

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: English Language Study (Higher)

NUMBER DA9E 12

COURSE

SUMMARY

This unit aims to develop further candidates' English, in all four skills; reading, writing, listening and speaking, to communicate effectively with others and undertake a wide variety of tasks in both educational and vocational contexts. The language development will be such that candidates become confident in using English in both complex and unfamiliar situations.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Communicate effectively in English.
- 2 Demonstrate an understanding of spoken English.
- 3 Demonstrate an understanding of written English.
- 4 Produce a well-structured written text.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Candidates will be bilingual and speak English as an additional language. While entry to the course or units is at the discretion of the centre, candidates will normally be expected to have attained one of the following:

- Intermediate 2 in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) or its component units
- University of Cambridge First Certificate in English
- IELTS 5.0 – 5.5
- an equivalent qualification

Careful consideration should be given to whether an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) or English and Communication Higher is most appropriate for the candidate.

Administrative Information

Superclass: FK

Publication date: August 2003

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 01

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2003

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged.

Additional copies of this unit specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. The cost for each unit specification is £2.50. (A handling charge of £1.95 will apply to all orders for priced items.)

National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: English Language Study (Higher)

CREDIT VALUE

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

**SCOTCAT 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 SCOTCAT points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

CORE SKILLS

Information on the automatic certification of any core skills in this unit is published in *Automatic Certification of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, publication code BA0906).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: English Language Study (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.

The prescribed topics for this unit are to be chosen from personal identity, current affairs, social environment and physical environment. Further details are given under 'Support Notes'.

OUTCOME 1

Communicate effectively in English.

Performance criteria

- a) Initiates and maintains the interaction with ease.
- b) Contributes and responds in a way which supports the development of the conversation.
- c) Uses appropriate language with clarity and accuracy.
- d) Uses vocabulary and has a command of language necessary to explore a topic in some depth.
- e) Asks for and responds to requests for clarification relevantly and clearly when and if required.

Evidence requirements

Two conversations:

- an introductory conversation with the assessor, based on the candidate's background (1 to 2 minutes)
- a conversation of approximately six to eight minutes duration, based on a topic chosen by the candidate, with one or more person(s).

It should be noted that this is a conversation and exchange of views and not a formal presentation. Dictionaries may not be used. The conversations should demonstrate that the candidate has fulfilled all the performance criteria.

OUTCOME 2

Demonstrate an understanding of spoken English.

Performance criteria

- a) Demonstrates understanding of the purpose and main content of the text.
- b) Identifies key points and relevant supporting detail correctly.
- c) Recognises implications of tone to deduce opinion and attitude.
- d) Demonstrates an ability to draw inference from the text.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: English Language Study (Higher)

Evidence requirements

One listening activity from which the candidate produces evidence of understanding, demonstrating that the performance criteria have been fulfilled. The listening text will be based on authentic use and come from one of a variety of sources, eg radio broadcasts, interviews or discussions. The text should be no more than four minutes in duration and be heard twice by the candidate. Use of a dictionary is not permitted.

A variety of question types, chosen from the following, will be used:

- completion of key visuals such as diagrams, tables and charts
- note-taking
- multiple choice
- sentence completion
- open/close
- classification

OUTCOME 3

Demonstrate an understanding of written English.

Performance criteria

- a) Demonstrates understanding of the purpose and main content of the text.
- b) Identifies key points and relevant supporting detail correctly.
- c) Recognises opinion and attitude, using semantic and syntactic clues.
- d) Demonstrates an understanding of the author's style and intent.

Evidence requirements

Written work in English or other appropriate evidence which demonstrates that the candidate has understood the text and fulfilled the performance criteria. The text should be between 450-600 words. Use of a bilingual or English-to-English dictionary is permitted.

A variety of question types, chosen from the following, will be used:

- completion of key visuals such as diagrams, tables and charts
- summarising and note-taking
- matching
- short-answer questions
- multiple choice
- sentence completion
- open/close
- classification

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: English Language Study (Higher)

OUTCOME 4

Produce a well-structured written text.

Performance criteria

- a) Uses conventions of layout and style appropriately.
- b) Demonstrates that structure and content are appropriate to purpose and audience.
- c) Conveys meaning clearly through use of a range of vocabulary and sentence structure.
- d) Uses language accurately and in a way that errors of register, syntax, spelling and grammar do not impede complete comprehension.

Evidence requirements

One piece of writing 300-350 words of one of the following types: descriptive, narrative or discursive. The topic will be chosen from: current affairs, personal identity, social or physical environment.

The first and subsequent draft will be produced under controlled conditions and will each be produced within one teaching period (maximum of 60 minutes). Bilingual or English-to-English dictionaries may be used.

Both the original draft, including any lecturer or teacher comments, and final version must be retained by the centre.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: English Language Study (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

The purpose of this unit is to support candidates' language development in preparation for further or higher education. Candidates could either be senior pupils who have joined the secondary school system or adult learners with a previous knowledge of English.

Teachers and lecturers should ensure that the content relates to the candidate's interactions in both specialist English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision and in mainstream classes. Note on coverage of topics.

The prescribed topics for this unit are:

- personal identity
- current affairs
- social environment
- physical environment

Although all listed topics will be covered in teaching of the unit, candidates are not expected to demonstrate competence in each topic area. The evidence requirements set out how evidence of competence is to be generated, and evidence may only be required in two or three topics. Ideally, the emphasis placed and time spent on each of these topics will be defined by the candidates' own priorities.

Listed under each topic are a few examples of what could be expected of candidates within that topic area; other examples should be identified by the teacher. In this unit, there should be a particular emphasis on the underlying study of language and structure to improve fluency and accuracy.

Personal identity

- give appropriate personal information
- describe relevant current personal circumstances
- talk about ethnic and family background
- extract information relating to personal circumstances from oral or written texts
- complete forms and write letters giving personal information

Current affairs

- extract information from newspapers, television and radio news programmes
- discuss the implications of current world events and express opinions
- write short articles discussing current events

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: English Language Study (Higher)

Social environment

- discuss topical issues
- analyse and interpret information from diagrams, graphs and tables about current social trends
- write letters and articles about particular areas of social concern
- complete questionnaires

Physical Environment

- compare and contrast different places of interest
- telephone for further information about a house, holiday or object for sale
- get information from maps and plans
- give and follow directions

To assist teachers or lecturers delivering this unit in a multilevel or language support situation, the content can be linked to topics in Intermediate 1 and Intermediate 2.

Where the unit is being undertaken in school and college, teachers should focus on aspects of the curriculum and candidates' interactions with subject teachers and other relevant people in the school or college.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

The approach to learning and teaching should reflect the principles of the communicative approach. Learning should be based on the candidates' existing linguistic knowledge and their learning environment.

The course materials used in the classroom should reflect the outside world in which candidates are operating. In schools, materials used should be from the mainstream curriculum. Candidates should be given maximum opportunity to practise and demonstrate all four language skills.

The aim of this unit is for candidates to analyse and improve fluency and accuracy in English through study and use of the language in different contexts.

Listening

Candidates should be exposed to a wide range of different voices and accents, both live and recorded and should be encouraged to listen for overall meaning, key points and detail and recognise the implications of tone in the expression of opinions and attitudes. They should be given the opportunity to listen to different types of formal discourse and apply the information to different tasks. They should become aware of the different facets of spoken English and continue to focus on developing the accuracy of their listening skills and their ability to infer meaning.

Speaking

Opportunities for practice of language should be maximised through pair and group work in the classroom, and learners encouraged to have conversations on relevant topics and take part in discussions. Analysing spoken English, with an increasing focus on accuracy and features of the language, will contribute to the development of appropriate skills at this level.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: English Language Study (Higher)

Candidates should become accustomed to being recorded for the purposes of assessment and to analyse and identify ways of improving their oral skills.

Reading

Candidates should be given experience of a range of texts and extensive practice in the question types which will be used to assess their reading. At this level candidates should be encouraged to analyse texts in terms of the purpose of the communication, identifying easily the expected response, using semantic, syntactic and grammatical cues. Their ability to infer meaning and draw conclusions should also be developed. Candidates should be encouraged to read widely and continue to learn to use dictionaries and other reference material.

Writing

Writing activities undertaken by the candidates at this stage should be varied and integrated into the work done in the other skills. Candidates should become familiar with the different ways in which they are asked to provide information and make use of a range of correspondence and report writing models. There should be a focus on improving the accuracy of their work with particular attention to grammatical structure, style and vocabulary. Feedback from the teacher, correction of texts and redrafting will form an essential part of this process.

In both Access 3 and Intermediate 1 a list of functions is provided for teachers and lecturers to use as a checklist. However at Intermediate 2 and Higher, such a detailed checklist was deemed to be too lengthy for inclusion in the support notes. Should teachers and lecturers wish to consult such a list, this can be found in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) text books, Threshold and other Vantage levels of the Council of Europe publications.

In school, language functions, activities and text types should arise during normal class lessons.

In colleges, lecturers may wish to use as a checklist for their programme of work for this unit the following functions, activities and text types.

Functions

- classifying
- comparing
- following/giving instructions
- describing
- questioning
- evaluating
- expressing opinion
- explaining
- hypothesising
- planning/predicting
- reporting
- sequencing

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: English Language Study (Higher)

Activities

- listening for pronunciation practice
- class, group and pair practice of target language
- conversations with candidates and others
- interactions with others in the educational establishments
- making presentations
- participating in one-to-one and group discussions
- recording and analysing interactions
- information gap exercises
- role playing exercises
- listening and reading comprehension in a variety of formats
- distinguishing facts from opinions
- identifying the purpose of written or spoken information
- matching written or spoken information to other texts
- extracting information from and completing tables, diagrams, graphs and grids
- extracting information and comparing with another candidate or answer key
- dictation
- correcting errors in texts individually and in pairs and groups
- writing and redrafting texts individually and in pairs and groups
- maintaining a vocabulary notebook
- using a range of CALL materials

Text types

- spoken and written information, instructions and descriptions from the teacher and others
- recordings of conversations, interviews, presentations, lectures and discussions
- magazines, journals, newspapers, books, brochures, leaflets and advertisements
- forms, notes, faxes, formal letters and reports
- published text books, learning packs, worksheets and audio and video material used in other subjects
- published text books, audio and video material for intermediate/advanced learners of English
- extracts from TV and radio
- a range of computerised materials

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Candidates will be required to provide evidence of achievement of each of the four outcomes. Teachers and lecturers are required to have records of achievement and it is recommended that candidates either hold their own records of achievement or have access to those held by the teacher or lecturer.

Teachers and lecturers may select instruments of assessment which they consider will provide valid, reliable and practicable assessment of the candidate's work or draw on the materials produced by SQA.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: English Language Study (Higher)

Gathering evidence of achievement in the classroom should reflect the real life situations which candidates encounter. Where there are opportunities to gather evidence with the classroom from real life situations, appropriate assessment tasks should be identified. If the candidate is studying in school or college, assessments should be drawn from other courses.

Candidates should receive information about the unit and time should be made available for them to familiarise themselves with this and clarify it with the teacher or lecturer.

Assessment should be integrated into the learning process and candidates assessed when the teacher or lecturer deems them ready. Where candidates are undertaking the other Higher ESOL units it is not necessary to assess on a unit basis but rather at points during the programme which are appropriate and correspond to the candidate's readiness for assessment.

Outcome 1 Communicate effectively in English

Candidates' conversations should be as natural as possible and reflect real life situations that the candidates may encounter in school or college or in the wider world. Reasonable time for preparation for speaking assessment should be given and candidates encouraged to seek clarification of the task, if necessary, before they are assessed.

Candidates will need to familiarise themselves with the tape recorder to provide evidence for moderation.

Outcome 2 Demonstrate an understanding of spoken English

The spoken text should be on a general topic relevant to the candidate. The use of spoken information should reflect the text types and tasks that candidates are likely to encounter across the curriculum or in the course of their work or studies. Care should be taken not to select texts which are culturally loaded.

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the text by undertaking tasks selected from the following:

- completion of key visuals such as diagrams, tables and charts
- note taking
- multiple choice
- sentence completion
- classification
- open/close
- summarising

Although there are no time restrictions, the task should be carried out in a reasonable time and during one period or class (60 minutes). The listening text can be heard twice.

Use of a dictionary is not permitted.

Candidates should be encouraged to seek clarification of the task, if necessary, before they are assessed.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: English Language Study (Higher)

Outcome 3 Demonstrate an understanding of written English

The sources for texts may include articles and reports from newspapers and magazines, correspondence and extracts from novels and other books. Candidates will be expected to demonstrate understanding of the text by undertaking tasks selected from the following:

- completion of key visuals such as diagrams, tables and charts
- note taking
- multiple choice
- sentence completion
- classification
- open/close

Although there are no time restrictions, the task should be carried out in a reasonable time and during one period or class (60 minutes). A glossary of terms likely to prove difficult may be provided at the end of the text.

Bilingual or English-to-English dictionaries should be available at all times and candidates encouraged to make use of them.

The use of written information should reflect the text types and tasks candidates are likely to encounter across the curriculum and in the wider world. Care should be taken not to select texts which are culturally loaded.

Candidates should be encouraged to seek clarification of the task, if necessary, before they are assessed.

Outcome 4 Produce a well-structured written text

The candidate will be presented with a clearly defined task. The piece of writing will be between 300-350 words. The candidate will have the opportunity to redraft their work. The first draft and any necessary redraft will each be produced within one teaching block/period (60 minutes). Both the original drafts, including any lecturer or teacher comments, and final versions must be retained by the centre.

Use of a bilingual or English-to-English dictionary is permitted.

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 special alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, publication code AA0645).