



National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Understanding of Mental Health and Mental Illness (Higher)

NUMBER DF6H 12

COURSE Mental Health Care (Higher)

SUMMARY

This Unit is designed to help the candidate understand issues relating to mental health and mental illness, the difference between the two and current perceptions of them. It looks at the growing awareness of mental health issues and the promotion of preventative measures. Mental health programmes are studied and their success evaluated. Different forms of mental illness and the effects of different treatment regimes are studied. Key current legislation and the role of statutory bodies and voluntary organisations are examined and evaluated.

Students who study this Unit will have their awareness of issues surrounding mental health and mental illness raised and will have a clearer understanding of these issues. It prepares students for further study and gives those moving into employment in this field a good underpinning knowledge.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Describe the differences between mental health and mental illness.
- 2 Describe and explain programmes for mental health.
- 3 Describe the effects of mental illness on human behaviour.
- 4 Explain how the rights of the individual are maintained by current legislation and available resources.
- 5 Explain the skills and attributes necessary for an effective mental health care worker.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

NQ Unit: D11H 11 *Mental Health Issues: An Introduction (Intermediate 2)*.

Administrative Information

Superclass: PH

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CREDIT VALUE

2 credits at Higher (12 SCQF credit points at 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 Understanding of Mental Health and Mental Illness (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.

OUTCOME 1

Describe the differences between mental health and mental illness.

Performance Criteria

- (a) The explanation of mental health is correct in terms of historical and cultural contexts.
- (b) The description of mental illness is accurate in terms of different illnesses and current theory.
- (c) The explanation of the effects of different models of understanding of mental health and mental illness on the individual is accurate.

Evidence Requirements

Written and/or oral evidence generated by notes, classwork and research. Three examples of changing attitudes to mental health and mental illness should be covered; two current theories of explaining the effects of different models of understanding should be examined.

OUTCOME 2

Describe and explain programmes for mental health.

Performance Criteria

- (a) The explanation of different programmes designed to recover, improve and maintain mental health is correct.
- (b) The description of the roles and responsibilities of different agencies in promoting and providing mental health programmes is accurate.
- (c) The evaluation of different mental health programmes is consistent with current commentary and research.

Evidence Requirements

Written and/or oral evidence generated by notes, classwork and research to meet the performance criteria.

Two mental health programmes should be covered for each of the three performance criteria.

OUTCOME 3

Describe the effects of mental illness on human behaviour.

Performance Criteria

- (a) The description of the effects of mental illness is accurate and consistent with the different types of mental illness.

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- (b) The description of the behavioural responses is accurate and consistent with the different types of mental illness.
- (c) The description of the effects of medication is comprehensive in terms of the effects on the behavioural characteristics of the individual.
- (d) The description of the effects of therapeutic intervention is comprehensive in terms of the effects on the behavioural characteristics of the individual.
- (e) The description of the effects that using different models for mental health have on the treatment of and service provision for individuals experiencing mental illness is valid.

Evidence Requirements

Written and/or oral evidence generated by notes, classwork and research to meet the performance criteria.

Two examples of mental illness should be used for each of the performance criteria. For performance criteria (c) and (d), one example each of the effects should be covered for medication and therapeutic intervention.

OUTCOME 4

Explain how the rights of the individual are maintained by current legislation and available resources.

Performance Criteria

- (a) The identification of key current legislation is accurate and relevant.
- (b) The explanation of the role of legislation in promoting the rights of the individual is valid in terms of current use.
- (c) The identification of resources is accurate in terms of available resources and services.
- (d) The explanation of available resources is valid in terms of their ability to maintain the rights of the individual experiencing mental illness.
- (e) The explanation of the implications of legislation on current practice is accurate and relevant

Evidence Requirements

Written and/or oral evidence generated by notes, classwork and research to meet the performance criteria.

Two examples of key current legislation should be covered for performance criteria (a) and (b); four examples of current resources should be covered for performance criteria (c) and (d).

OUTCOME 5

Explain the skills and attributes necessary for an effective mental health care worker.

Performance criteria

- (a) The description of different skills and attributes of an effective mental health care worker.
- (b) The explanation of the importance of self awareness in a mental health care worker is valid in terms of good practice.

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Evidence Requirements

Written and/or oral evidence generated by notes, classwork and research to meet performance criteria.

Four examples of skills should be covered in performance criteria (a); with some demonstration of the candidates own self development with its application for performance criteria (b).

National Unit Specification: support notes

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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

This is included as an appendix to the statement of standards.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

It may be helpful to cover the content of Outcomes 1, 3 and 5 over the first part of the course, followed by Outcomes 2 and 4. This would enable the candidate to gain a broad insight and understanding of mental illnesses and some of the issues surrounding it. This will facilitate their understanding of the programmes, interventions and legislations, which underpin and inform mental health care provision. A talk from a visiting speaker, eg CPN, Mental Health Social Worker, Mental Health Support Worker, Advocacy Support Worker would enhance this part of the Course.

Use should also be made of TV and radio documentaries, as well as newspaper and journal articles. Candidates should utilise the information and fact sheets on mental health and mental illness, provided by public bodies, such as Health Education Board Scotland, Health Boards/Trusts, national/local voluntary organisations, such as MIND, and local authorities.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Candidates should undertake their own written work, in the form of case studies, to evidence their understanding of each of the outcomes and performance criteria, but should also work in a small group setting to test out their understanding of mental health and mental illness, their attitudes to mental illness, the appropriateness of different forms of treatment and care, as well as the availability and relevance of resources provided by health and social services, voluntary organisations and community groups.

The performance criteria lend themselves to thematic written project work, where a number of the performance criteria can be included in the one piece of work. This can assist the candidate in understanding the relationship between the public awareness of mental health issues and the successful treatment and the recovery rehabilitation of people suffering from mental illness.

CANDIDATES WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

This Unit Specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. 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. For information on these, please refer to the document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (SQA, 2004).

National Unit Specification: Appendix to the statement of standards

UNIT Understanding of Mental Health and Mental Illness (Higher)

APPENDIX 1: Content and context

NB: This Appendix is within the Statement of Standards, ie the mandatory requirements of the Unit.

Outcome 1

Candidates should distinguish between mental illness through examining how throughout history social, religious and cultural beliefs and attitudes have influenced the defining of certain behaviours as ‘mental illness’.

The description of the growth of the promotion of ‘mental health’, in terms of preventative measures and health education, should cover issues such as:

- ◆ workplace stress
- ◆ break-up of communities and families through the demands and consequences of industrialisation
- ◆ effects of drug and alcohol dependency
- ◆ improvements in the relevance and range of resources provided by public health and social services

As ‘mental illness’ is a generic description for a range of illnesses and behaviour patterns, the candidate should be able to describe the different illnesses, possible causes, associated behaviour patterns and recommended treatment methods including:

- ◆ schizophrenia
- ◆ clinical depression
- ◆ manic depressive psychosis
- ◆ neuroses
- ◆ psychosomatic disorder

Distinction should also be made between people being the subject of a ‘mental illness’ and ‘special needs’, in terms of the causes, treatment, support and public awareness.

Those factors which may contribute to the onset of a mental illness or are inappropriately described as ‘mental illness’ should be covered; including:

- ◆ genetic predisposition
- ◆ learned behaviour
- ◆ child birth
- ◆ grieving
- ◆ the effects of different drug treatments
- ◆ stress
- ◆ difficulty with establishing and maintaining personal relationships

The candidate should examine current public perceptions of ‘mental health’ and ‘mental illness’, as defined by their peer group and newspapers and television, against current theories on the causes and effects of both strands.

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The public profile of ‘mental health’ promotion and awareness should be examined against the effects on an individual of being labelled as ‘mentally ill’ in terms of self-esteem, employment, personal relationships and acceptance within the local and wider community.

Outcome 2

Descriptions of the purposes of different mental health awareness programmes including the general ones promoted by HEBS and the very specific ones from organisations such as the Schizophrenia Fellowship or MIND should be given.

Different target audiences for the mental health programmes should be examined. This would include:

- ◆ those that are designed to increase public awareness, tolerance and understanding
- ◆ those developed to encourage individuals and families to join support groups
- ◆ those aimed at employers to reduce workplace stress

The examination of different mental health programmes should include the roles, responsibilities and funding of formal specialist health organisations, such as HEBS (Health Education Board for Scotland) and Health Boards/Trusts, as well as more generalist organisations such as schools, colleges and youth clubs.

Evaluation should take account of the effects of the indirect involvement of other health related programmes to the promotion of good mental health. This would include the work of SAD (Scotland Against Drugs) and the Scottish Council on Alcoholism.

The evaluation of different mental health programmes should be conducted by examining different barometers of public opinion, including:

- ◆ the treatment of mental health issues, often linked with the implementation of community care policies, by the reporting of tabloid newspapers
- ◆ the typecasting and explanation of ‘deviant behaviour’ by characters in television domestic situation and comedy programmes

The evaluation should include research by the key public and voluntary sector agencies on the success or otherwise of mental health programmes. The research can be found in publicly available published studies, as well as annual reports and donations/funding/marketing material.

Outcome 3

The candidate should consider the effects of mental illness on the individual in terms of the different types of illness, so as to understand both the common and unique characteristics, including, the loss of ability to manage daily tasks such as shopping, paying bills, cooking or personal hygiene.

The description of behavioural responses should be in terms of the patterns particular to each form of mental illness. This would include the more subtle social dysfunctioning occasioned by schizophrenia as opposed to the more obvious and extreme reclusive behaviour of a person suffering from manic depression.

National Unit Specification: Appendix to the statement of standards (cont)

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The effects on others of a particular behaviour pattern and how this may reinforce the acuteness of the mental illness candidate should also be considered. An example of this would be the acute introspection of a person suffering from clinical depression will alienate family and friends who feel shut out of the person's life, so if they react by becoming more distant then the sense and reality of isolation is increased.

An exploration of the effect that different models for mental health have on the treatment and support received by those affected by mental illness and an examination of the impact of different models have in shaping service provision for those with mental illness should be undertaken.

The candidate should examine the effects of treatment regimes on behavioural characteristics, which may exaggerate or alter the behaviour originating from the illness. The quantity and frequency of medication or drug treatment has to be tested with the patient before the most appropriate regime is established, so there may be extreme mood swings, extensive periods of tiredness or lethargy or evident hyperactivity. For example of this would be how, in the treatment of schizophrenia, there may be a period of erratic and unpredictable patterns of engaging or disengaging in personal relationships.

Outcome 4

The key current legislation identified should cover both mental health and mental illness. This could include the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, Mental Health (Scotland) Act 1984, NHS Community Care Act 1990, Mental Health (Public Safety and Appeals) (Scotland) Act 1999, Adult with Incapacity (Scotland) Act and The Data Protection Act - all as preceded and updated.

Key legislation that is designed to protect an individual's rights should also be examined, but may not necessarily be specific to mental health or mental illness including data protection. This will assist in understanding the person's overall rights as a citizen and not just as a sufferer from an illness.

The explanation of the role of the key current legislation should examine the differences between protecting the person suffering from a mental illness and protecting the community within which he/she lives. A critical appraisal of the adequacy of this legislation in protecting both the individual and the community should be provided. Within this appraisal the candidate should provide an assessment of how far an individual's overall rights as a citizen should be compromised for his/her protection or the protection of the wider community. The mechanisms in place to ensure that the legislation has been correctly implemented should also be examined, including, the Mental Welfare Commission, the Court system and the European Court of Human Justice.

The resources covered should include those provided by:

- ◆ central government
- ◆ the National Health Service and Health Care Trusts
- ◆ local authorities
- ◆ voluntary organisations
- ◆ community support groups

National Unit Specification: Appendix to the statement of standards (cont)

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The resources to be examined should include:

- ◆ income support
- ◆ hostels
- ◆ day care
- ◆ outpatient clinics
- ◆ specialised hospital facilities
- ◆ residential care
- ◆ group living
- ◆ community psychiatric nursing services

The examination of resources should include:

- ◆ availability within different local communities
- ◆ ease of access
- ◆ criteria for use and the implications for the individual suffering from a mental illness
- ◆ other family members in either having access or not having access to these resources

The range and nature of resources against the rights of the individual suffering from a mental illness and the wider community should be examined. This raises matters such as the acceptability of group living within a community or the restriction of liberty experienced by the existence of locked hospital wards, as well as the availability of information provided by staff in the different facilities on the rights of the individual.

The candidate should examine the statutory and legal basis of the provision of different resources to consider how they can support the rights of the individual. For example, a compulsory admission to hospital automatically restrict the individual's rights to liberty, whereas in a group living context the arrangement is voluntary and relies on the sense of responsibility of the individual.

The candidate should examine the impact of legislation on:

- ◆ organisations who deliver support to individuals affected by mental ill health
- ◆ the services received by the individual with mental ill health

Outcome 5

The candidate should examine:

- ◆ the skills of the mental health care worker and the impact of these skills on individuals affected by mental ill health
- ◆ the impact of attributes such as patience, flexibility, reliability and confidentiality etc. when working with individuals with mental ill health
- ◆ the importance of self awareness in a mental health care worker, for example factors, which might influence attitudes such as pre, conceived ideas
- ◆ the ways in which self reflective practice enhances care