



National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Travel and Tourism: Enhancing Skills for Employment
(SCQF level 5)

CODE F3PL 11

SUMMARY

This Unit is designed to help build self confidence in candidates through development of the skills, attitudes and behaviours valued by employers in the travel and tourism sector. A practical approach will be applied throughout and reflected in activities such as participating in a selection interview. There will be particular emphasis on the development of effective self presentation which is essential to many roles in the customer facing environment of travel and tourism. This will also include raising an awareness of the standards expected in different sectors of the industry. It is suitable for a wide range of candidates including those undertaking a relevant Group Award, adult returners and could also make a practical contribution to vocational educational training for the long term unemployed.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Develop the personal skills, attitudes and behaviours necessary to work effectively in the travel and tourism sector.
- 2 Participate in a selection interview for a job in the travel and tourism sector.
- 3 Review and evaluate own progress towards enhancing employability in the travel and tourism sector.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is as the discretion of the centre although attainment of the following would be beneficial:

- ◆ Standard Grade English at General level (SCQF level 4)
- ◆ Communication at SCQF level 4
- ◆ Working with Others at SCQF 4

Administrative Information

Superclass: NK

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CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Intermediate 2 (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5*).

**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 in this Unit.

Opportunities for developing aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in *Guidance on Learning and Teaching Approaches for this Unit*.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

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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 SQA.

OUTCOME 1

Develop the personal skills, attitudes and behaviours necessary to work effectively in the travel and tourism sector.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Using an initial self-assessment, identify current strengths and development needs in relation to specified skills, attitudes and behaviours.
- (b) Maintain a log recording interaction and behaviour in a range of development opportunities.
- (c) Regularly monitor, record and reflect upon progress, learning gained and modifications to future behaviour in response to own review of the log and feedback from others.

OUTCOME 2

Participate in a selection interview for a job in the travel and tourism sector.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Research the company standards applied by a relevant organisation for the job role selected.
- (b) Construct an effective personal presentation plan for participating in a selection interview with particular reference to punctuality, dress code, grooming, verbal and non-verbal communication skills.
- (c) Formulate suitable responses to prepared selection interview questions.
- (d) Participate with commitment in a selection interview demonstrating the skills, attitude and behaviours identified in the plan.
- (e) Seek feedback on performance in the interview.

OUTCOME 3

Review and evaluate own progress towards enhancing employability in the travel and tourism sector.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Evaluate own performance in a selection interview.
- (b) Gather feedback from others on specific aspects of own skills, attitude and behaviours.
- (c) Complete a second self assessment of employability skills in light of progress.
- (d) Comment upon development and learning gained and identify areas for further development of specified employability skills.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

This Unit requires written and/or oral evidence, gathered under open-book conditions at appropriate points throughout the Unit. It also requires performance evidence to show that all Outcomes and Performance Criteria have been achieved.

Written and/or oral evidence should consist of a folio containing:

- ◆ a completed initial self-assessment with supporting evidence
- ◆ a list identifying existing strengths and development needs
- ◆ a maintained log with records of development opportunities and behaviour displayed. The log should record the following details for a minimum of three development needs across a range of practical activities/experiences:
 - a record of the date of the activity, event or experience being recorded
 - a brief record of what occurred, own behaviour and its effectiveness in the situation
 - a record of feedback received from others, eg comments, praise, advice, criticism
 - a record of progress or learning gained from the experience
 - a record of how future behaviour/performance may be modified in similar situations
- ◆ a record of selection interview preparation including:
 - background information about the organisation and the job
 - details of own skills, qualities and achievements
 - a description of appropriate company standards and protocols, for example, in relation to dress codes and grooming standards
 - a list of questions to ask at interview
 - answers to prepared interview questions
 - a summary of appropriate skills, behaviours and attitudes
- ◆ an evaluation of own performance in a selection interview which could take the form of a checklist assessing, eg punctuality/appearance/conduct/attitude/behaviour and in response to feedback from others; this should be signed by the assessor for authentication purposes
- ◆ a list identifying areas for performance improvement in future interviews
- ◆ a second self-assessment of employability skills based on progress made
- ◆ a description of progress made, learning gained from experience and areas for further development which is consistent with the log, the final self-assessment and in response to feedback from others

Performance evidence will consist of: participation in a selection interview. This may be either in a simulated environment, or if the opportunity arises, in a real situation. If a simulated interview format is adopted this should last no more than 10 minutes. An assessor observation checklist must be used to provide evidence of the candidate's performance.

The Assessment Support Pack for this Unit provides sample assessment material. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the Assessment Support Pack to ensure a comparable standard.

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 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

This Unit is mandatory in the National Certificates in Travel and Tourism at SCQF 5 and 6. The Unit may be delivered as a free-standing Unit but would also lend itself to integrated delivery with other practical Units in the National Certificates in Travel and Tourism.

This Unit will involve the candidate using practical techniques such as assessing their own skills and aptitudes in relation to success in future employment. The conventions and protocols of personal presentation and grooming in different sectors of travel and tourism should be researched to gain an appreciation of expected industry standards. An appreciation of what makes an effective CV or completed application form could be explored.

Employers in the travel and tourism industry are particularly interested in candidates who have the relevant skills to work in a customer service setting where face- to - face interaction is essential for front line staff. Customers expect high levels of service, requiring employees with the right blend of skills such as good attitude, self-confidence and a clean, well groomed appearance. The increase in service jobs where the employee is part of the product and is effectively part of the company brand has resulted in a change in the type of skills required by employers in travel and tourism.

The factors that contribute to success in the selection and recruitment of potential employees will be explored. Candidates will attain an understanding of the process of 'filtering' in the recruitment process and should benefit from awareness of the issues surrounding self-selection such as 'casual' and 'cold calling' in the employment process. It will provide the opportunity to concentrate on the underpinning image related link between job application form and the recruitment and selection procedure.

An understanding and awareness of skills needed to participate well in interviews and how to utilise these skills to best effect in the workplace will be covered. The opportunity to develop skills to overcome obstacles in interpersonal and social skills, such as making a good first impression, employment etiquette and the appropriate use of manners will be provided. The importance of prior research, preparation and the application of self - presentation skills for employability success in the travel and tourism industry will be stressed. The Unit is also intended to help candidates assess their strengths and weaknesses and to encourage engagement in reflective learning.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Practical, vocational contexts should be used in this Unit to allow candidates to learn the importance of and take responsibility for developing skills, attitudes and behaviours valued by employers in the travel and tourism sector. These include:

- ◆ communication skills
- ◆ customer focus
- ◆ drive and commitment
- ◆ personal presentation and grooming
- ◆ good timekeeping
- ◆ enthusiasm and positive attitude
- ◆ interpersonal skills
- ◆ team-working skills
- ◆ flexible approach to problem solving
- ◆ responding positively to advice
- ◆ confidence to set goals
- ◆ time management
- ◆ independent working
- ◆ positive attitude to change
- ◆ dealing with conflict

This list could act as a basis for developing skills in the context of practical activities. Preparing for and participating in job selection interviews provides a context for developing interpersonal skills, communication skills, displaying appropriate personal conduct and positive attitudes.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

When delivering this Unit as part of the National Certificate in Travel and Tourism, it is recommended that relevant practical activities in other Units for example, customer care, selling skills, guiding, cabin crewing, event organisation are integrated into the delivery of the Unit.

It would be beneficial if those delivering this Unit have previous knowledge and experience of selection, recruitment and training of individuals in a travel and tourism environment along with the particular approaches adopted by some companies. It would also be recommended that prior knowledge and experience of appearance and image related issues such as self-confidence and impression management would be an advantage in the teaching and understanding of this Unit's subject area. Maximum benefit will be achieved by taking advantage of opportunities for applied grooming and appearance related workshops from external practitioners such as hairstylists, beauty therapists, image consultants and those currently employed in the travel and tourism industry.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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It may be appropriate to start with individuals considering their own ideas on employability skills in travel and tourism. Tutors should draw on materials from employer surveys, etc which identify and highlight the importance of the range of recognised employability skills (these could include websites of the Sector Skills Council for the sector, People 1st and Future Skills Scotland). A specified list should then be discussed with candidates who will then use this throughout the work of the Unit. However, it is expected that the initial self-assessment of current skills will be completed early on in the Unit. It is unlikely that individuals will improve on all the necessary skills in the allotted time-scale but they should be encouraged to remain positive throughout to boost confidence. A practical approach to assess learners would be advised, where candidates are encouraged to monitor and reflect on their learning through the observation of other peers and tutor guidance. Role-play scenarios, as part of pre-assessment exercises should be fully encouraged to build confidence and reinforce learning. Opportunities to observe popular culture in film and media, which relate to issues in this subject area will add interest and should enhance speculation and areas for discussion.

Practical exercises will be necessary for the individual to gain understanding of the necessary skills as mentioned above and these may take the form of, eg brainstorming/mind mapping, group discussion, questionnaires, case studies, role plays, paired and team exercises, interviews, visiting speakers. Full and timely feedback from tutors will help positive reinforcement of progress made. Learning activities should be designed to develop employability skills, eg the use of role plays should help individuals decide on appropriate use of skills and behaviour in a variety of situations or workplace visits could be organised with candidates taking an active role in making preparations for the visit.

Individuals should be encouraged to find the information they require for this Unit, eg by using relevant websites or text to identify interview techniques. The tutor will often act as facilitator, providing advice and support to candidates. Throughout the Unit, there should be ample opportunity for individuals to do things for themselves, make choices and decisions, interact with others and try out new activities and roles in a safe climate.

Individuals should use everyday contacts to observe the use of employability skills in the workforce, in order to identify good and poor practice. In this Unit, candidates will analyse aspects of their performance and behaviour; they will review and evaluate their performance, attitudes and behaviour taking account of a number of factors and feedback from others; they will draw conclusions and develop actions points for improvement. These are good opportunities for developing the general skills of critical thinking and reviewing and evaluating in the Core Skill of *Problem Solving*. Participating in simulated interviews presents good opportunities for developing the general skill of Oral Communication in the Core Skill of *Communication* where candidates are required to produce and respond to Oral Communication.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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OPPORTUNITIES FOR CORE SKILL DEVELOPMENT

This Unit will enable candidates to develop Core Skills in *Communication* and team working. The Core Skills will be developed along with employability skills deemed desirable by employers in the travel and tourism sector. Self evaluation, interpersonal skills and presentation (of self and information) are consistent themes throughout the Unit delivery. The ability to communicate effectively is reflected in the selection interview which each candidate is required to undertake. The opportunity should be taken throughout delivery of this Unit, to emphasise that the relevant Core Skills indicated above, and the employability skills developed, are life skills which can be applied in a wide range of situations in everyday life and in employment.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Opportunities for the use of e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by information and communications technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or e-checklists. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Further advice is available in *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education (AA1641, March 2003)*, *SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools (BD2625, June 2005)*.

In this Unit candidates will maintain a log with records of development opportunities and behaviour displayed throughout the Unit. The log should record the following details for a minimum of three development needs across a range of practical activities/experiences in a work related context:

- ◆ a record of the date of the activity, event or experience being recorded
- ◆ brief record of what occurred, own behaviour and its effectiveness in the situation
- ◆ a record of feedback received from others, eg comments, praise, advice, criticism
- ◆ record of progress or learning gained from the experience
- ◆ a record of how future behaviour/performance may be modified in similar situations

The ability for centres to incorporate diverse and interesting topics, which relate closely to employability skills such as health and hygiene, will strengthen the approach to this assessment.

It is anticipated that in addition to gathering evidence in the log for at least three practical activities/experiences, further opportunities for log entries will occur naturally, eg good opportunities for gathering evidence may present themselves whilst undertaking workplace experience, a workplace visit or during the study visit Unit, particularly in relation to Outcome 3. Other suitable opportunities may be through use of role plays and simulations either in this Unit or, where the Unit is taken as part of the National Certificate Group Award in Travel and Tourism in integrated activities with other Units in the programme.

It is the individual's responsibility to complete the log whenever opportunities present themselves and much of this recording may not therefore occur at a pre-set time.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Video recorded evidence of performance, eg in the simulated selection interview, would be beneficial as it would afford the individual a better opportunity to effectively self-assess and offers more flexibility for peer assessment.

The assessor should record achievement at regular intervals on a candidate record sheet. Details of the items required for the folio are included in Evidence Requirements.

CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES AND/OR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

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. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (www.sqa.org.uk).