SCOTTISH
QUALIFICATIONS
AUTHORITY

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT   Using a Computer in Business (Access 3)

NUMBER   D520 09

CLUSTER   Business (Access 3)

SUMMARY

This unit is designed to give candidates the basic skills required to operate a computer for business use.

OUTCOMES

1   Identify, describe and use a variety of common business programs.
2   Input, edit, save and print data from existing computer files using business programs.
3   Identify equipment used in a computer system and demonstrate good working practices.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Access 3.

Additional copies of this unit specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. The cost for each unit specification is £2.50 (minimum order £5).

National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT   Using a Computer in Business (Access 3)

CORE SKILLS

This unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete core skills for the unit   Using Information Technology   Acc 3

Core skills components for the unit   None

Additional information about core skills is published in *Automatic Certification of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 1999).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT   Using a Computer in Business (Access 3)

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.

OUTCOME 1

Identify, describe and use a variety of common business programs.

Performance criteria
(a)   Identification of programs is correct.
(b)   Description of common uses of programs is correct.
(c)   Procedures to load, operate and exit programs are followed correctly.

Note on range for the outcome
Business programs: word processing, database, spreadsheet.

Evidence requirements
Evidence in the form of candidate responses to short answer questions and an observation checklist of candidate using the 3 programs.

OUTCOME 2

Input, edit, save and print data from existing computer files using business programs.

Performance criteria
(a)   Use of keys to perform specific functions is correct.
(b)   Data is input and amendments are made accurately.
(c)   Data is saved and printed according to instructions.

Note on range for the outcome
Business programs: word processing, database, spreadsheet.
Amendments:

•   Word processing: insert text, edit text, delete text
•   Spreadsheet: insert data, edit data, delete data
•   Database: add new record, edit record, delete record

Evidence requirements
Candidates will be required to take a print-out of files in each of the 3 programs prior to amendments and after amendments have been made.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Using a Computer in Business (Access 3)

OUTCOME 3

Identify equipment used in a computer system and demonstrate good working practices.

Performance criteria
(a) Identification and use of equipment used in computer systems is accurate.
(b) Equipment and software is used in accordance with operating instructions.
(c) Workstation is kept free from hazards and all work stored in accordance with organisational guidelines.
(d) Any potential hazards are recognised and reported promptly.

Note on range for the outcome
Equipment: keyboard, monitor, printer, mouse, CD-ROM.

Evidence requirements
Evidence should be generated from candidate responses to short answer questions and the use of an observation checklist.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT   Using a Computer in Business (Access 3)

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

While the time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

Outcome 1

Candidates will be introduced to, and develop a working knowledge of, a variety of business programs. These programs will illustrate the vocational uses of computers, for example, number work, working with text and working with data. Candidates should be encouraged to keep a portfolio of work.

Outcome 2

Candidates should be introduced to the standard keyboard and alternative methods to input information and, where possible, have the opportunity to use them. Candidates will be able to input data, edit and delete data in word processing, spreadsheet and database packages, and should develop the skill of proof-reading and checking their work.

They should be familiar with the operation of input devices.

Candidates will learn how to select the appropriate software application and within each application, how to run, input, save, print and exit from it. They will become familiar with the procedures required to produce hard copies from each of the programs.

Outcome 3

Candidates will be able to identify the different pieces of hardware that make up the system they are using and be able to identify input and output devices. They should be able to deal confidently with the computer and keyboard and become familiar with routine machine maintenance, eg, replenishing paper in the printer. They should be aware of potential hazards when dealing with equipment of this type and should know what precautions to take and what to do about any potential hazards. Candidates should be encouraged to file their own work neatly and should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own work area.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

The unit is designed to provide the candidate with practical 'hands-on' experience. Teachers/lecturers and lecturers should avoid, where possible, the use of technical language. Initially, there is likely to be a high degree of teacher/lecturer input. Many processes and a variety of programs will need to be discussed and demonstrated. Candidates will be encouraged to practise and become confident and proficient in these. Candidates will also develop skills in handling hardware and responding to screen prompts.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT   Using a Computer in Business (Access 3)

Developing the skills of proof-reading and spelling will be encouraged so that candidates can take responsibility for their own work before submission.

As candidates become more confident, the role of the teacher/lecturer changes to that of an observer and advisor. Attention should now be given to monitoring effective use of hardware and media.

All materials should be appropriate to the needs and abilities of the candidate. Where necessary, candidates should be allowed to use an alternative method of inputting data to that of the standard keyboard. The positioning of equipment should be appropriate to the candidate to enable him or her to operate it effectively.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Outcome 1

The candidate should respond to a series of short answer questions which will enable him or her to describe the common uses and contexts of word processing, spreadsheets and databases. The teacher/lecturer should observe the candidate identifying, loading, operating and exiting programs in accordance with organisational procedures. The candidate will be observed throughout and an observation checklist completed.

Outcome 2

The candidate should complete 3 practical tasks. The candidate should input data into an existing file, edit, delete, save and print data according to instructions, for each of the software applications.

Outcome 3

In this task the candidate should answer a minimum of 5 short answer questions about computer equipment. This may take the form of an interview or a written exercise. The teacher/lecturer should complete an observational checklist over the period of the unit to ensure that good working practices have been followed.

SPECIAL NEEDS

This unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment and Certification Arrangements for Candidates with Special Needs/Candidates whose First Language is not English* (SQA, 1998).