



Group Award Specification for:

Professional Development Award (PDA) in Career Information, Advice and Guidance: Advanced Practice at SCQF level 8

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1 Introduction

This document was previously known as the Arrangements Document. The purpose of this document is to:

- ◆ assist centres to implement, deliver and manage the qualification
- ◆ provide a guide for new staff involved in offering the qualification
- ◆ inform course managers teaching staff, assessors, candidates, employers and HEIs of the aims and purpose of the qualification
- ◆ provide details of the range of candidates the qualification is suitable for and progression opportunities

This PDA is the third qualification in a Suite developed for the Careers Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) sector, funded and supported by Skills development Scotland (SDS) and supported by the Scottish Government. The full Suite will comprise an HNC in CIAG Practice and three PDAs covering a range of specialist areas within CIAG. All Units contained in the PDAs will be embedded in the overall HNC structure.

2 Qualification structure

This Group Award comprises four mandatory HN Units, previously validated. It comprises 32 SCQF credit points 24 of which are at SCQF level 8. As such, it exceeds the minimum design criteria for PDAs of 16 credit points at the level of the qualification. A mapping of the Units to the Aims of the qualification and Core Skills development opportunities are available in Sections 4 and 5.1.

2.1 Structure

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
H55N	34	Career Information Advice and Guidance: Context and Principles for Delivery of Services	1	8	7
H6CF	35	Career Information, Advice and Guidance: Coaching Approach	1	8	8
H6CH	35	Career Information, Advice and Guidance: Career Management Skills Approach	1	8	8
H6X5	35	Career Information, Advice and Guidance: Research Skills	1	8	8

3 Aims of the qualification

The PDA in CIAG: Advanced Practice is designed to provide both career and academic progression opportunities by developing the candidate's skills and knowledge as an experienced practitioner in working with customers within a CIAG setting. The Units focus on providing advice using coaching and CMS approaches. It also includes a new Unit on research skills to provide preparation for higher study. The PDA is embedded in the HNC CIAG. The three PDAs are not intended to be sequential and cover different aspects of providing CIAG. Experienced practitioners may choose this PDA for the purposes of career progression and CPD.

3.1 General aims of the qualification

All PDAs have a range of broad aims that are generally applicable to equivalent qualifications:

- 1 Developing critical and evaluative thinking and ability to manage and absorb large amounts of information.
- 2 Developing problem-solving skills.
- 3 Developing as self-directed and self-reflective candidates.
- 4 Developing the ability to be flexible and to work co-operatively within a team structure.
- 5 Developing transferable skills such as study and research skills, presentation techniques, personal effectiveness.
- 6 Enabling progression within the SCQF including progression to HE.
- 7 Providing opportunities for career planning and enhancing employment prospects.
- 8 Developing an individual's Core Skills profiles.

3.2 Specific aims of the qualification

- 9 To develop and enhance understanding of the historical development of the current context and principles underpinning the provision of CIAG.
- 10 To develop industry-specific skills and knowledge in the field of CIAG.
- 11 To develop knowledge and specific skills in different approaches to providing CIAG, ie Coaching and Career Management Skills in order to be able to assess customer needs and provide effective support to customers.
- 12 Develop and enhance experience and working practices to the current accepted professional standards by carrying out relevant research in relation to providing CIAG to a range of customers.

The table in Section 5.1 identifies how the aims are met by the structure and content of the qualification.

4 Recommended entry to the qualification

Entry to this qualification is at the discretion of the centre. The following information on prior knowledge, skills, experience or qualifications that provide suitable preparation for this qualification is illustrative and for guidance only.

This qualification is designed primarily to develop new and enhance existing industry-specific skills and knowledge in the field of CIAG. The component Units are a blend of theory and practice to develop both understanding and competence. As such, candidates would benefit from having an understanding of the skills and knowledge utilised in the Advice and Guidance sector in general and CIAG in particular. As this is a level 8 qualification, a candidate's potential ability to achieve the award may be demonstrated by previous achievement of one or more of the following:

- ◆ Successful completion of PDA CIAG: Customer Support and/or PDA CIAG Customer Engagement
- ◆ Occupationally relevant skills and experience developed in a paid or voluntary capacity
- ◆ SVQ level 3 in a related area, eg SVQ Advice and Guidance
- ◆ SVQ level 2 in Advice and Guidance Support
- ◆ PDA Certificate Advice and Guidance: Design and Prepare Group Sessions
- ◆ PDA Certificate Advice and Guidance: Deliver Group Sessions
- ◆ PDA Certificate Advice and Guidance: Developing Client Contact
- ◆ PDA Certificate Advice and Guidance: Managing Information
- ◆ PDA Certificate Advice and Guidance: Professional Practice
- ◆ PDA Certificate: Advice and Guidance: Providing Inclusive Support to Young People Facing Transition
- ◆ PDA Certificate Advice and Guidance: Supporting Clients Through the Medium of Telecommunications
- ◆ PDA Certificate Advice and Guidance: Working Within a Network to Support Clients
- ◆ PDA Certificate Advice and Guidance: In-depth Advice and Guidance Interviewing
- ◆ PDA Certificate Advice and Guidance: Providing Information and Support to Clients
- ◆ PDA Certificate: Money Advice and Guidance
- ◆ Front Line Guidance (Customised Award)
- ◆ Highers: a minimum of two at C or above
- ◆ HNC/HND
- ◆ NQ Units/SGAs: at SCQF level 6 in appropriate subject area
- ◆ Qualifications from another Awarding Body/Professional Body equivalent to any of the above

4.1 Core Skills entry profile

The Core Skill entry profile provides a summary of the associated assessment activities that exemplify why a particular level has been recommended for this qualification. The information should be used to identify if additional learning support needs to be put in place for candidates whose Core Skills profile is below the recommended entry level or whether candidates should be encouraged to do an alternative level or learning programme.

Whilst entry to the award is ultimately at the discretion of individual centres, it is anticipated that candidates should have attained Core Skills at the following SCQF level prior to undertaking the award.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	5	Candidates will require effective communication skills as they will be dealing with members of the public and internal and external colleagues.
Numeracy	5	Candidates will require good numeracy skills to complete the qualification.
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	5	Candidates will require a range of IT skills to undertake assignments and undertake research related to the provision of CIAG.
Problem Solving	5	Candidates will require problem solving skills to successfully adapt to overcome barriers and address changing circumstances and different customer requirements. All Units develop this skill.
Working with Others	5	Candidates will require to work effectively with others particularly within the Units, CIAG: Coaching Approach and CIAG: Career Management Skills Approach.

4.2 Core Skills Exit Profile

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	6	Effective communication is at the heart of CIAG. Successful completion of the Units will consolidate and develop pre-existing skills.
Numeracy	5	Candidates will require good numeracy skills to complete the qualification. However, opportunities to progress within this Core Skill may be limited in the candidate's day-to-day role.
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	6	Candidates may utilise a range of IT skills to research information and present assignments and to support customers to access and use CIAG effectively.
Problem Solving	6	Candidates will apply creativity and problem solving skills to overcome barriers and adapt to changing circumstances and customer requirements. These skills will be developed by all Units in the PDA.
Working with Others	6	Working with Others is essential to being an effective practitioner. Candidates will work with a range of internal and external colleagues as well as members of the public so will be able to demonstrate skills development through the Units.

5 Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs

This qualification was designed to meet a specific industry need for the development of knowledge, skills and competence and to meet CPD requirements for the CIAG workforce and what follows are details on how that purpose has been met through mapping of the Units to the aims of the qualification. Through meeting the aims, additional value has been achieved by linking the Unit standards with those defined in National Occupational Standards and/or trade/professional body requirements. In addition, significant opportunities exist for candidates to develop and enhance the more generic, Core, skills throughout this qualification.

5.1 Mapping of qualification aims to Units

Code	Unit title	Aims										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
H55N 34	CIAG: Context and Principles for Delivery of Services	X		X		X	X	X	X	X		X
H6CF 35	Career Information, Advice and Guidance: Coaching Approach	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
H6CH 35	Career Information, Advice and Guidance: Career Management Skills Approach	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
H6X5 35	Career Information, Advice and Guidance: Research Skills	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

5.2 Mapping of National Occupational Standards (NOS) and/or trade body standards

The National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Career Information Advice and Guidance developed by Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) in 2010 informed the development of the component Units of this award. There is no discrete SVQ in CIAG although there are long-established SVQs in Advice and Guidance which contain NOS relevant to CIAG.

The field in Scotland welcomed the NOS but subsequent consultation with the sector did not support the development of an SVQ structure. This was picked up in the Strategy Document *A Qualifications And Continuous Professional Development Framework For The Career Development Workforce In Scotland* published in 2013

The Career Development National Occupational Standards (NOS) intend to define the competencies required to carry out the functions delivered by the career development workforce and were developed and reviewed against the functional map for Career Guidance (2010).

The NOS are intended as a high level strategic overview of the competencies required to fulfil the tasks required in the career development sector. The NOS are not designed to describe specific roles. Role definitions are normally based on a number of the functions, as defined within the functional map, and therefore role definitions can relate to a number of standards. There is no expectation that a job role would encompass all the performance requirements across every standard, rather that specific jobs will utilise the appropriate standards.

The standards do not equate directly to qualifications, but are used to derive relevant competency-based qualifications for the career development sector.

Each comprises a number of Performance Criteria which an individual should demonstrate to be competent in the sector. Each standard also has underpinning knowledge and understanding.

5.2.1 Mapping of NOS to Units

Code	Unit title	SSC code	NOS
H55N 34	CIAG: Context and Principles for Delivery of Services	CrD01 CrD03	Build and apply understanding of theory and effective practice in career development Develop and apply ethical practice in your career development role
H6CF 35	CIAG: Coaching Skills	CrD05 CrD07 CrD04 CrD09	Work with individuals to explore and identify their needs and aspirations Deliver individual and group development through career-related learning Build and maintain relationships with individuals to ensure a client-centred approach Provide on-going support to help individuals achieve their goals and development objectives
H6CH 35	CIAG: Career Management Skills Approach	CrD08 CrD02 CrD01 CrD10 CrD06	Enable individuals to use and apply information for career Development Reflect on, develop and maintain own skills and practice in <i>career advice and guidance</i> Build and apply understanding of theory and effective practice in career development Help individuals evaluate their progress and achievement and plan for the future Enable individuals to set realistic goals and career development objectives
H6X5 35	CIAG: Research Skills	CrD02 CrD01 CrD16	Reflect on, develop and maintain own skills and practice in <i>career advice and guidance</i> Build and apply understanding of theory and effective practice in career development Plan and undertake research on behalf of the service

5.3 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualification

The following Core Skills are signposted, which means candidates will develop aspects of Core Skills through teaching and learning approaches.

Unit code	Unit title	Communication		Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
		Written	Oral	Using Number	Using Graphical Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively with Others	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
H55N 34	CIAG: Context and Principles for Delivery of Services	X				X	X	X		X		
H6CF 35	CIAG: Coaching Approach	X	X	X		X	X	E	E	E	X	X
H6CH 35	CIAG: Career Management Skills	X	X	X	X	X	X	E	E	E	X	X
H6X5 35	CIAG: Research Skills	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Achievement of the Core Skill of Problem Solving is embedded within the following Units; H6CF 35 CIAG: Coaching Approach and H6CH 35 CIAG: Career Management Skills.

5.4 Assessment Strategy for the qualification

Each of the component Units of this PDA is a stand-alone Unit with discrete Evidence Requirements and Assessment Guidelines. The following is designed to provide guidance for delivering Centres to develop appropriate assessments to meet the Evidence Requirements. It is NOT prescriptive and centres retain the flexibility to design assessments to meet their needs.

SQA encourages centres to take a holistic view of assessment wherever practicable, both within and across Units. This has the benefit of streamlining the assessment process and can result in a lessening of the assessment burden on candidates. Where possible, a single piece of work may contribute to meeting several parts of the Evidence Requirements.

Unit	Assessment		
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3
CIAG: Context and Principles for Delivery of Services	<p>An extended response in an appropriate format to cover all Evidence Requirements.</p> <p>Outcome1 and Outcome 2 can be assessed holistically.</p>	<p>An extended response in an appropriate format to cover all Evidence Requirements.</p> <p>Outcome1 and Outcome 2 can be assessed holistically.</p>	<p>An investigative report based on either the candidate's own workplace, or where appropriate using case studies, which covers the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ An explanation of two different models of organisational service delivery. ◆ An explanation of why partnership working is important to all models of CIAG service delivery. ◆ An investigation of how one organisation ensures that their service delivery embeds the CIAG ethics, principles and values identified in Outcomes 1 and 2.

Unit	Assessment		
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3
CIAG: Coaching Approach	<p>A series of restricted response questions or an extended response in an appropriate format to cover all Evidence Requirements. Closed-book.</p>	<p>Assessor observation of a minimum of one CIAG interview supported by an observation checklist and a record of interview Outcomes. Professional discussion or additional questioning may be useful to clarify the candidate's underpinning knowledge from the Outcome particularly those elements not evidenced in the observed session.</p>	<p>A reflective account including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ a review of their own performance. ◆ the effectiveness of the interview based on feedback from a variety of sources. ◆ identification of areas for own future improvement. ◆ they should also explain how inclusiveness and equality was ensured during the interviews. <p>Outcome 3</p> <p>The use of professional discussion or additional questioning may be useful to clarify the candidate's underpinning knowledge from the Outcome particularly those elements not evidenced in the observed session. The confidentiality of the customers must be maintained during any workplace assessments.</p>

Unit	Assessment		
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3
CIAG: Career Management Skills	<p>A series of restricted response questions or one extended response in an appropriate format to cover all Evidence Requirements. It is recommended that questions are structured to establish the candidate's range of knowledge and to allow them to expand upon the three specific areas which are most important to them in their current role. Closed-book.</p>	<p>Assessor observation of a minimum of one candidate interaction with a customer supporting them to access and use career-related information. The observation should be supported by an observation checklist, a record of the Outcomes of the support activity and resource materials used. Candidates should use the observation checklist to record their interaction with another customer or a further different support activity with the same customer. Candidates could use the observation checklists to help form their review in Outcome 3. The use of professional discussion or additional questioning may be used to clarify the candidate's underpinning knowledge from the Outcome particularly those not evidenced in the observed session. The use of observation and questioning will also authenticate the work of the candidate.</p>	<p>A reflective account including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ a review of their own performance ◆ the effectiveness of the support given to the customer based on feedback from a variety of sources ◆ identification of areas for own future improvement <p>They should also explain how equality and inclusiveness were promoted during the support activities.</p> <p>The use of professional discussion or additional questioning may be useful to clarify the candidate's underpinning knowledge from the Outcome particularly those elements not evidenced in the observed session. The confidentiality of the customers must be maintained during any workplace assessments.</p>

Unit	Assessment		
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3
CIAG: Research Skills	<p>A report which shows they can evaluate their own practices and performance, taking account of relevant factors.</p> <p>They should use a range of valid and reliable evidence to assess own practices, which includes an assessment of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the effects of own behaviour and values on others ◆ relevant external factors ◆ evaluate own performance against targets and goals ◆ use evidence to reflect on own behaviour and performance ◆ involve others in the interpretation of evidence ◆ accept criticism in a positive manner and assess its validity and importance ◆ revise goals and targets in the light of evidence reviewed. 	<p>An individual action plan and a record and evidence of achievement.</p> <p>The action plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ clear statement of the goals and targets ◆ the specific knowledge and skills that will be needed to get there ◆ the actions the candidate will have to take to acquire the required knowledge and skills ◆ the resources and support required for the candidate in order to achieve his/her goal ◆ the criteria by which the candidate will determine whether or not he/she is still 'on course' ◆ intermediate stages with target dates for every step in the plan, as well as dates for completion and/or dates for review 	<p>A reflective account which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ how the action plan is reviewed regularly ◆ re-assessment of objectives taking account of own personal experience and feedback from appropriate people ◆ goals and targets revised to ensure continued self-development to meet objectives. ◆ consideration of how actions taken have met individual objectives and improved practice. <p>The use of professional discussion or additional questioning may be useful to clarify the candidate's underpinning knowledge from the Outcome particularly those elements not evidenced in the observed session. The confidentiality of the customers must be maintained during any workplace assessments.</p>

Unit	Assessment		
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3
		Record: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ what has been done and why ◆ what has been learned from each activity ◆ how skills and knowledge developed will be used ◆ further activity required 	Open-book

6 Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment

6.1 Modes of delivery

This qualification may be delivered by a range of SQA Approved Centres, eg FE Colleges, Workplace-based or Training Providers.

As such, delivery will vary depending on the presenting centre. This may take the following forms:

- ◆ part-time/full-time/evening-twilight class
- ◆ face-to-face, classroom-based learning
- ◆ blended learning, ie a blend of classroom and distance/online learning
- ◆ workplace/education-training provider partnership working

6.2 Sequencing/integration of Units

It is recommended that the Unit, *CIAG: Context and Principles for Delivery of Services* be delivered first as this underpins the practice which will be developed in the subsequent Units. Sequencing of the specialist Units may be influenced by the candidates work schedule.

The PDA has been designed to allow Outcome 3 of the specialist Units *CIAG: Group Work and CIAG: Employability* to be assessed holistically with Unit *Learning and Development: Evaluating Own Practice and Planning for Self Development*.

Possible delivery based on a 4-block system (2 blocks per semester), although a 3-block system could also be appropriate. Both allow for some essential underpinning knowledge and introduction of practical skills to be front-loaded so that development of the skill and practical hours can occur once initial competence has been gained.

Below is an indication of a 4-block delivery schedule:

Unit	2 Semester/4 blocks			
	1	2	3	4
CIAG: Context and Principles for Delivery of Services	X	X		
CIAG: Coaching Approach	X	X		
CIAG: Career Management Skills Approach		X	X	
CAIG: Research Skills	X	X	X	X

6.3 Recognition of Prior Learning

SQA recognises that candidates gain knowledge and skills acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts.

In some instances, a full Group Award may be achieved through the recognition of prior learning. However, it is unlikely that a candidate would have the appropriate prior learning and experience to meet all the requirements of a full Group Award.

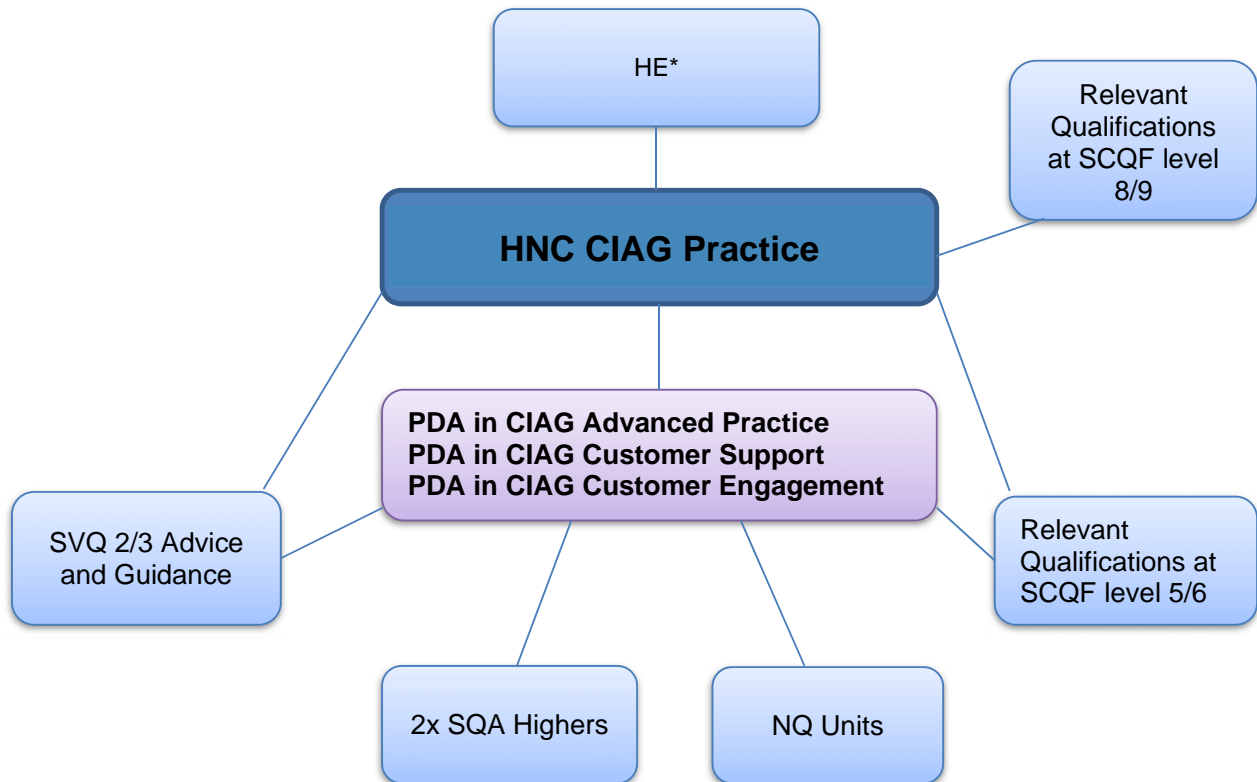
The recognition of prior learning may **not** be used as a method of assessing in the following types of Units and assessments:

- ◆ HN Graded Units
- ◆ Course and/or external assessments
- ◆ Other integrative assessment Units (which may or not be graded)
- ◆ Certain types of assessment instruments where the standard may be compromised by not using the same assessment method outlined in the Unit
- ◆ Where there is an existing requirement for a licence to practice
- ◆ Where there are specific health and safety requirements
- ◆ Where there are regulatory, professional or other statutory requirements
- ◆ Where otherwise specified in an Assessment Strategy

More information and guidance on the *Recognition of Prior Learning* (RPL) may be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk.

6.4 Articulation and/or progression

Examples of possible progression routes are given in the following diagram.



6.5 Professional recognition

There is no current professional recognition for this qualification.

6.6 Opportunities for e-assessment

Although there are not currently specific materials available, some of the Units may lend themselves to the use of e-portfolios.

6.7 Support materials

Assessment Support Packs will be available to download from the secure section of the SQA website.

6.8 Resource requirements

Specific guidance on resources is given in each Unit specification.

Candidates should have access to a wide variety of current texts, on-line resources and relevant publications to support the level of independent research and underpinning knowledge required.

7 General information for centres

Equality and inclusion

The Unit specifications making up this Group Award have been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of candidates will be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used within this/these qualification(s) should be internally verified, using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

External verification will be carried out by SQA to ensure that internal assessment is within the national guidelines for these qualifications.

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in *SQA's Guide to Assessment* (www.sqa.org.uk/GuideToAssessment).

8 Glossary of terms

Career Development: The improvement of the career resilience and career management skills of individuals. It does this by providing information, advice and guidance about career and learning options and developing individuals' skills, learning, aspirations and motivation to lifelong learning. This could take place in the workplace, community or in career development focused organisations, learning organisations or other places where individuals are encouraged to develop their career or educational prospects.

Career-related learning: Any learning within the context of career development. Learning could be related to self-awareness, aspiration raising, opportunity awareness, motivation, confidence-building, empowerment, networking, transition and change management, decision making and avoidance, action-planning, option-evaluation, finding out about and accessing opportunities. It may also be related to career guidance, vocational behaviour, career choice or career planning.

Customer-Centred: Non-directive method of putting the customer at the centre of the process so they are empowered to make decisions about and drive their own development.

Principles and Values: The principles and values of those who work within career development are identified as integral to the way in which practitioners deliver career development and support opportunities to individuals and groups. Professional and membership bodies supporting the career guidance sector have developed various codes of practice and codes of ethics which capture this approach, and it is expected that the majority of the career development workforce will be aware of and working towards these existing codes.

Target group: These standards are for anybody who supports or delivers career development opportunities and activities, either as a part of, or as the majority of their role, within the public, private or voluntary sector. They apply at service, organisation, departmental or individual levels.

Relevant occupations: Relevant occupations as defined by the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes used across the UK. These do not reflect fully the range of occupations evident in the career development workforce, which encompasses work-based and education related services, private organisations, voluntary, public sector and community based-services

Embedded Core Skills: is where the assessment evidence for the Unit also includes full evidence for complete Core Skill or Core Skill components. A candidate successfully completing the Unit will be automatically certificated for the Core Skill. (This depends on the Unit having been successfully audited and validated for Core Skills certification.)

Finish date: The end of a Group Award's lapsing period is known as the finish date. After the finish date, the Group Award will no longer be live and the following applies:

- ◆ candidates may not be entered for the Group Award
- ◆ the Group Award will continue to exist only as an archive record on the Awards Processing System (APS)

Lapsing date: When a Group Award is entered into its lapsing period, the following will apply:

- ◆ the Group Award will be deleted from the relevant catalogue
- ◆ the Group Award specification will remain until the qualification reaches its finish date at which point it will be removed from SQA's website and archived
- ◆ no new centres may be approved to offer the Group Award
- ◆ centres should only enter candidates whom they expect to complete the Group Award during the defined lapsing period

SQA credit value: The credit value allocated to a Unit gives an indication of the contribution the Unit makes to an SQA Group Award. An SQA credit value of 1 given to an SQA Unit represents approximately 40 hours of programmed learning, teaching and assessment.

SCQF: The Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) provides the national common framework for describing all relevant programmes of learning and qualifications in Scotland. SCQF terminology is used throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF visit the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk.

SCQF credit points: SCQF credit points provide a means of describing and comparing the amount of learning that is required to complete a qualification at a given level of the Framework. One National Unit credit is equivalent to 6 SCQF credit points. One National Unit credit at Advanced Higher and one Higher National Unit credit (irrespective of level) is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points.

SCQF levels: The level a qualification is assigned within the framework is an indication of how hard it is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HNCs and HNDs are available at SCQF levels 7 and 8 respectively. Higher National Units will normally be at levels 6–9 and Graded Units will be at level 7 and 8. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2–6 and will normally be made up of National Units which are available from SCQF levels 2–7.

Subject Unit: Subject Units contain vocational/subject content and are designed to test a specific set of knowledge and skills.

Signposted Core Skills: refers to opportunities to develop Core Skills arise in learning and teaching but are not automatically certificated.

History of changes

It is anticipated that changes will take place during the life of the qualification and this section will record these changes. This document is the latest version and incorporates the changes summarised below. Centres are advised to check SQA's APS Navigator to confirm they are using the up to date qualification structure.

NOTE: Where a Unit is revised by another Unit:

- ◆ No new centres may be approved to offer the Unit which has been revised.
- ◆ Centres should only enter candidates for the Unit which has been revised where they are expected to complete the Unit before its finish date.

Version Number	Description	Date
02	Update to Core Skills to reflect CS panel decisions.	18/05/17

Acknowledgement

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that the CIAG sector in Scotland made in the development of this qualification.

9 General information for candidates

This section will help you decide whether this is the qualification for you by explaining what the qualification is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the qualification and opportunities for further learning and employment.

Entry to this qualification is at the discretion of the presenting centre. To be accepted onto the course, you will have to show that you have the ability to achieve the qualification. This could be demonstrated for example by:

- ◆ Previous occupational experience/knowledge of the Advice and Guidance sector in a paid or voluntary capacity
- ◆ PDAs in CIAG: Customer Support and CIAG: Customer Engagement at SCQF level 7
- ◆ SVQ/NVQ in Advice and Guidance Support at level 2
- ◆ SVQ/NVQ in Advice and Guidance at level 3
- ◆ PDA in Front Line Guidance
- ◆ PDA Certificate in Customer Contact
- ◆ HNC/HND
- ◆ a minimum of two certificated SQA Units at SCQF level 6

This PDA is designed to develop and enhance higher level skills for more experienced practitioners in the career advice and guidance sector. It provides professional progression from the PDAs at SCQF level 7 and will help prepare you for further study should you wish to progress academically to degree level study.

The Group Award has four mandatory Units, three at SCQF level 8 and one at SCQF level 7. Although each Unit can be taken on its own without completing the Group Award, some Units do require that you have the knowledge of previous Units in order to complete them. This is clearly outlined in each Unit specification.

The four Units are:

- ◆ *CIAG: Context and Principles for Delivery of Services*
- ◆ *CIAG: Coaching Approach*
- ◆ *CIAG: Career Management Skills Approach*
- ◆ *CIAG: Research Skills*

Each Unit specification gives detailed information on the purpose of the Unit and details the activities which will enable you to combine the essential knowledge and practical skills to be achieved on completion of the Units. The type of assessments you will experience are varied and include, eg reflective accounts, restricted response questions, investigative reports and assessor observation.

On completion, if you wish continue your studies to gain greater knowledge and skill in Careers Information, Advice and Guidance, you may have the opportunity to progress to other qualifications, eg:

- ◆ HNC CIAG Practice
- ◆ SVQ Advice and Guidance at level 4
- ◆ HND or Degree level study in related field