

National Unit Specification: General Information

UNIT Skillstart: Communication in a Work-Related Environment (Access 2)

NUMBER D06M 08

COURSE

SUMMARY

This unit will be suitable for candidates who need to develop written and spoken communication skills to be used at a very basic level in a work-related environment. In the context of this unit, an 'identified work-related environment' refers to either an identified workplace or an identified learning environment which simulates the workplace and which provides opportunities for practising work-related skills. The unit will enable the candidate to acquire essential skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking, helping the candidate to communicate in a direct and uncomplicated way in familiar work-related situations.

The unit forms part of the Skillstart qualifications.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Respond to everyday written communication in an identified work-related environment.
- 2 Produce everyday written communication in an identified work-related environment.
- 3 Engage in simple dialogue in an identified work-related environment.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

It would be beneficial if candidates had some basic communication skills. This may be evidenced by possession of National Certificate Module 7110065 Communication for Life and Work.

CREDIT VALUE

1 Credit at Access 2.

Administrative Information

Superclass: HD

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Additional copies of this specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. The cost is £2.50.

CORE SKILLS

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

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 the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1

Respond to everyday written communication in an identified work-related environment.

Performance Criteria

- a) Common signs are identified correctly.
- b) Information is selected accurately from simple written instructions and diagrams.
- c) Diagrammatic and written instructions are followed correctly.

Evidence Requirements

Evidence for Performance Criteria (a)-(c) should be gathered from direct observation of the candidate in an identified work-related environment.

In connection with Performance Criterion (a) the candidate should identify correctly a total of 10 common signs.

In connection with Performance Criteria (b) and (c), evidence should be gathered on at least two occasions while undertaking two different tasks. The candidate should follow both diagrammatic and written instructions for at least one of the two tasks. Diagrammatic instructions should be simple and serve to illustrate the written instructions.

Where evidence cannot be gathered from performance evidence alone, for example, ensuring the candidate's understanding of information, such evidence should be gathered from the candidate's answers to short answer questions. The candidate may respond using his or her normal mode of communication.

OUTCOME 2

Produce everyday written communication in an identified work-related environment.

Performance Criteria

- a) Information appropriate for the task is presented as legible text.
- b) Conventions appropriate for the writer's purpose and task are used.

Evidence Requirements

Evidence for Performance Criteria (a)-(b) should be gathered from direct observation of the candidate in an identified work-related environment.

The candidate should complete two simple forms in a familiar format. Each form should require the candidate's signature. The candidate should also complete two short written communications. The candidate may use print or handwriting.

National unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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The information conveyed in each communication should consist of at least one item of information referring to the candidate's experience in the work-related environment. Vocabulary and sentence structure should be very simple. Legibility, spelling and presentation should be of a standard to allow the meaning to be understood clearly.

The written communication should conform to recognised conventions appropriate to the purpose and intended reader such as appropriate use of language, address, identification of writer, means of delivery.

OUTCOME 3

Engage in simple dialogue in an identified work-related environment.

Performance Criteria

- a) Essential information, opinions or ideas are conveyed in a spoken communication.
- b) Delivery is appropriate to the other person and to the situation.
- c) Essential information, opinions or ideas are understood from a spoken communication.
- d) Response is comprehensible, taking account of the contribution of the other person.

Note on range for the outcome

The type of communication should include the following: formal; informal.

Evidence Requirements

Evidence for Performance Criteria (a)-(d) should be gathered from direct observation of the candidate in an identified work-related environment.

The candidate should participate in dialogue, speaking to the other person in an appropriate manner. One purpose should be to convey information and the other to receive information. Communication should be formal and informal.

Formal communication should take place with a person in authority, the candidate should show respect for the person's authority during the dialogue. While engaged in dialogue the candidate should convey and receive very simple information, consisting of one item of information, an opinion or idea at a basic level. It is not necessary for the candidate to convey and receive information on the same occasion.

Informal communication should take place in a relaxed, conversational manner. While engaged in dialogue the candidate should convey and receive very simple information consisting of one item of information, an opinion or idea at a basic level. It is not necessary for the candidate to convey and receive information on the same occasion.

National unit specification: support notes

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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

This unit forms part of the Skillstart qualifications. Successful completion of either of these qualifications may facilitate the candidate's progress towards Scottish Group Awards and Scottish Vocational Qualifications.

The candidate should achieve the level of competence of someone who can demonstrate basic occupational skills. The unit should be seen in the context of the wide range of skills needed for achievement of the Skillstart qualifications and should be integrated into practical activities in the work-related environment. In the context of this unit, an 'identified work-related environment' refers to either an identified workplace or an identified learning environment which simulates the workplace and which provides opportunities for practising work-related skills.

The unit should provide opportunities for candidates to learn and practise basic communication skills for an adult work environment. Safety issues, rights and responsibilities, working with others, confidence building, travel to work, operating skills could all be worked on in this context.

Any appropriate local authority or centre regulations should be taken into account with regard to supervision of candidates when outside the boundaries of the centre.

Corresponding to outcomes:

- 1 Emphasis should be on the skill of reading very simple written information. The communication should be brief and convey one or two items of information in a direct, uncomplicated way. Text could be a leaflet, instructions or notice. The text may also include images, for example, simple diagrams, a table, computer icons, illustrations with captions, common signs. Common signs should be those that the candidate will meet in his or her environment. Signs could include push, pull, toilets, danger, information, exit, safety helmets should be worn, slippery floors and other hazard signs, street names, road signs.

A wide variety of written and diagrammatic information might be studied and acted on, for example, simple recipes, photocopier and word processor instructions, telephone directories, health and safety instructions, seed packets, vending machines, store guides, delivery sheets, road maps, the highway code.

National unit specification: support notes (cont)

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- 2 Emphasis here should be on producing very simple written communication which enables a person to carry out working responsibilities. In achieving the purpose of the communication, the information conveyed will be of a basic nature. Each communication should contain at least one item of information which is familiar to the candidate and which refers to the candidate's experience in the work-related environment. Errors may be present but these should not prevent the reader from grasping the meaning after further reading.

Text may include notices, log book entries, notes to colleagues. Images, for example, tables or sketches may be used in support of the written text. Images may be produced by the candidate or selected from a bank of images. Layout, word choice and any use of graphics or pictures should be appropriate to purpose. Opportunities should be taken to discuss the significance of signing forms and the importance of legible name and address, which are sufficiently accurate to locate the person.

- 3 The emphasis here should be on effective communication with one other person. Opportunities should be given for talking and listening on a variety of occasions, for example, to convey information, describe feelings or respond to questions. At this level, there may be weaknesses in the candidate's use of vocabulary, register and sentence structures but these should not prevent communication with colleagues in the work-related environment. The communication should convey a minimum of one item of information, an opinion or idea at a basic level, for example checking an instruction, or making a short telephone call notifying absence from work.

Delivery at this level should include the occasional use of appropriate non-verbal conventions, for example, occasionally making appropriate eye contact or pausing at appropriate points. Responses should take account of contributions from the other person, for example, by repeating information or asking a question.

GUIDANCE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACHES

The work of this unit should be tied very closely to the candidate's communication needs during work-related activities. Every opportunity should be given for the candidate to identify and express these needs and suggest appropriate learning activities. Group work, individual and paired work will all be appropriate. Learning as part of normal training or in other practical situations will be a crucial part of this unit, so group size should be small enough to allow for this safely.

Tutors/trainers will need to structure tasks carefully in order to develop skills step by step and give lots of practice until the candidate can be assessed at a time of consistent competence.

National unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Tape and video will allow effective self and peer review of progress, and other technology (eg. word processor) could be used to present work. Opportunities should always be given to draft and edit written work and to practise forms before submitting a final version. The compilation of personal and group dictionaries, telephone directories or log books of work-related tasks should be positively encouraged.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT

Tutors/trainers should 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 tutor/trainer. However, tasks which are intended to provide evidence for summative assessment must be completed by the candidate unaided.

Centres may use the Instruments of Assessment which are considered by tutors/trainers to be most appropriate. Examples of Instruments of Assessment which could be used are Practical Exercises, Assignments and Short Answer Questions.

Outcome 1

In respect of Performance Criterion (a) the candidate should give short answers to questions designed to allow the candidate to demonstrate the ability to identify 10 common signs in his or her work-related environment.

In respect of Performance Criteria (b) and (c) the candidate should undertake an Assignment designed to assess his or her ability to read and understand simple written and diagrammatic information and carry out a task using this information. The candidate should meet the performance criteria on at least two occasions while undertaking two different tasks.

Outcome 2

The candidate should undertake two Practical Exercises to enable him or her to demonstrate ability to convey simple information in writing. The candidate may use print or hand-writing.

The first exercise should consist of the candidate completing two simple forms in familiar format. The forms should require the candidate's signature. The second exercise should consist of the candidate completing two short written communications. Legibility, spelling and presentation should be of a standard to allow the meaning to be understood clearly.

Outcome 3

The candidate should undertake a speaking task which involves speaking to another person for two different purposes. One purpose should be to convey information and the other to receive information. The other person may ask open questions to promote the dialogue.

National unit specification: support notes (cont)

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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).