



## International Vocational Unit Specification

### General information for centres

**Unit title:** Investigative Interviewing

**Unit code:** F3RB 47

**Unit purpose:** This Unit is designed to enable candidates to develop and enhance the skills required to conduct an investigative interview of a witness or suspect as part of a structured investigation process. It will provide candidates with the ability to research, plan, prepare, conduct and evaluate an investigative interview.

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

- 1 Use a recognised structured interview approach to interview a witness or suspect.
- 2 Evaluate the interview.

**Credit points and level:** 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 a good working knowledge of general procedures gained through experience of working in a police environment. Candidates could be in or aiming towards an investigative post within a police or law enforcement organisation. Candidates should have good communication, analytical and research skills.

**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.

**Assessment:** This Unit can be assessed through a simulated interview where the candidate plays the investigating officer and a suitable individual acts as a suspect or a witness. Candidates would be expected to plan for the interview and to carry it out. They should also provide a report which evaluates the investigative interview which they have conducted.

## **International Vocational Unit Specification: statement of standards**

**Unit title:** Investigative Interviewing

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or Skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Please refer to *Evidence Requirements for the Unit* after Outcome 2.

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**

Use a recognised structured interview approach to interview a witness or suspect

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Different types of structured interview
- ◆ Planning for the structured interview
- ◆ Purpose of a structured interview
- ◆ Recording the progress of the structured interview
- ◆ Questioning skills
- ◆ Listening skills
- ◆ Closure

### **Outcome 2**

Evaluate the interview

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Achievement of the plan
- ◆ Strengths and Weaknesses of the interview process

## **International Vocational Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Investigative Interviewing

### **Evidence Requirements for the Unit**

Candidates will need to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can research, plan and prepare for and conduct a structured interview and evaluate the process and Outcome.

Evidence should be based on a simulated role play. Candidates will be given a brief for a witness or a suspect. The witness or suspect will also be given a brief. Candidates should conduct the interview using the appropriate structured interview approach. They should use suitable questioning and listening techniques and close the interview in a manner appropriate to the status of the interviewee.

They should also provide:

- ◆ a plan for the interview
- ◆ notes they have made during the interview
- ◆ a report evaluating the interview which refers to the extent to which the interview plan was achieved (including the purpose of the interview) and identifies valid strengths and weaknesses

### **Assessment Guidelines for the Unit**

Assessment for this Unit should be undertaken by a simulated role play. The candidate will act as the interviewer and another person will play the role of the witness or suspect. Candidates should be given their brief in sufficient time to allow them to properly prepare for the interview.

The role play can be assessed using an observation checklist covering questioning skills, listening skills and closure. The evaluative report should be about 500 words long.

## Administrative Information

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**Unit title:** Investigative Interviewing  
**Superclass category:** QH  
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### History of changes:

Version	Description of change	Date

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## **International Vocational Unit Specification: support notes**

### **Unit title:** Investigative Interviewing

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 intended for police officers or staff involved in the investigation of criminal and non-criminal matters. Candidates could be following a career path which includes investigation as one of their core duties.

The Unit is designed to provide candidates with the knowledge and abilities to undertake and evaluate an investigative interview as an integral part of a professional investigation process.

The Unit considers the key skills and abilities necessary to prepare for and deliver a properly researched and prepared investigative interview. It examines the use of the structured interview as a framework on which to prepare for and deliver an investigative interview and examines the key skills which form part of the process.

The ability to ask questions of individuals is a crucial skill for any police officer. Asking the right type of question can have a profound effect on an interview. A detailed understanding of the different types of question that can be asked can greatly enhance the quality of the process.

Active and effective listening are key skills in the interview process, as is the ability to identify the barriers that may interfere with them and the methodology for breaking them down. It is important to understand the impact and importance of non-verbal behaviour on the interview process, these include the appearance of the interviewer, their physical demeanour, posture, facial expressions, touch and the use of proximity and space during the interview itself.

It is important to accurately record information imparted during an interview and measure its impact on the investigation. It is also essential that the interviewer can assess their own performance in the interview situation, determine if they adhered to their plan, achieved the objectives they set and obtained information vital to the enquiry. Lessons learned from the process can improve future interviews and help colleagues to learn.

The notes below give further guidance on the context of each Outcome.

#### **Outcome 1 — Structured interview**

The interviewing of individuals in criminal investigations, whether as suspects or witnesses, has always been a fundamental part of a police officers' role. Investigative Interviewing using a recognised model provides a framework and structure to use during interviews involving witnesses or suspects.

## **International Vocational Unit Specification: support notes (cont)**

### **Unit title:** Investigative Interviewing

Structured interview models deal with the following aspects of the interview process.

- 1 Research, planning and preparation.
- 2 Determining the purpose of the interview.
- 3 Identifying the information that requires to be obtained.
- 4 Developing rapport with the interviewee.
- 5 Clarifying and confirming the information that is obtained.
- 6 Evaluation of the information obtained.

Proper planning, preparation and delivery of an investigative interview is crucial to the success of the investigation being undertaken. The Unit examines the importance of carrying out proper research prior to the interview commencing and planning how it will progress. This involves determining the purpose of the interview, confirming the facts already known, identifying the information that is required, proving points crucial to the investigation and examining any defence put forward by an individual who may be a suspect. The Unit also describes how to use an aide memoiré to assist the planning process.

The Unit details the importance of establishing a degree of rapport with a witness or suspect and examines the impact that first impressions can have on the process. It discusses the procedures that should be adopted when conducting an interview including introducing the interviewer to the subject, the explanation of the process surrounding the interview itself and the management of stress and frustration if the interview does not go according to plan.

The Unit details each stage of the investigative interview process:

First free recall: the process of allowing the witness to recall their version of events in their own words without interruption.

Information stage: this involves a second recall of events again without interruption but with greater detail. At the conclusion there is an opportunity to question the witness to obtain further information including distance from the event, quality of their eyesight, do they wear glasses, accurate descriptions of the persons involved any weapons.

There are four main types of question, Open, Closed, Probing and Counter Productive.

The Unit examines questioning skills and the advantages to be gained by asking properly structured relevant questions which focus on the matter under investigation, which can be easily understood by the witness or suspect and avoid the use of inappropriate terminology. It examines the use of open, closed and probing questions and highlights the disadvantages of counter productive questioning.

Good interviewers ask questions which are short, confined to one topic and which are clear and easily understood. Questions should be devoid of slang, jargon or harsh language which could upset or alienate the subject.

Asking open questions encourages witnesses to talk freely and openly about the topic under review. They can be used to good effect at the start of the interview process to establish rapport develop a relationship with the interviewee.

## **International Vocational Unit Specification: support notes (cont)**

### **Unit title:** Investigative Interviewing

Closed questions: These allow the interviewer to focus on a specific matter or piece of information. They can be used to obtain specific information or facts, they can allow the interviewer to clarify crucial details related to the enquiry, they are also easy to ask and answer.

Probing Questions: A single question is never enough to obtain all of the information required. There will nearly always be a need to ask follow up questions to expand on the information provided. These are used to amplify or clarify the base line information provided by the subject. Amplification provides a greater depth of response while clarification identifies specifics and clears up any ambiguity.

Probes are used when a response does not meet the objective of the question which was asked. It is important that the interviewer, when using a probe, does not provoke a negative response in the interviewee. The need for probing questions should be considered and identified at the planning stage for the interview.

Amplification probes are used when there is a need to expand upon the amount or quality of information provided by an interviewee. The use of silence is an important tool in this area, a good interviewer will allow a period of time between an answer being provided and asking a question which seeks further detail.

Clarify and confirm: when the witness has recalled all of their information it may be necessary to clarify or probe certain aspects of their statement or explore any doubts over the accuracy of the information provided.

The Unit deals with listening skills and in particular active listening and effective listening. It details what could be considered to be barriers to effective listening and methods of breaking them down. It will also examine non-verbal behaviour/ communication in an interview situation, the components and functions of non verbal communication and the use of proxemics in an interview.

Closure: This is an important part of the process, witnesses should: get in touch should they recall any further information, be provided with a point of contact and be informed of what happens next. Interviewers have to deal with any concerns the witness may have and thank them for their help.

### **Outcome 2**

It is important to evaluate the information obtained from an interview to determine its impact and relevance to the enquiry, and examine and compare the information obtained during the interview with information that is already known. Information obtained should also be compared against the points to prove and key objectives set out in the plan prepared at the start of the interview process. It is important to assess the information generated from the interview to determine if it creates further lines of enquiry or intelligence for other, but unrelated, crimes

It is also crucial for the officer conducting the interview to evaluate their own performance against the plan they had prepared prior to the interview commencing. They should also assess their performance against and the quality of the information obtained.

## **International Vocational Unit Specification: support notes (cont)**

**Unit title:** Investigative Interviewing

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

This Unit can be delivered on a stand-alone basis or as part of a development programme for police staff seeking to work in an investigative role in a police or law enforcement environment. The main candidate group is likely to comprise of individuals who work in police or law enforcement organisations outwith Scotland.

This is a practical, skills based Unit and delivery methods should take account of this. Candidates should be given opportunities during the delivery to practise planning for a structured interview as well as the communication skills of questioning and listening which they will deploy during investigative interviews.

Part of the assessment will require candidates to prepare a plan for an investigate interview detailing the purpose and objectives of the interview and listing information which they wished to confirm or information they wished to acquire.

The assessment will also ask candidates to take part in a mock investigative interview based on a fictitious incident in controlled conditions using their previously prepared plan as a framework and demonstrating appropriate communication and questioning skills. Candidates should take notes during the interview which should be submitted as part of the assessment. They would thereafter be expected to carry out an evaluation of the interview which will cover the extent to which the plan was achieved and the strengths and weaknesses of the interview.

Briefs should be prepared for the candidates and for the witness or suspect. Deliverers may find it helpful to prepare a number of different briefs covering both witnesses and suspects. The briefs should be as realistic as possible and should take account of what is likely to happen during an actual investigative interview. For example, one party may be aware of information of which the other is unaware. One party may believe that the other does not know something which, in fact, they do know and so on.

Some thought should be given to the choice of individuals to act as suspects or witnesses. Ideally these should be individuals who are not known to the candidate but who are familiar with the way suspects and witnesses behave. They should also be able to act in a realistic fashion which takes into account the need to recognise that this is a simulated assessment event.

### **Open learning**

This Unit is particularly suitable for Open Learning as candidates should be able to acquire the relevant knowledge by working through the distance learning material which will be available for this Unit. Appropriate arrangements would need to be made for assessment and quality assurance.

### **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](http://www.sqa.org.uk)).

## **General information for candidates**

### **Unit title:** Investigative Interviewing

This Unit forms part of a series of International Vocational Awards developed by SQA and the Scottish Police College which focus on policing. This Unit centres on investigative interviewing and the role an interview plays in an investigation. It has been designed to offer personal developmental opportunities to police officers and staff who are involved in the investigation of criminal and non-criminal matters.

The Unit will provide you with detailed knowledge of the types of structured interview model which are available and with the skills necessary to research plan and prepare for and thereafter deliver an investigative interview based on a recognised interview model.

The Unit will equip you with the skills necessary to determine the purpose of the interview, identify the information you need to obtain and set key objectives for the interview. It will also equip you with the skills necessary to convert your research into a properly structured plan which sets out the framework for the interview and how the various objectives will be achieved.

You will develop the skills necessary to deliver a successful interview including the ability to develop rapport with a witness or suspect; use communication skills including questioning and active listening and the detail the impact that non-verbal behaviour can have on the process. You will be able to identify and use the four main types of question, open, closed, probing and non-productive that can be used in an interview.

In order to complete the Unit you must successfully undertake the assessment for the Unit. You will be asked to carry out a structured investigative interview with a witness or suspect. This interview will be simulated and you and the suspect/witness will be given a brief based on a fictitious but realistic incident. You will be expected to use a recognised structured interview model to plan and carry out the interview. Your plan will be submitted as part of your assessment. During the interview you will be expected to display suitable communication skills such as questioning and listening. You will be required to take notes during the interview and you will have to submit them as part of your assessment. You will also be expected to prepare a report evaluating the interview and which clearly states if the objectives set were achieved and which considers the strengths and weaknesses of the interview.