

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: Beginners' English (Access 2)

NUMBER DA9M 08

COURSE

SUMMARY

This unit aims to prepare beginner level candidates to communicate with others about themselves and their lives. The language development will occur in such a way as to make candidates familiar with common everyday situations and confident in using an introductory level of English. On completion of this unit, candidates will be able to understand very simple information, produce accurately written words and talk to a sympathetic speaker of English on topics of immediate personal interest.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Exchange simple personal information.
- 2 Demonstrate understanding of simple written information.
- 3 Form written words correctly.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre.

CREDIT VALUE

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

**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: Beginners' English (Access 2)

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: Beginners' English (Access 2)

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

Exchange simple personal information.

Performance criteria

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

Evidence requirements

Two conversations with different people, that demonstrate that the candidate has fulfilled all the performance criteria in each conversation. Interactions should be face to face, of no more than one minute's duration and can be selected from:

- role play
- conversation with a teacher or another known person
- classroom interaction between candidates

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 understanding of simple written information.

Performance criteria

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

Evidence requirements

Two very simple accessible written texts. 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 texts will be variable depending on topic and type, but they should be based on authentic use. A suggested length is 15 to 20 words.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: Beginners' English (Access 2)

OUTCOME 3

Form written words correctly.

Performance criteria

- a) Uses upper and lower case, and spaces between words, accurately.
- b) Can form the Roman script clearly.

Evidence requirements

One piece of copied writing based on a clear and simple text. A suggested length is 10-20 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 dictionary is permitted.

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: Beginners' English (Access 2)

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 give candidates confidence in using English at beginner level to exchange personal information. Candidates could be either young people joining the Scottish secondary school system or adult learners who have little or no previous knowledge of English.

Where relevant, 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 where relevant.

Note on coverage of topics

The prescribed topics for this unit are:

- personal identification
- house, home and environment
- daily life
- free time and entertainment
- health
- work and 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. Therefore 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 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.

Personal identification

- say who they are and spell their name
- state their address and give their telephone number
- say which school or college they attend and who is their teacher
- say where and when they were born and where they are from
- state their age and sex
- describe their family
- obtain similar information from others

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: Beginners' English (Access 2)

House, home and environment

- describes the type of accommodation they live in
- state main flat or house contents
- describe essential aspects of the local area
- obtain similar information from others

Daily life

- describe simple daily routines at home
- describe simple daily routines at school/college/work as appropriate

Free time, sport and entertainment

- say what they like to do

Health

- say how they are eg. well, ill, tired, hungry etc

Work and education

- recognise the names of relevant occupations
- ask for information
- follow simple instructions

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 situations, the content can be linked to topics in Access 3.

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.

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 a social context.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: Beginners' English (Access 2)

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. Learning to use a dictionary is of paramount importance.

Writing

Writing activities undertaken by the candidate at this stage should be simple copying. The aim in this unit is to make candidates gain confidence in developing basic writing skills.

Candidates should become familiar with the different ways in which they are asked to provide 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
- asking for and giving information
- asking for help
- expressing likes and dislikes
- thanking
- asking for repetition
- simple describing

Activities

- listening for pronunciation practice
- class, group and pair practice of target language
- reading and practising dialogues
- conversations with students and others
- information gap exercises
- role playing exercises
- authentic interactions
- listening and reading comprehensions
- identifying the purpose of written or spoken information
- matching written or spoken information to illustrations and to other texts
- extracting information and comparing with another student or answer key
- answering true/false and multiple choice questions on a text

Text types

- spoken information and instructions from the teacher and others
- audio recordings made by teacher of dialogues and lexis
- short extracts from TV
- notes, postcards and short letters
- alphabetical lists
- advertisements
- signs, notices and posters

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: Beginners' English (Access 2)

- labels
- extracts from forms and leaflets
- published text books, audio and video material for beginner learners of English
- menus

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 may draw on the materials provided by SQA.

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.

Outcome 1 Exchange simple personal information

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 understanding of simple 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.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English for Speakers of Other Languages: Beginners' English (Access 2)

Outcome 3 Form written words accurately

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

The candidate will have the opportunity to redraft written work.

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).