



## **National Unit specification: general information**

**Unit title:** Guidance: Options and Choices

**Unit code:** H0F0 09

**Superclass:** HC

**Publication date:** January 2012

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 01

### **Summary**

The Unit is designed to allow candidates facing new circumstances or a new start to identify skills and knowledge. They will use this as a basis to investigate choices and plan next steps.

Candidates will have the opportunity to improve their self awareness by evaluating their own interests, strengths and areas for improvement. Candidates will also be able to develop planning skills.

This Unit may provide a useful framework for centres involved in designing and operating learning support systems for candidates.

### **Outcomes**

- 1 Carry out a self evaluation to identify own interests, strengths and areas for improvement based on previous experience.
- 2 Identify suitable choices to enable interests, strengths and areas for improvement to be built on.
- 3 Plan a course of action in light of the choices identified.
- 4 Review the planned course of action to identify and minimise potential risk(s).

### **Recommended entry**

Entry is at the discretion of the centre.

## **General information (cont)**

### **Credit points and level**

0.5 National Unit credit at SCQF level 3: (3 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 3\*)

*\*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**

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following Core Skills component:

- ◆ Critical Thinking at SCQF level 3

There are also opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills which are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit specification.

## **National Unit specification: statement of standards**

**Unit title:** Guidance: Options and Choices

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**

Carry out a self evaluation to identify own interests, strengths and areas for improvement based on previous experience.

#### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Identify own strengths in relation to skills and qualities based on personal and vocational experience.
- (b) Identify own interests in relation to vocational experience.
- (c) Identify own areas for improvement in relation to personal and vocational experience.

### **Outcome 2**

Identify suitable choices to enable interests, strengths and areas for improvement to be built on.

#### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Identify and use sources of information to find out the choices available.
- (b) Identify any suitable choices which enable strengths, interest and areas for improvement to be built on.
- (c) State briefly the reasons supporting the choices identified.

### **Outcome 3**

Plan a course of action in light of the choices identified.

#### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Identify an appropriate aim(s) for the course of action based on the choices identified.
- (b) Give the reasons for choosing this aim.
- (c) Identify the simple tasks required to achieve this aim(s).
- (d) Identify the resources required to complete these tasks.

## National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

**Unit title:** Guidance: Options and Choices

### Outcome 4

Review the planned course of action to identify and minimise potential risk(s).

#### Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify any risk(s) that may affect the planned course of action.
- (b) Identify appropriate actions to minimise the risk(s) identified.

#### Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

**The candidate will receive directive support throughout the Unit whilst generating the evidence required achieving the national standard through each of the Outcomes for the Unit. This means that the teacher/lecturer will issue explicit instructions to candidates to enable progress.**

The evidence will be generated by the candidate at appropriate points throughout the Unit. The evidence will consist of:

- ◆ Written and/or recorded oral evidence generated by the candidate for all Outcomes.

This evidence must be retained in a folio.

The specific evidence required to demonstrate the achievement of each Outcome is listed below:

#### Outcome 1

A candidate self evaluation identifying:

- ◆ a minimum of one interest in relation to own vocational experience.
- ◆ a minimum of one strength in relation to own skills and qualities.
- ◆ a minimum of one area for improvement own skills and qualities.

#### Outcome 2

A candidate record covering:

- ◆ a minimum of two sources of information.
- ◆ a minimum of two suitable choices in relation to own interests, strengths and areas for improvement.
- ◆ a minimum of one reason supporting the suitability of the choices identified.

Confirmation by the teacher/lecturer that the candidate used the sources of information to identify the suitable choices available.

## **National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Guidance: Options and Choices

### **Outcome 3**

The candidate's action plan which identifies:

A candidate record of action planning covering:

- ◆ an aim, confirmed as appropriate by the teacher/lecturer, for the course of action based on the choices identified.
- ◆ a minimum of two simple tasks required to achieve this aim.
- ◆ the resources required to complete these tasks.

Confirmation by the teacher/lecturer of the appropriate use of sources of information.

### **Outcome 4**

A candidate review of the plan of action covering:

- ◆ a minimum of two risks in relation to the planned course of action.
- ◆ a minimum of two actions, confirmed as appropriate by the teacher/lecturer, to minimise the identified risk.

## **Guidance on the content and context for this Unit**

This Unit is suitable for candidates who have no previous experience of Units within the Personal and Social Development suite of Units but it also offers progression for candidates who have completed other Units such as: Induction, Guidance: Ongoing and Guidance: Pre-Exit or any other Units from the Personal and Social Development area.

### **Outcomes**

For Outcome 1 it may be helpful for candidates to consider their:

- ◆ Likes and dislikes
- ◆ Strengths and weaknesses
- ◆ Skills and areas for development
- ◆ Interests and preferences

Candidates should reflect on their previous vocational and personal experience. They will do this with directive support from their teacher/lecturer. A personal interview could be a means of encouraging the candidate to reflect and identify their interest, strengths and areas for improvement.

For Outcome 2 candidates need to ask themselves:

- ◆ Where can I find information about the choices available to me?
- ◆ Which choices will enable me to build on my strengths, interests and areas for improvement?

## National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

### Unit title: Guidance: Options and Choices

To answer these questions the candidate should investigate appropriate choices and resources available to them that will help develop the performance and personal needs identified for self development. The teacher/lecturer will be help the candidate understand the suitability for their choices.

For Outcome 3 candidates need to formulate a course of action (plan):

- ◆ Does my aim suit my personal development needs ie my interests, hobbies, strengths and areas for improvement?
- ◆ What are my reasons for choosing my aim?
- ◆ What do I need to do to achieve my aim?
- ◆ What resources will I need?

The plan of action should meet the needs of the candidate by enabling them to build on their strengths, interests and area for improvement. Resources could include course information, job profiles, application forms, expertise from staff, employers etc.

For Outcome 4 candidates need to ask themselves:

- ◆ What might prevent me from accomplishing my plan?
- ◆ What action can I take to minimise the risk and help me to achieve my aim?

To answer these questions the candidate should examine the course of action and think about what could potentially go wrong and what, if anything, they can do avoid this situation.

Suitable for candidates who have completed other Units such as: Induction and Guidance: Ongoing or any other Units from the Personal and Social Development area.

### Guidance on learning and teaching approaches for this Unit

As part of the induction process, time should be devoted to ensuring that candidates have a clear understanding of the Outcomes, Performance Criteria, Evidence Requirements and Core Skills of the Unit.

This Unit is an individual personal development journey that has the development of the candidate at the centre of the Outcomes, it may enable learners to become confident individuals, successful learners, responsible citizens and effective contributors; the four areas employers have highlighted as particularly important when entering a workplace. Centres must ensure that activities undertaken allow the candidate the opportunity to achieve the Outcomes and Performance Criteria for the Unit. Centres must make available resources needed to successfully complete the Unit.

This Unit will encourage candidates to examine all aspects of their previous experience and not only concentrate on their educational and employment experience; they should widen their view to include their life experience gained from hobbies and leisure pursuits as well as their educational/training attainment.

## **National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

### **Unit title:** Guidance: Options and Choices

Centres may wish to make candidates aware of the many skills and qualities they have gained from their experiences that would be transferable to their future plans and that are important in education and employment, such as:

- ◆ Good timekeeping
- ◆ Completing tasks to an appropriate standard
- ◆ Keeping accurate records of task completion
- ◆ Seeking advice to enable progress
- ◆ Asking for help to improve understanding of instructions
- ◆ Keeping simple records of work

This Unit allows candidates the opportunity to develop their self awareness by evaluating their own interests, strengths and areas for improvement; develop task management skills, including planning, organising, decision making skills and interpersonal skills which will enable candidates to become effective contributors and the ability to source and use appropriate knowledge.

Throughout this Unit candidates should be encouraged to:

- ◆ act on personal guidance from teachers/lectures, peers and professionals in their field.
- ◆ become a reflective learner through the review process undertaken, including feedback from observations from peers, teachers/lectures to set realistic achievable next steps for the future.

### **Guidance on approaches to assessment for this Unit**

The Evidence Requirements are fully expressed in the mandatory section of this Unit specification.

Candidates should receive directed support in selecting evidence for the folio. Evidence should be gathered at appropriate points as candidates make progress through the Unit. Records of assessment should be maintained and kept up-to-date in order to track candidate progress and to provide evidence for internal and external verification.

Instruments of assessment must be in line with the Evidence Requirements for the Unit. Centres should choose instruments of assessment best suited to their individual candidates and resources. This could include:

- ◆ Candidate written records
- ◆ Personal Interview
- ◆ Assessor record of candidate responses
- ◆ Review sheets
- ◆ Log books (E-logs)

## National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

**Unit title:** Guidance: Options and Choices

### 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 Communication 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.

Written and/or oral evidence for this Unit can be produced in a variety of formats, for example:

- ◆ Digital sound recordings
- ◆ E-mails
- ◆ Blogs
- ◆ Electronic presentations
- ◆ Electronic journals

Centres should select the format most appropriate for the individual's needs and the learning environment in which the Unit is being completed.

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)*.

### Opportunities for developing Core Skills

In this Unit candidates will be involved in carrying out an evaluation, planning a course of action and reviewing the course of action to identify and minimize potential risks. This provides good opportunities for developing aspects of *Problem Solving*.

This Unit has the Problem Solving component of Critical Thinking embedded in it, so when the candidate achieves this Unit their Core Skills profile will be updated to show they have achieved Critical Thinking at SCQF level 3.

### Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website [www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements)

## History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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