

## Higher National Unit Specification

### General information for centres

**Unit title:** Understanding Loss and the Process of Grief

**Unit code:** DH3W 34

**Unit purpose:** To enable candidates to evaluate a variety of theoretical models of grief, identify helping strategies to support individuals, families and carers in the process of grief and identify individual and cultural needs.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- ◆ Evaluate theoretical models and explain the process of loss and grief.
- ◆ Identify a range of helping strategies to individuals and significant others in a range of settings, in the event of a bereavement.
- ◆ Describe the individual and cultural needs associated with religious and cultural differences in society.

**Credit value:** 1 HN Credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7\*)

*\*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.*

**Recommended prior knowledge and skills:** Candidates should have good communication skills, both written and oral. These can be evidenced either by the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications for example Higher English or a qualification equivalent to SCQF Level 5 or by the completion of a pre-course interview part of which could take the form of a written assignment. The skills to undertake this Unit could also be demonstrated through an employer's reference or the process of application and interview. In addition to proven communication skills candidates should have preferably undertaken some real work experience, paid or voluntary, in a care setting.

**Core skills:** There may be opportunities to gather evidence towards core skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components.

This unit provides opportunities for development of the following core skills:

## **General information for centres (cont)**

### **Communication: (All Outcomes)**

- ◆ Convey complex ideas in a well structured and coherent form e.g through assignment for outcome 1
- ◆ Use a range of forms of communication effectively in both familiar and new contexts
- ◆ Oral communication could be demonstrated via the reflective accounts which show interaction with the worker and individuals receiving care.

### **Information Technology: (All Outcomes)**

- ◆ Use standard applications to obtain and process information and data as required. This is not a mandatory requirement, but candidates should be encouraged to develop these appropriate skills

### **Working with Others: (All Outcomes)**

- ◆ Consideration should be given to the responsibility of self and others to understand the situation of people experiencing loss. This work should include individuals receiving care, team-members and collaboration with other agencies.

**Context for delivery:** If this Unit is delivered as part of a group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes.

This unit is one of the Optional Units for the HNC Social Care and would normally be undertaken as part of the group award. However, it could be studied as a stand alone unit which may be useful as part of a professional development programme.

**Assessment:** This unit may be assessed as one complete written assignment or it is possible to incorporate a range of assessment methods for this unit; written assignments, case studies and role plays and oral presentations.

Outcome 1 may be assessed as a written assignment. Outcome 2 may be assessed as a written assignment, based on a case study or role play or alternatively reflective accounts for those candidates who have current experience of working with people who are bereaved. Outcome 3 may be assessed as a written assignment or oral presentation.

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

**Unit title:** Understanding Loss and the Process of Grief

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and evidence requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

### **Outcome 1**

Evaluate theoretical models and explain the process of grief.

#### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- ◆ Types of loss which may trigger grief
- ◆ Current theories of grief

#### **Evidence requirements**

Candidate will need evidence to demonstrate an understanding of a range of losses: losses associated with death; and losses not associated with death which may trigger grief in individuals. Candidates must demonstrate an understanding of relevant theories.

Candidates must provide evidence, which identifies a minimum of four occasions of loss – two **not** associated with death and two associated with death. Candidates should apply a range of theoretical approaches which cover complex and uncomplicated experiences of loss.

Evidence may be generated through a written assignment.

#### **Assessment guidelines**

Evidence for the outcome may be generated through a written assignment. A maximum of 1000 words is appropriate for this outcome.

### **Outcome 2**

Identify a range of helping strategies to individuals and significant others in a range of settings, in the event of a loss

#### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- ◆ Legal and other procedures to be followed in event of a bereavement within a range of care settings
- ◆ Agencies to which the individual can be referred for further support
- ◆ Emotional support for individuals and significant others who have experienced loss
- ◆ The impact of loss and grief on social care staff

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

**Unit title:** Understanding Loss and the Process of Grief

### **Evidence requirements**

Candidates will need evidence, which identifies a range of legal and other procedures, which require to be carried out following a death in a range of care settings. Candidates will need evidence to demonstrate an understanding of what is meant by emotional support in practice. Candidates must demonstrate an understanding of a range of agencies from the statutory and voluntary sectors, which may offer additional practical, financial, and emotional support which meet the needs of the individual and significant others.

Evidence for the outcome may be generated through a written assignment or assignments of approximately 1000 words for the whole outcome. This may take the form of a reflective account for those candidates who have current experience of working with people who are bereaved.

### **Assessment guidelines**

Evidence for emotional support for individuals and significant others may be gathered using methods such as role play or case study for candidates who have no experience of bereavement.

## **Outcome 3**

Describe the individual and cultural needs associated with religious and cultural differences in society

### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- ◆ Historical and cultural traditions surrounding grief and bereavement
- ◆ Rites and practices of faiths and religious responses to death
- ◆ Current (secular) non religious responses to death

### **Evidence requirements**

Candidates should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the historical and cultural traditions surrounding grief and bereavement. Candidates should be able to demonstrate an understanding of a range of rites and practices of both recognised religions and faiths. Candidates should also provide evidence, which demonstrates an understanding of non religious responses to death.

Evidence may be generated through a written assignment or oral presentation. Candidates must provide evidence to describe rites and practices of 4 major religions and 1 new religious movement. Candidates should also provide evidence which demonstrates a knowledge of 2 non religious responses to death. If possible candidates could provide evidence from their own practice experience.

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

**Unit title:** Understanding Loss and the Process of Grief

### **Assessment Guidelines**

A written assignment or oral presentation may be appropriate for this outcome.

## **Administrative Information**

<b>Unit code:</b>	DH3W 34
<b>Unit title:</b>	Understanding Loss and the Process of Grief
<b>Superclass category:</b>	PP
<b>Date of publication:</b>	August 2004
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## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes**

**Unit title:** Understanding Loss and the Process of Grief

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**

The unit is primarily intended to provide candidates with an understanding of a range of theoretical perspectives and helping strategies which can provide support for individuals receiving care, families and carers in the process of grief. Within this process candidates will identify a range of individual and cultural needs. Lecturers should be aware of candidates' own life experience which may include recent bereavement. This unit will likely be delivered towards the end of the award, by which time, candidates should have developed a broader knowledge base that underpins practice.

#### **Outcome 1**

This outcome examines a range of situations in which loss may occur. It is important to stress that loss is not only associated with death. Individuals may experience loss in relation to the loss of a pet, a limb, their health, rape, loss of a partner through separation or divorce, loss in relation to family breakdown, loss in relation to moving into residential care and loss in relation to children being looked after by agencies of care.

Attention should be paid to the range of ways in which individuals may experience death. Candidates should be aware of the impact of anticipated and unexpected death, violent death, suicide, miscarriage, abortion, and stillbirth. Candidates should be aware of the different manifestations of behaviour following loss (e.g challenging behaviour, anger and depression).

A range of theories of grief should be examined and should include Hayes, Bowlby, Raphael Wordon, Kubler-Ross and Murray Parkes.

#### **Outcome 2**

This outcome looks at procedures which require to be done following a death or other loss. Here, candidates can be made aware of the role of, for example, the doctor, funeral director, social workers, police and lawyers following a death or other loss. Candidates should also be made aware of procedures which may apply to a range of care settings e.g. residential care where relatives need to be informed.

Candidates should have a clear understanding of the range of agencies which may offer support to individuals and significant others. This support may be in the form of financial, practical or emotional or religious support. Agencies examined may be statutory or voluntary and include Social Work, DSS, Housing, Victim Support, MacMillan Nurses, Cruse, the Samaritans, religious groups and specialist support groups who deal with specific issues such as the experience of the loss of a child.

## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes**

### **Unit title:** Understanding Loss and the Process of Grief

Providing emotional support to individuals and significant others should be approached essentially from the premise of the use of effective communication skills; listening, appropriate body language, empathy and unconditional positive regard. Regard should be given when supporting people who have difficulty in understanding and/or communicating because of conditions such as a learning disability and dementia or where children are involved.

#### **Outcome 3**

A description of the historical and cultural traditions surrounding grief and bereavement should be examined and compared to the present day. Candidates should be made aware of how death was seen as a part of everyday life. Most people died at home, the deceased was kept in the home until the funeral and members of the family would prepare the body. Rituals such as stopping clocks, turning mirrors, placing pennies on the eyes of the deceased, were commonplace. Today, death is described as being sanitised; most people die in hospital or in a hospice and it is the funeral director who takes the deceased to the funeral parlour and prepares the body.

Candidates should be aware of the importance of the rites and practices of a range of faiths and religions following a death. An examination of a range of world faiths should be undertaken; Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, as should new/other religious movements such as Jehovah Witnesses, Mormons and Scientologists. Candidates should also be aware of New Age faiths.

It is important that candidates should also have some understanding of the current (secular) and non-religious responses to death. The Humanist Society may provide personnel to lead the funeral. Individuals or families may have specific requests for procedures after death e.g. donating their body to medical science, specific methods of burial which involve environmental considerations (cardboard coffins), specific requests regarding the funeral arrangements such as family members or friends conducting the funeral ceremony and the choice of particular modern, non religious music.

#### **Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit**

Guest speakers from a variety of organisations involved in the bereavement processes may enrich the candidate's learning experience.

#### **Links to SVQ Units**

This HN Unit provides some of the underpinning knowledge for the following SVQ Units:

#### **HSC384 Support individuals through bereavement**

#### **HSC385 Support individuals through the process of dying**

If candidates write about real work situations then this may also provide evidence for PCs.

## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes**

**Unit title:** Understanding Loss and the Process of Grief

### **Open learning**

This unit could be delivered by open or distance learning. Centres would require planning to ensure the sufficiency and authenticity of candidate's evidence.

For information on normal open learning arrangements, please refer to the SQA guide *Assessment and Quality Assurance of Open and Distance Learning* (SQA, 2000).

### **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 special alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, 2001).

## **General information for candidates**

### **Unit title:** Understanding Loss and the Process of Grief

This unit is designed to enable you to understand the different types of losses which may be experienced and understand more fully how this may affect individuals and significant others. You will examine a range of theories of grief which will help you to understand the process of grief both from the perspective of those who are experiencing bereavement and from people who are terminally ill.

You will find out about the procedures following a death and the agencies who provide financial, practical and emotional support and you will also learn how to provide emotional support for individuals receiving care and significant others.

You will also examine a historical perspective of how death was dealt with in days gone by and compare this with the situation today.

You will find out about the rites and practices of a range of faiths and religious responses to death and also non religious responses.

You will be asked to write about the areas outlined above by written assignments and case studies. You may also be asked to undertake a role play which could assess your ability to offer emotional support to someone who has been bereaved.

The experience of loss in relation to death may be something you have experienced either in your personal life or in a work situation. This unit allows you to reflect on issues which may affect you or others around you. If you have not had this experience, the unit may allow you a better understanding of the subject and enable you to work more effectively with others who are experiencing bereavement.