

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: Transactional English (Access 3)

NUMBER DA9L 09

COURSE

SUMMARY

This unit aims to develop candidates' basic English to make simple requests for goods and services. Language development occurs in such a way as to make candidates familiar with common relevant situations and confident in using basic English. On completion of the unit, candidates will be able to give, request and understand simple information, write a short note and make a simple transaction.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Use spoken English to obtain goods and services.
- 2 Demonstrate an understanding of simple spoken and written information.
- 3 Write a short note based on personal information.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Access 3 (6 SCOTCAT points*) at SCQF level 3.

**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.*

Administrative Information

Superclass: FK

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: Transactional
 English (Access 3)

CORE SKILLS

It is unlikely that attainment of this unit would lead to the automatic award of a particular core skill.

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: Transactional English (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

Use spoken English to obtain goods and services.

Performance criteria

- a) Begins and concludes the interaction appropriately.
- b) Makes simple requests which can be understood by a sympathetic speaker of English, despite inaccuracies and frequent hesitations.
- c) Provides information which can be understood by a sympathetic speaker of English, despite inaccuracies and frequent hesitations.
- d) Responds appropriately to requests for information, which may need to be rephrased.

Evidence requirements

Two role-plays with different people, that demonstrate that the candidate has fulfilled all the performance criteria in each role play. Interactions should be short, of no more than one minute's duration.

Records of candidate performance should be retained, and it is recommended that a sample of audio or video recordings be used for moderating purposes.

OUTCOME 2

Demonstrate an understanding of simple spoken and written information.

Performance criteria

- a) Understands the main purpose of the text.
- b) Recognises and understands key words.
- c) Identifies information relevant to the purpose of the text.

Evidence requirements

Two simple, accessible texts: a written text and a listening text. They should both be on familiar topics, with comprehension conveyed through spoken or written English, demonstrating that the candidate has fulfilled the performance criteria.

The text will be variable depending on topic and type, but it should be based on authentic use. A suggested length for the written text is 20 to 25 words. The listening text should be no more than one minute in duration.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: Transactional English (Access 3)

OUTCOME 3

Write a short note based on personal information.

Performance criteria

- a) Writes legibly and uses upper and lower case accurately.
- b) Conveys meaning on a first reading despite errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- c) Uses appropriate format or layout.

Evidence requirements

One note in response to a clear and simple task, demonstrating that the candidate has fulfilled the performance criteria.

The length of the texts produced by the candidates will be 15-20 words.

The writing will be supported and produced under controlled conditions as described in guidance on approaches to assessment.

The first draft and any necessary redraft will each be produced within one teaching block/period.

Use of bilingual or English to English dictionary is permitted.

Both the original drafts 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: Transactional English (Access 3)

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 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

The purpose of this unit is to give candidates confidence in using English at a basic level to obtain goods and services. Candidates could be either young people recently joining the Scottish secondary school system or adult learners who have little previous knowledge of English, although an ability to use the Roman script is assumed. (For candidates unfamiliar with the Roman script, the free standing unit *Beginners' English (Access 2)* is recommended as a prior step).

Where relevant, teachers and lecturers should ensure that the content relates to the candidates' interactions in both specialist English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision and mainstream classes.

Note on coverage of topics

The prescribed topics for this unit are:

- shopping
- services
- travel
- food and drink
- education

At this level, restricted use of language in each topic is expected. 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. Evidence may only be required to be retained in two or three topics.

Ideally, the amount of emphasis placed and time spent on each of these topics will be defined by the candidates' own priorities. Equally, the specific situations may well differ: a parent with school-age children would cover similar material in the topic of education to that of interest to a school candidate, but from a different perspective.

Listed under each topic are examples of what could be expected of candidates within that topic area. At this level, only the simplest linguistic exponents of each would be expected.

Shopping

- make a request for goods
- ask for information about goods, eg price
- indicate whether or not they wish to buy something
- respond to requests for information relevant to above
- state likes and dislikes where relevant
- understand simple signs and notices

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: Transactional English (Access 3)

Services

- recognise the names of the main services, eg. police, post office
- make a request for assistance or a service
- indicate that you have a problem
- describe an item of lost property
- respond to requests for information relevant to above

Travel

- ask for, follow and give simple directions
- make a request for tickets
- get information from timetables
- respond to requests for information relevant to above

Food and drink

- express likes and dislikes
- offer food and drink
- make and understand requests for food and drink
- respond to requests for information relevant to above

Education

- ask for assistance in the classroom
- express likes and dislikes
- follow instructions
- get information from timetables

Although it is recommended that candidates at this level are taught in a beginner level course, this may not always be possible to achieve. To assist teachers and lecturers delivering this unit in a multilevel situation, the content can be linked to topics in Intermediate 1 and Intermediate 2.

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 practical, skills based and relevant to the candidates and their roles in the English speaking environment in which they live. Opportunities should be provided to use language in real situations for real purposes and activities should provide links to the educational institution and the outside world.

The course materials used in the classroom need to reflect the outside world in which candidates are operating. In schools, materials used should provide an introduction to the mainstream curriculum. A wide variety of methods should be employed to maximise opportunities for practice of language. The learner should be encouraged to communicate, rather than remaining silent in an attempt to use only accurate language.

Listening

Learners should be exposed to a wide range of different voices, both live and recorded and should be encouraged to listen for both gist and specific information. Exposure to local accents is important.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: Transactional English (Access 3)

Speaking

The aim is for learners to develop the ability to engage in face-to-face conversation, including being able to take the initiative and respond to others in the context of obtaining goods and services.

Reading

Candidates should, from an early stage, use two main types of text: written texts illustrating the language they have heard and are using, and a wide range of simple authentic texts that the candidate will be dealing with in everyday life. In schools, this would include working with texts they are likely to meet in other subjects. Simple illustrated readers may also be useful to reinforce language learnt. Learning to use a dictionary is of paramount importance.

Writing

Writing activities undertaken by the candidates at this stage should be simple and not too time consuming. The aim in this unit is to make candidates feel competent at undertaking the kind of practical writing tasks that will be required of them and to increase their confidence in writing. Candidates should become familiar with the different ways in which they are asked to provide personal information and the appropriate use of upper and lower case.

In addition to the prescribed themes and topics, teachers and lecturers may wish to use the following functions, activities and text types as a checklist for the programme of work for this unit.

Functions

- greeting and leave-taking
- identifying
- making requests
- asking for and giving information
- asking for help
- expressing likes and dislikes
- thanking
- asking for repetition
- asking for clarification
- describing
- giving and understanding directions

Activities

- listening for pronunciation practice
- listening and reading comprehension tasks
- class, group and pair practice of target language
- reading and practising dialogues
- information gap exercises
- role playing exercises
- authentic interactions
- short dictations

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: Transactional English (Access 3)

Text types

- spoken information and instructions from the teacher and others
- audio recordings made by teacher of dialogues and lexis
- short extracts from TV and radio
- signs, notices and posters
- labels
- extracts from forms and leaflets
- menus
- published text books, audio and video material for beginner learners of English
- simple illustrated readers
- text books used in other subjects

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Candidates will be required to provide evidence of achievement of each of the three 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 in the National Assessment Bank.

Gathering evidence of achievement in the classroom should reflect the real life situations which candidates encounter. Where there are opportunities to gather evidence out 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 integrated into other courses.

Candidates should receive information about the unit which, ideally at this level, would be in their first language. 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 whole Access 3 course, it is not necessary to assess on a unit by unit basis, but rather at points during the course which are appropriate and correspond to the candidates' readiness for assessment.

Outcome 1 Use spoken English to obtain goods and services

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.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: Transactional English (Access 3)

Outcome 2 Demonstrate an understanding of simple spoken and written information

Written information

Dictionaries should be available at all times and candidates encouraged to make use of them. It is not necessary for candidates to give written answers, the teacher or lecturer can ask the questions and write down the candidates' answers. Candidates should be encouraged to give one/two word answers and not lift large pieces of the text. Although there are no time restrictions, the task should be carried out in a reasonable time.

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.

Spoken information

Candidates should be encouraged to seek clarification of the task, if necessary, before they are assessed. It is not necessary for candidates to give written answers, the teacher or lecturer can ask the questions and write down the candidates' answers. The listening text can be heard twice.

The use of spoken information should reflect the text types and tasks that candidates are likely to encounter across the curriculum and in the wider world.

Outcome 3 Write a simple note based on personal information

Write a simple note based on personal information.

The candidate will be provided with clear guidance in the assessment task as to what is expected of them and in what format.

Dictionaries should be available at all times and candidates encouraged to make use of them.

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).