



National Unit Specification: General Information

UNIT Communication (Intermediate 1)

NUMBER D01B 10

COURSE

SUMMARY

This core skills unit seeks to develop the ability to respond to and produce written and oral communication which is mainly familiar and routine to the candidate's setting. This unit is designed to develop communication skills at a functional level. It should guide the candidate towards the acquisition of broadly-based skills in common language contexts, helping the candidate to establish and maintain social and working relations and to use language skills in a vocational situation.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Respond to simple but detailed written communication.
- 2 Produce simple but detailed written communication.
- 3 Produce and respond to simple but detailed oral communication.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained Communication (Access 3).

CREDIT VALUE

1 Credit at Intermediate 1.

Administrative Information

Superclass: KB

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CORE SKILLS

Information on the automatic certification of core skills is published in *Automatic Certification of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 1999).

The attainment of this unit will lead to the automatic award of:

- Communication at Intermediate 1.

National unit specification: statement of standards

UNIT Communication (Intermediate 1)

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.

Note on range for the unit

The outcomes should be demonstrated in relation to material which is mainly familiar and routine to the candidate's setting.

OUTCOME 1

Respond to simple but detailed written communication.

Performance Criteria

- a) Identify the purpose of a communication, and support with textual evidence.
- b) Give an accurate account of important ideas or significant information in the communication.
- c) Identify a central point of view in the communication.
- d) Make a basic evaluation of the communication supported by evidence.

Evidence Requirements

Written or spoken evidence that on one occasion the candidate has understood, analysed and evaluated an appropriate non-fiction text and has achieved all the performance criteria. All the performance criteria *must* be met within one task.

Simple but detailed written communication

Non-fiction texts must be used. Texts will be accessible and deal with content related to the candidate's experience, an area of study or the work setting. The communication will be clearly presented and will contain several sets of information, or aspects of content, or a discernible point of view expressed in a direct, uncomplicated way. The key points of the text will be easily identifiable. The vocabulary will be familiar to the candidate but, within a familiar area, some accessible specialist vocabulary may be used. In general, sentences will be simple in structure and the relationship between paragraphs straightforward.

OUTCOME 2

Produce simple but detailed written communication.

Performance Criteria

- a) The techniques used are appropriate to the writer's purpose and audience and are mainly used consistently.
- b) Essential information or ideas with some supporting detail are presented in a logical order.
- c) Structure is mainly appropriate to purpose and audience.
- d) Spelling, punctuation and syntax are mainly accurate.

National unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Communication (Intermediate 1)

Evidence Requirements

One piece of written evidence or a portfolio of thematically linked pieces which show that the candidate has achieved all the performance criteria. The piece, or pieces taken together, should amount to no fewer than 300 words.

Simple but detailed written communication

The candidate will produce written communication which presents information in a straightforward way. It will convey several sets of information or aspects of content. Where appropriate, opinions and/or ideas will be presented clearly with an attempt to go beyond the personal statement and introduce a measure of generalisation and objectivity. The communication will be organised into a logical structure. Layout, word choice and any use of graphics or pictures will be appropriate to purpose, context and target audience. The vocabulary and sentence structures will be straightforward. Although a few errors may be present, spelling, choice of vocabulary and sentence structures will be sufficiently accurate to convey the writer's meaning at first reading.

OUTCOME 3

Produce and respond to simple but detailed oral communication.

Performance Criteria

- a) Use of vocabulary and language structures is mainly appropriate to purpose and audience.
- b) The communication conveys appropriate information, opinions and/or ideas.
- c) Basic skill in sequencing and linking information, opinions and/or ideas is shown.
- d) Delivery takes account of situation and audience.
- e) Responses take account of the contributions of other(s).

Evidence Requirements

All the performance criteria must be met in one spoken interaction (discussion or presentation) with one or more people. A brief note of context and source will accompany the evidence, which could take the form of a checklist or recording. An individual presentation should last for a minimum of three minutes with additional time for questions.

In a spoken interaction at this level

The candidate will convey several items of information, opinions or ideas with sequencing and linking appropriate to purpose and situation. The use of vocabulary, register and structure will be mainly appropriate to purpose and audience and there will be some attempt to vary these, where appropriate. Delivery will be audible with some variation in pace and tone and appropriate use of non-verbal conventions. The candidate will respond to points of view and/or questions from others.

National unit specification: support notes

UNIT Communication (Intermediate 1)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. None of the sections of the support notes is mandatory.

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT

The content and context for this core skills unit should be appropriate to the personal and/or vocational needs of the candidate.

Core skills units are stated at five levels of attainment, with activities becoming progressively more demanding in breadth and depth, and in the extent of individual autonomy required. The appendix to this unit shows the relationship between the levels in Communication.

The programme in Communication should develop:

- the skills required for reading accessible texts
- the skills required for reading and researching topics and texts
- the skills required for informational and expressive writing
- the skills required for writing notes, plans and basic evaluations
- the skills required for individual talk, discussion and listening.

The programme in Communication should provide opportunities to:

- use language for a variety of purposes with a balance between productive and receptive modes
- use language in a range of settings - personal, social and vocational
- read a variety of texts which offer a range of reading demands
- use a range of written forms including graphical and pictorial
- use a range of forms of oral communication with a balance between productive and receptive modes.

Outcome 1

Non-fiction texts must be used. Candidates' reading should include a variety of texts and graphical and pictorial representations which offer a range of reading demands, e.g. books; newspapers and magazines; pamphlets; notices; advertisements; instructions; graphs; diagrams; tables; charts; and reports. The text may be related to the candidate's personal interests or to an area of study or the work setting. The text should convey several sets of information/aspects of content. For example, a newspaper report on a crime might contain one set of information about the crime itself; one set about witnesses; and one set about police action to date and planned.

Texts can include items from newspapers (local, tabloid or simpler articles from broadsheets) or magazines (those aimed at a general readership which do not assume too sophisticated an audience, or magazines aimed at those with a particular interest, if appropriate to candidate); vocational texts; college or school newsletters; extracts from biographies and autobiographies; letters. Texts may also include images, e.g. diagrams, maps, charts, tables, sketches or photographs.

National unit specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Communication (Intermediate 1)

The *purpose* of the communication can be to inform or report; to persuade; to express feelings or reactions; to share an experience; to entertain.

The *conventions* used - layout, use of graphics, vocabulary, degree of formality and structure - should support the purpose of the communication and be wholly consistent with the type of text.

The *evaluation* of the text will be at a basic level, but should be supported by evidence from the text. At this level, reference to the text will focus on content and word choice.

Outcome 2

Candidates should use language for a variety of purposes appropriate to their individual needs, e.g. conveying information; describing feelings; arguing and persuading; giving assistance; keeping records.

Written communication which the candidate produces should reflect personal interests or be related to an area of study or the work setting. Texts may include, e.g. reports; instructions; guides to procedures; letters, such as job applications, letters to newspapers, letters of complaint; diaries; newspaper or newsletter articles. Texts may also include images, e.g. diagrams, maps, charts, tables, sketches or photographs may be used in support of the written text. The images may be produced by the candidate or selected from a bank of images.

Candidates should choose an appropriate *structure* for written work. The structure chosen and the language techniques used should be appropriate to purpose, context and intended readership.

It is anticipated that a word length of no fewer than 300 words would be required to demonstrate competence at this level. Where a portfolio of evidence is being used for assessment requirements (e.g. letter, information sheet and notice or advertisement) the pieces should be linked and cover an issue related to personal interest, an area of study or the work setting. The pieces taken together should amount to no fewer than 300 words.

Outcome 3

Candidates should use language for a variety of purposes appropriate to individual needs e.g. conveying information; explaining feelings; giving instructions; giving and justifying opinions.

In their spoken interaction, candidates may, for example:

- give a short talk and answer questions on it
- take part in a simple interview
- give assistance or instructions
- make contributions involving a degree of detail to a discussion on a simple topic.

National unit specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Communication (Intermediate 1)

Topics might include, for example, findings from a project or a piece of research on which the candidate has been working, or a tutorial topic which is explored in discussion. Individual talk will convey simple but detailed information or express a direct point of view. At this level, an individual presentation should last for a minimum of three minutes with additional time for questions. A group discussion will deal with a straightforward topic.

Candidates should show basic skill in *sequencing and linking ideas*, e.g. instructions would be given in the correct order and might be repeated/clarified in response to questioning; a short talk would include a recognisable beginning and end and basic linkage.

It is likely that a group discussion would involve two or more people but an interview conducted on a one to one basis could also be used to demonstrate the standard of oral communication skills which covers the performance criteria.

In *taking account of the contributions of others* candidates should listen and respond to points of view, answer questions, ask questions to clarify, or expand a contribution as appropriate.

Delivery should be clear and audible and candidates should make appropriate use of posture, eye contact and gesture.

In creating a checklist for Outcome 3, teacher/lecturers should find the detail provided under *Evidence Requirements* helpful.

GUIDANCE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACHES

The learning and teaching approaches should encourage candidates to identify the evidence of their attainment and to transfer the skills acquired to other contexts.

Programmes of work in Communication should be designed to engage candidates in the varied and purposeful use of interrelated skills of language through a range of tasks. These tasks may reflect the candidates' vocational interest or may be of more general interest. It is recommended that these tasks should be negotiated and planned in such a way that the evidence required for assessment is generated in the course of ongoing work rather than as a discrete exercise.

Learning and teaching in Communication should be active and candidate-centred. Candidates should have the opportunity to plan and make decisions for themselves, to show initiative and independence and to work co-operatively in groups. Activities should provide opportunities to use language in real situations for real purposes and may be part of projects or practical exercises set within the Communication programme or drawn from activities in other vocational and social contexts.

National unit specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Communication (Intermediate 1)

Opportunities for rewriting, reviewing, revising and evaluating by the candidate, by peers and by the teacher/lecturer should be seen as an essential feature of all formative activities. The candidates should be involved in activities which stretch their capabilities.

The use of dictionaries should be encouraged at all stages. Word processors, including those which can make use of spelling check type software, may be used by candidates.

In oral communication, recordings of candidate performance at this level would enable others to appreciate the standard required. Recorded evidence of candidate performance would also assist internal and external verification.

Where the Communication unit is being combined with another unit to create an enhanced learning and teaching programme, care must be taken to ensure that all aspects of each unit are covered and adequate time must be allowed for the coverage of both units. Such a programme would create opportunities to consolidate the skills gained in this unit.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT

The statement of satisfactory performance for each outcome indicates the minimum required for the purpose of summative assessment. However, the number of activities undertaken by the candidate in the course of the unit should not be limited to those specified for assessment purposes. In awarding the candidate Communication at Intermediate 1 the teacher/lecturer must be confident that the candidate will be able to demonstrate these skills in any context and set of circumstances.

Teachers/lecturers must remember to distinguish between their differing roles in formative and summative assessment. In the former, as much help and support as is required by the candidate may legitimately be given by the teacher/lecturer. *Tasks which are used to provide evidence for summative assessment must be completed by the candidate unaided.* It would, however, be acceptable for the teacher/lecturer to draw the candidate's attention to any general area of error in relation to particular performance criteria or redirect him or her to the task in hand.

Where the candidate is responding orally in Outcome 1, detailed evidence (transcript, recording) must be retained for verification purposes. In Outcome 3, a brief note of context and source, whether for an individual presentation or group discussion, should accompany the evidence, which could take the form of a checklist or recording.

Evidence of attainment should be gathered, wherever possible, from integrated activities, whether this unit is being studied as a stand alone unit or is being used in combination with others.

National unit specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Communication (Intermediate 1)

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 alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment and Certification Arrangements* (SQA, 1998).

Core skills units

Appendix

Communication: progression chart

Skill	Access 2	Access 3	Intermediate 1	Intermediate 2	Higher
Reading	Respond to very simple written communication	Respond to simple written communication	Respond to simple but detailed written communication	Respond to accessible written communication	Respond to complex written communication
Writing	Produce very simple written communication	Produce simple written communication	Produce simple but detailed written communication	Produce well-structured written communication	Produce well-structured written communication on a complex topic
Talking and listening	Produce and respond to very simple oral communication	Produce and respond to simple oral communication	Produce and respond to simple but detailed oral communication	Produce and respond to oral communication	Produce and respond to oral communication on a complex topic