

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Health Care: Practice Experience

Unit code: F0KA 34

Unit purpose: The Unit has been designed to meet the generic range of skills required of candidates beginning their development as professional care practitioners in the wide range of health care professions. It prepares them for this role by exposing them to the practice of experienced practitioners and allows them to practice the skills in a directly supervised environment. It is recognised that many of the candidates will take up nurse education with a view to registering as a nurse. The Unit has been designed to meet the Nursing and Midwifery Council defined Outcomes for entry to the branch programmes of pre-registration nurse education. This will assist Higher Education Institutions that offer programmes leading to eligibility to register as a nurse in making decisions about accrediting applicants' prior learning.

On completion of the Unit candidates should be able to:

- 1 Demonstrate an awareness of the principles of professional and ethical practice when caring for individual patient/clients.
- 2 Develop and maintain professional caring relationships with individual patient/clients.
- 3 Demonstrate skills in the delivery of care through participation in holistic care provision to meet the needs of individual patient/clients.
- 4 Participate in inter-professional teamwork for the purposes of integrative care provision.

Credit points and level: 4 HN Credits at SCQF level 7: (32 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 6 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 this candidates should preferably have undertaken some work experience, paid or voluntary, in a health care setting.

General information for centres (cont)

Core Skills: The achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skill — Working with Others at Intermediate 2 (SCQF level 5).

There are also further opportunities to develop the Core Skills of the following Units in this Unit:

Communication at SCQF level 6

Problem Solving at SCQF level 6

Information Technology 1 at SCQF level 5

Numeracy at SCQF level 5

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 included in the framework of the HNC Health Care.

Ideally, the teaching of this Unit should be fully integrated with Units: Principles of Health Care Practice, Positive Health Care for Individuals and Calculations and Practical Techniques in Health Care to allow the candidate to integrate their theoretical knowledge with practice.

Assessment: A portfolio containing best available evidence of the candidate's satisfactory achievement of all the Unit Outcomes could be used to assess this Unit. Underpinning knowledge and understanding can be evidence in the portfolio by responses to oral questioning by a registered practitioner and by the candidate's reflective accounts. The portfolio can provide a guide to the questions the practitioner may wish to ask. The reflective accounts can provide opportunity for the candidate to demonstrate their understanding of the links between theory, legislation, and codes of conduct and their practice. Assessment of the Outcomes is an ongoing process that can occur when the opportunity arises at the work experience placement. However it is recommended that there is a formal meeting of the candidate, the lecturer and the placement supervisor/mentor as necessary to review the candidate's progress. As the Core Skill Working with Others is embedded in this Unit, it is strongly recommended that the assessment guidelines are followed. Where a different assessment model is to be used prior moderation of the assessment instrument(s) is recommended to ensure that the Core Skill component is still covered.

For candidates wishing to access a Branch Programme of a Diploma/Nursing Degree, 760 hours of clinical practice should also be achieved and the assessment guidance given later in this Unit specification must be followed.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Health Care: Practice Experience

Unit code: F0KA 34

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

Demonstrate an awareness of the principles of professional and ethical practice when caring for individual patient/clients

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ The implications of professional regulation for nursing practice
- ◆ The relevant professional body's Codes of Professional Conduct
- ◆ The application of ethical principles to nursing practice
- ◆ Legislation relevant to nursing practice
- ◆ Effective working relationships and professional attributes

Evidence Requirements

Each candidate will need to evidence that they have developed an understanding of ethics and professional health care practice and are able to demonstrate these during their work experience. The candidate is required to keep reflective accounts as part of their portfolio in which they record examples of when they have demonstrated the application of the knowledge, understanding and skills listed above. These self-assessments are based on personal evaluation of practice recorded in the candidate's placement portfolio. Candidates are expected to demonstrate the skills under direct supervision. These skills and qualities must be demonstrated in the work setting showing that the candidate can:

Discuss in an informed manner the implications of professional regulation for nursing practice through:

- ◆ demonstrating a basic knowledge of professional regulation and self regulation
- ◆ recognising and acknowledge limitations of own abilities
- ◆ recognising situations that require referral on to a registered practitioner.

Demonstrate an awareness of the relevant Code of Professional Conduct standards for conduct, performance and ethics through:

- ◆ committing to the principle that the primary purpose of the professional health care practitioner is to protect and serve society
- ◆ accepting responsibility for one's own actions

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Health Care: Practice Experience

Demonstrate an awareness of, and apply ethical principles to nursing practice through:

- ◆ demonstrating respect for patient/client confidentiality
- ◆ identifying ethical issues in day-to-day practice

Demonstrate awareness of legislation relevant to nursing practice through:

- ◆ identifying key issues in relevant legislation relating to mental health, disability, children, and data protection
- ◆ demonstrating behaviours that conform with the Health and Safety legislation, including manual handling

Demonstrate effective working relationships and professional attributes through:

- ◆ a willingness to accept responsibility for their actions
- ◆ punctuality
- ◆ respect of colleagues
- ◆ truthfulness
- ◆ reliability
- ◆ enthusiasm for the role
- ◆ a willingness to seek supervised practical experience to aid professional development

Assessment guidelines

The assessment of this Outcome can be combined with Outcomes 2, 3 and 4 as a single portfolio assessment of the Unit, full details of which are given below under Outcome 4.

Outcome 2

Develop and maintain professional caring relationships with individual patient/clients

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ The methods of, barriers to, and boundaries of effective communication and interpersonal skills in the professional caring relationship
- ◆ Sensitivity in interactions with individual patient/clients
- ◆ Sensitivity in the provision of information and support to individual patient/clients
- ◆ Promoting equity in patient/client care by contributing to care in a fair and anti-discriminatory way

Evidence Requirements

Each candidate will need to evidence that they have the skills and qualities necessary to form and maintain a professional caring relationship with the individual patient/clients. The demonstration of the skills in the promotion of equality and anti-discriminatory practice when caring for the diverse range of patients/clients is a central theme to this relationship. These skills and qualities must be demonstrated in the work setting showing that the candidate can:

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Health Care: Practice Experience

Understand methods of, barriers to, and boundaries of effective communication and interpersonal relationships through:

- ◆ recognising the effect of one's own values on interactions with individual patient/clients and their carers, families and friends
- ◆ utilising appropriate communications skills with individual patient/clients
- ◆ acknowledging the boundaries of a professional care relationship

Demonstrate sensitivity in interaction with and provision of information and support to individual patient/clients by:

- ◆ contributing to measures to ensure the privacy and dignity of the individual patient/client
- ◆ understanding the importance of patient/client empowerment and the need for the care worker to operate as an advocate for the individual patient/client in certain situations
- ◆ reflecting on, and evaluating practice in developing and maintaining professional care relationships with individual patient/clients

Demonstrate the importance of promoting equity in individual patient/client care by contributing to care in a fair and anti-discriminatory way through:

- ◆ demonstrating fairness and sensitivity when responding to individual / patient / client / groups from diverse circumstances
- ◆ recognising the needs of individual patient/clients whose lives are affected by disability, however manifest

Assessment guidelines

The candidate producing a report as part of their portfolio of practice on their role in promoting patient/client rights and independence will demonstrate the candidate's knowledge and understanding of empowerment and advocacy. The report must be evidence based, citing examples from practice.

The assessment of this Outcome is combined with Outcomes 1, 3 and 4 as a single portfolio assessment of the Unit, details of which are given below under Outcome 4.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Health Care: Practice Experience

Outcome 3

Demonstrate skills in the delivery of care through participation in holistic care provision to meet the needs of individual patient/clients

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Preparation of documentation that systematically assesses the individual patient/client's physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs
- ◆ Care planning including, involving the individual patient/client and, where possible, their carers
- ◆ Help individual patient/clients to make informed decisions during the planning of care
- ◆ Identify opportunities for health promotion and make best use of these either directly or through referral to other professionals or agencies
- ◆ How to implement a programme of care that has been designed and supervised by a registered practitioner
- ◆ Safe and effective practice
- ◆ Essential care skills which meet the individual patient/client's needs
- ◆ Evaluation of the appropriateness of the care provided
- ◆ Situations where agreed plans of care no longer appear appropriate and refer these to the appropriate accountable practitioner

Evidence Requirements

The candidate must demonstrate the skills, knowledge and understanding required of the care planning process and, under the supervision of a registered practitioner, participate in each of the areas detailed above. This will be achieved through:

Assessment guidelines

Contribute to the development and documentation of health care assessment by participating in comprehensive and systematic health care assessment of the physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs of individual patient/clients.

- ◆ be aware of assessment strategies to guide collection of data for assessing patients/clients and use assessment tools under guidance
- ◆ discuss the prioritisation of care needs
- ◆ be aware of the need to re-assess individual patient/client as necessary
- ◆ identify opportunities for health promotion and discuss these with the individual patient/client

Planning

Contribute to the planning of health care, involving individual patient/clients and where possible their carers, demonstrating an understanding of helping individual patient/clients to make informed decisions.

- ◆ identify care needs based on the assessment of an individual patient/client
- ◆ participate in the negotiation and agreement of the care plan with the individual patient/client and significant others, under the supervision of a registered practitioner
- ◆ inform individual patient/clients about intended actions respecting their right to participate in decision about their care

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Health Care: Practice Experience

Implementation:

The candidate must demonstrate that they are able to contribute to the implementation of a programme of health care and health promotion, where appropriate, that has been designed by a registered practitioner. The candidate's contribution must be consistent with the plan, within the limits of their abilities and supervised by the registered practitioner.

The candidate must also demonstrate evidence of a developing knowledge base which underpins safe and effective care practice. To do this the candidate must access and discuss research in nursing, health promotion and related fields and show how this is applied to the planned care interventions.

The candidate must also demonstrate a range of essential care skills, under the supervision of a registered practitioner, to meet individuals' needs, which include:

- ◆ maintaining dignity
- ◆ privacy and confidentiality
- ◆ effective communication and observational skills, including listening
- ◆ taking physiological measurements
- ◆ safety and health, including moving and handling and infection control; essential first aid and emergency procedures
- ◆ administration of medicines
- ◆ emotional, physical and personal care including meeting the need for comfort, nutrition and personal hygiene

Evaluation:

The candidate must contribute to the evaluation of the appropriateness of care delivered by:

- ◆ demonstrating an awareness of the need to regularly assess a individual patient/client's response to health care intervention
- ◆ providing for a supervising registered practitioner, evaluative commentary and information on the care provided based on personal observations and actions
- ◆ contributing to the documentation of the Outcomes of the care interventions

Referral on:

The candidate must recognise situations in which agreed plans of care no longer appear appropriate and refer these to an appropriate accountable practitioner by:

- ◆ demonstrate the ability to discuss and accept care decisions
- ◆ accurately record observations made and communicate these to the relevant members of the health and social care teams

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Health Care: Practice Experience

The candidate must participate in the discussion of the individual care plan and be actively involved in assessment, its planning, implementation, evaluation and referral on of the individual patient/client where necessary. To achieve this end the candidate will be allocated a small number of patients/clients for whom he/she will have a significant role in helping to meet their health care needs. The candidate must also identify opportunities for health promotion when caring for these individual patient/clients and where appropriate integrate these in to the individual care plans. The evidence will be presented in their portfolio as anonymised reflective accounts of their active involvement in assessment of needs, negotiating and agreeing a care plan, meeting the health needs, reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of the health care and referral on to other practitioners. Through the portfolio the candidate must demonstrate evidence of a developing knowledge base that underpins safe health care practice. This will require the candidate to review and utilise best available evidence including appropriate research that underpins the health care practice and interventions in which they have been involved. Through the reflective accounts the candidate will:

- ◆ recognise and acknowledge the limitations of their current abilities
- ◆ demonstrate an understanding of when to defer to the registered practitioner
- ◆ demonstrate an ability to accept responsibility for their own actions and decisions
- ◆ identify examples of the use of evidence in planning care interventions
- ◆ reflect on their own practice and seek advice and support from a registered practitioner where necessary

Assessment guidelines

The assessment of this Outcome can be combined with Outcomes 1, 2 and 4 as a single portfolio assessment of the Unit, full details of which are given below under Outcome 4.

Outcome 4

Participate in inter-professional teamwork for the purposes of integrative care provision

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Health and safety principles and policies
- ◆ Recognising and reporting on situations which are potentially unsafe for individual patient/clients, self and others
- ◆ The skills and qualities of an effective team member
- ◆ The importance of effective oral and written communication within the team context
- ◆ Calculating, recording, interpreting and reporting on numerical data
- ◆ The roles of the members of the care team
- ◆ The role of the care team in maintaining and enhancing integrated care
- ◆ Recording, entering, retrieving and organising data essential to care delivery

Evidence Requirements

The candidate will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the workplace's health and safety principles and policies and be able to recognise and report situations that are potentially unsafe.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Health Care: Practice Experience

The candidate must also demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of their current role within the care team and its relationship to the roles of the other members within the context of the wider care plan. This will be demonstrated through evidence of their effective teamwork, their understanding of when to refer to a registered practitioner and knowledge of the roles of other care team members. The candidate must also demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly and accurately with the other members of the care team. This skill must be demonstrated both through spoken communication, as part of case discussion, and as written reports. The candidate must be able to calculate, record, understand and report on numerical data.

The evidence should accurately record the candidate's ability to:

- ◆ understand and act on health and safety principles, policies and procedures
- ◆ recognise and report on potential unsafe situations
- ◆ read and understand plans of care
- ◆ record individual patient/client information as narrative, numerical data and charts
- ◆ retrieve and store data in a variety of sources, including IT systems
- ◆ use effective verbal communication and recognise barriers to communication
- ◆ describe a situation where a multi-professional approach was used to help meet the individual patient/client's needs

Assessment guidelines

The assessment of this Outcome can be combined with Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 as a single portfolio assessment of the Unit details of which are given below.

All the Outcomes for this Unit can be assessed holistically through the completion of a portfolio of practice and the candidate's level of ability verified by a registered practitioner at the workplace. At this stage in the candidate's development practice is judged as sufficient to pass the Outcome when the skills are demonstrated under direct supervision. There is no requirement for the candidate to work independently.

The candidate is required to evaluate his/her knowledge, understanding and ability to perform the skills that are listed for each Outcome. Candidate should record their evaluation of practice in their portfolio. This allows the candidate to reflect on their practice and plan for their own personal development.

The candidate is required to demonstrate responsibility for his or her own learning throughout the portfolio. This is important as part of their own personal and professional development.

Their portfolio should contain reflective accounts where the candidate records evidence of their self-evaluation and the actions they have taken in setting their own learning goals and seeking the supervision of a registered practitioner to develop safe health care practice. The candidate will need to have had significant opportunities to observe an experienced practitioner and then practice the skills detailed under each Outcome prior to assessment. The candidate is judged to have achieved the Outcomes when they are able to demonstrate the skill while participating in providing care with others under the direct supervision of a registered practitioner. Achievement of the level of skill necessary to pass all four Outcomes is recorded in the placement portfolio. Candidates should be encouraged to evaluate their own performance prior to being assessed by the registered practitioner and record the details in their reflective accounts.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Health Care: Practice Experience

Where a candidate is following a route towards entry with advanced standing to a Nursing Diploma/Degree the presenting centre should share an assessment tool with the receiving Higher Education Institution (HEI). Where this is not the case or where guidance within the HEI assessment tool is unclear on the number of reflective accounts it is recommended that a minimum of 10 will be required to generate sufficient evidence for the Unit Outcomes. They should be included within the candidate's portfolio. These are written up under open-book conditions with each account being between 500-750 words. Each reflective account should be evidence based using a standard referencing system eg Harvard Referencing System.

Candidates wishing to access a Branch Programme of a Nursing Degree

The structure of the HNC Health Care (NHS Education Scotland Endorsed Route) allows for the potential articulation directly into the Branch Programmes of Nursing Degrees/Diplomas. In most cases this will allow entry into Year 2 of the receiving Higher Education Institution's (HEI) programme. As the HNC Health Care has 96 SCQF points at SCQF level 7, it is recommended that the additional 24 points be awarded to the clinical practice, skills component covered by this Unit. This is possible because of the significant amount of clinical practice required to allow articulation directly into the Branch Programmes. It is essential that the clinical practice is assessed using the partner Higher Education Institutions clinical assessment tools and that hours of practice are accurately recorded. For candidates wishing to access a Branch Programme of a Nursing Degree, 760 hours of clinical practice should also be achieved.

It is recommended that the centre offering the HNC Health Care and the receiving HEI share a NHS Education Scotland validated assessment tool for clinical practice used by first year students of the HEI. The same systems for auditing the appropriateness of practice placements, and the placement supervisors/mentors, and the training of the placement supervisors/mentors, could also be shared between the two education institutions.

Administrative Information

Unit code: F0KA 34
Unit title: Health Care: Practice Experience
Superclass category: PH
Original date of publication: September 2006
Version: 01

History of Changes:

Version	Description of change	Date

Source: SQA

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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Health Care: Practice Experience

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 160 hours.

It is anticipated that candidates will need to spend substantially more time in the workplace in order to develop the skills needed to achieve the Outcomes. Where the Unit is being used to prepare a candidate for direct entry into the Branch Programme of a pre-registration nursing programme (Year 2), NHS Education Scotland (NES) advice on the number of workplace practice hours should be followed. Their guidance states:

The rules governing nursing programmes do not apply to the HNC Health Care and therefore there is no requirement in relation to a set number of practice hours. The amendments to the principle rules governing nursing states that APL can be applied in relation to Outcomes for entry to branch programmes being met. However it is a strong NES recommendation that the number of practice hours should be comparable with the Common Foundation Programme (Year 1 of a pre-registration nursing programme) experience of candidates on a 3-year university programme, ie approximately 760 hours. The rationale for this advice is:

- ◆ it is anticipated that candidates will actually need approximately this amount of time to achieve the relevant Outcomes
- ◆ HEIs may have greater confidence in giving advanced standing to this group of candidates if the time in practice is equivalent
- ◆ equivalent time in practice may contribute to equity between the two groups of candidates

(See HNC Health Care Arrangements document for further guidance on placement hours for candidates wishing to apply to directly enter branch programmes of pre-registration nurse education).

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

The Outcomes for this Unit are derived from the guidelines for entry to Nursing Branch Programmes as described in Standards of Proficiency for Pre-registration Nursing Education. Details are available from the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) website <http://www.nmc-uk.org>. The Outcomes for entry to the branch programmes for each of the four Domains have been mapped against this Unit's Outcomes to ensure that all aspects have been covered. This process is important in allowing educational providers of this Unit to establish articulation agreements with partner Higher Education Institutions that will allow access into their Nursing Branch Programmes. It is envisaged that institutions delivering this Unit will share common instruments of assessment with their partner Higher Education Institution to allow for a straightforward accreditation of prior learning against their Nursing Common Foundation Programme. The Unit has also been designed to be relevant to candidates embarking on the development of professional practice skills in the wide range of health care professions. Where the Unit is being taught as part of the Group Award HNC Health Care it is recommended that the teaching be integrated with the Units Principles of Health Care Practice, Positive Health Care for Individuals and Calculations and Practical Techniques in Health Care.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Health Care: Practice Experience

Outcome 1

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate their awareness of the principles of professional and ethical practice while at work experience placement caring for individual patient/clients. They must be able to apply their knowledge of relevant:

- (a) Ethical principles
- (b) Legislation relevant to health care
- (c) Codes of Conduct
- (d) Professional regulations

They should use their placement portfolio to record examples of the application of these principles to their practice. The portfolio can then be used as a basis for discussion with their placement supervisor and the course team members. The candidate must also demonstrate that they are able to refer on to a registered practitioner when this is necessary. To do this the candidate needs to be aware of their current levels of ability and reflect on the next stages in their own development. Again, it is important that the candidate records these personal observations in their placement portfolio.

The candidate is expected to demonstrate the attributes required of a health care professional at all times while on work experience placement. Prior to commencing placement the candidate must be clear as to what will be required of him/her in terms of his/her behaviour.

Outcome 2

The candidates are expected to demonstrate the interpersonal skills that enable him/her to establish develop and maintain professional relationships with individual patient/clients. He/she will be able to recognise the need for mutual respect and trust and will draw on the theoretical issues related to:

- (a) Anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practice:
- (b) Empowerment and advocacy
- (c) Effective communication
- (d) Interpersonal skills and interactions
- (e) Provision of group care

The importance of effective communication with individual patient/clients and significant others should be explored in detail. The candidate should know the barriers and boundaries there are to effective communication and develop a range of skills to overcome these including the use of tone, pace and non-verbal communication. The boundaries to communication should also be explored in the context of the professional relationship.

The candidate is also expected to recognise the special needs of individual patient/clients whose lives have been affected by disability and have the skills to maintain individual patient/client's dignity, privacy and confidentiality at all times. The issues surrounding confidentiality should be clearly examined including the reasons for maintaining confidentiality and the reasons for disclosure. This should be done in the context of relevant legislation, codes of conduct, professional regulations and ethical principles.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Health Care: Practice Experience

Outcome 3

The candidate must understand care delivery as a holistic, evidence based, ongoing process where care is systematically planned in conjunction with the individual patient/client after he/she has been thoroughly assessed and where the care provided is evaluated on an ongoing basis to inform review and future plans. Detailed information about what the candidate must know and be able to do is given within the Knowledge and Skills section of this Outcome. The candidate should be allocated a small number of individual patient/clients at their work experience placement to allow them to follow the individual patient/client through the full care delivery cycle. Through this they will produce evidence of their involvement in and understanding of the assessment, planning implementation and evaluation processes. They can also use their reflective accounts to demonstrate the knowledge of the process of referral on to other members of the multi-disciplinary team. The administration of medicines, essential first aid and emergency procedures can be assessed through simulated activity.

Outcome 4

The candidate is required to apply their knowledge of the roles of other members of the multi-disciplinary care team to their workplace setting by effectively participating in inter-professional working practice. They must understand care planning in the wider context of the macro care plan and critical pathways of care and the importance of good inter-agency work.

The candidate will be expected to participate in the work of the care team as a team member. It is recognised that the role of the candidate on placement is sometimes difficult and that negotiations with members of the staff team will be necessary particularly in the case of candidates not employed by the agency. The candidates must be clear about their own role within the multi-disciplinary team. They will be able to demonstrate this through their ability to appropriately refer on to a registered practitioner when it is necessary.

Candidates must also demonstrate that they have the range of Core Skills necessary to function as a team member. These must include:

- (a) Accurate and clear oral communication, eg when giving verbal reports or involved in case discussion
- (b) Accurate written reporting
- (c) Accurately calculate, record, understand and report on numerical data
- (d) Record, enter, retrieve and organise data within records systems either in paper or electronic formats.

The candidate must also understand their role as a team member in complying with the Health and Safety regulations and policies. Prior to commencing their work experience placement the candidate will have a thorough understanding of the Health and Safety legislation and appropriate knowledge and skills in manual handling relating to health care practice.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Health Care: Practice Experience

Their understanding must include the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated regulations, eg:

- (a) COSHH regulations
- (b) Manual Handling
- (c) Personal Protective Equipment
- (d) Fire Regulations
- (e) Accident Reporting
- (f) First Aid at Work

The importance of maintaining health and safety standards with regards to clothing and personal hygiene and practice must be emphasised including their importance in preventing cross infection.

For all Outcomes the candidate is expected to reflect on, and evaluate their practice on an ongoing basis. The candidate should record their personal observations in a reflective log and be prepared to discuss the development of their skills with their placement supervisor and the course tutor. There is an onus on the candidate to be proactive in seeking help and guidance on the development of these skills.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

All Outcomes must be demonstrated in the context of the work placement. The course team must select placements that will provide the candidate with the range of opportunities to demonstrate the skills required by the Outcomes. Candidates must have a supervisor/mentor at the placement who is a registered practitioner and is fully conversant with the requirements of the Unit. Assessment of the Outcomes will be shared between the course team and the placement supervisor.

Candidates are required to complete a portfolio of evidence containing checklist of direct observation of the candidates' work and reflective accounts of their practice. Checklists are signed off when the candidates demonstrate competence under direct supervision. The candidate's reflective accounts are a significant component of the portfolio. Guidance is given on the minimum number, length and style of reflective accounts in the assessment guidelines. Where candidates undertake this Unit as part of the HNC Health Care (NES Endorsed Route) the partner HEI workplace practice assessment tool must be used.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

The achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of Complete Core Skill — Working with Others at Intermediate 2 (SCQF level 5).

There are also further opportunities to develop the Core Skills of the following Units in this Unit:

Communication: at (SCQF level 6) this could be evidenced through written and oral reporting and use of effective communications with individual patient/clients and colleagues.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Health Care: Practice Experience

Problem Solving: at (SCQF level 6) could be evidenced through case discussion with clinical supervisor about the most appropriate courses of action for care delivery.

Information Technology: at (SCQF level 5) could be evidenced through the input, storage, organisation and retrieval of data essential for care delivery in a records management system

Numeracy: at (SCQF level 5) could be evidenced through calculations made as part of clinical procedures and through calculation of dosage when administering medicines. Numerical skills will also be evident when recording data in tables and graphs.

Open learning

The underpinning knowledge for this Unit can be developed through the study of HN Units; Principles of Health Care Practice, Positive Health Care for Individuals and Calculations and Practical Techniques for Health Care. However, this Unit requires all aspects of skills and knowledge to be demonstrated in the workplace with close monitoring by the course team and workplace supervisor/mentor. It can only be achieved by the candidate having regular and prolonged exposure to a relevant workplace and its individual patient/clients. This does not necessitate attendance at an educational institution.

For further information and advice, please see *Assessment and Quality Assurance for Open and Distance Learning* (SQA, February 2001 – publication code A1030).

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. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Alternative Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs*, which is available on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk.

General information for candidates

Unit title: Health Care: Practice Experience

This Unit is designed to enable you to begin to develop the skills of the professional care practitioner. It prepares you for this role by exposing you to the practice of experienced practitioners through work experience and allowing you to practice the skills in a directly supervised environment. You acquire the knowledge and understanding that underpins these skills prior to, or during your exposure to the practice of the registered practitioner.

The Unit has been designed to meet the generic range of skills required of candidates beginning their development as professional care practitioner in the wide range of health care professions. It is, however, primarily intended for candidates who expect to take up nurse education with a view to registering as a nurse. The Unit has been designed to meet the Nursing and Midwifery Council's (NMC) defined Outcomes for entry to the branch programmes of pre-registration nurse education. This will assist Higher Education Institutions that offer programmes leading to eligibility to register as a nurse in making decisions about accrediting applicants' prior learning. The Unit is also relevant to those with experience of working as a care assistant and to those who have limited experience in care work who wish to develop their skills.

On successful completion of this Unit candidates will gain 4 HN credits at SCQF level 7. However the centre will be responsible for determining the practice opportunity and length of time given to candidates to meet the Evidence Requirements as this is a competence based Unit. Those candidates wishing to articulate to a branch programme will have to complete 760 hours of practice (as stipulated by the NMC). This will be facilitated through partnership between the SQA centre and the receiving HEI.

On completion of the Unit you should be able to:

- 1 Demonstrate an awareness of the principles of professional and ethical practice when caring for individual patient/clients.
- 2 Develop and maintain professional caring relationships with individual patient/clients.
- 3 Demonstrate skills in the delivery of care through participation in holistic care provision to meet the needs of individual patient/clients.
- 4 Participate in inter-professional teamwork for the purposes of integrative care provision.

Assessment

All the Outcomes for this Unit will be assessed holistically. You are required to demonstrate responsibility for your own learning through the development of a portfolio of practice. This is important as part of your own personal and professional development. The portfolio should contain a care study, including references to articles or research that underpins the piece of work. It should also include a reflective log where you record evidence of your evaluation of your practice and the actions you have taken in setting your own learning goals and seeking the supervision of a registered practitioner to develop safe care practice. You will need to have had significant opportunities to observe an experienced practitioner and then practice the skills detailed under each Outcome prior to assessment. You are judged to have achieved the Outcomes when you are able to demonstrate the skill while participating in providing care with others under the direct supervision of a registered practitioner. Achievement of the level of skill necessary to pass all four Outcomes is recorded in the placement log where there will be a checklist provided for this purpose. You will be required to reflect on your own practice and plan for your own personal development and record the details in your reflective log.