seeks to develop skills in combination rather than in isolation. Progression from previous levels will be in terms of the candidate's ability to handle language in more sophisticated ways, and in terms of the range of language encountered by the candidate. The quality and accuracy of the language which s/he produces, together with its content, will also reflect this progression.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Oral communication (Outcome 1)

Following a prepared presentation, candidates will be required to discuss issues and respond to questions in the target language following on naturally from the topic chosen. The interlocutor must ensure that the discussion develops from the original topic and theme and continues into at least one of the other prescribed themes. This test of oral communication will contribute to both the internal assessment of the unit and to the external assessment of the course. For the purpose of the unit assessment, the candidate's performance will be assessed on a pass/fail basis. The performance criteria for a pass should be interpreted as being the same as the Grade C descriptions in the course specification.

For the purpose of the course assessment, the candidate's performance will also be marked in terms of content, accuracy, language resource and intonation in accordance with the grade descriptions given in the course specification, using performance criteria and pegged marks issued by SQA .

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Language (Higher)

Listening (Outcome 2)

Candidates will listen to texts from live and, where possible, audio- or video-recorded sources in the target language. For the purpose of the unit assessment, they will listen to views and opinions and accounts of events being expressed within topics included in the prescribed themes, and will be required to demonstrate comprehension by undertaking tasks such as the following:

- responding in English to questions in English
- choosing the correct multiple-choice option in English
- listing in English the views/intentions expressed or the events recounted
- making notes in English under given headings.

A variety of these tasks should be used in the internal assessment of listening. Use of a dictionary is not permitted.

Reading (Outcome 3)

For the purpose of the unit assessment, candidates will read a text of 400-450 words, and will demonstrate comprehension by undertaking tasks such as the following:

- responding in English to questions in English
- choosing the correct multiple-choice option
- writing a summary
- completing grids to indicate understanding
- following written instructions to complete a task

A variety of these techniques should be used in the internal assessment of reading. A glossary of terms likely to prove difficult may be provided at the end of the text. Use of a dictionary is also permitted.

CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES AND/OR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (www.sqa.org.uk).