



**National Qualifications 2012
Internal Assessment Report
Skills for Work: Health Sector**

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in National Qualifications in this subject.

National Courses

Titles/levels of National Courses verified:

Skills for Work: Health Sector:

Intermediate 1 (24 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 4)

Intermediate 2 (24 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5)

General comments

All centres visited exhibited a clear and accurate understanding of the requirements of the national standards. Innovative practice that enriched the learning experience was also observed. The Skills for Work: Health Sector Courses continue to provide achievable and relevant awards which allow progression to higher level study or training including SVQs in Health and Social Care at level 2. Centres have developed a variety of delivery programmes to meet the needs of the diverse groups of candidates participating in the Courses.

Course Arrangements, Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Course Arrangements

Although the Courses are aimed at the health sector, centres recognise the benefits of learners developing employability skills that are transferable, should individuals opt for non-health related careers. The health sector continues to provide employment within the NHS, independent and voluntary organisations. There are a range of employment opportunities with a variety of entry points and progression routes. The Skills for Work: Health Sector Courses provide a starting point for people who may want to consider health as a career, whether in a clinical or non-clinical role.

The Skills for Work: Health Sector Courses illustrate opportunities by looking at the patient journey. This shows how many people are involved in providing patient care. However, should a learner decide to opt for another career pathway, the employability and study skills included in the learning experience are transferable, allowing for informed choice and wider career opportunities.

The Courses provide learners with experience of the practical skills required to work at SCQF level 4 (Intermediate 1) and SCQF level 5 (Intermediate 2) in the sector, and help prepare them for further training. Skills for Work Courses are designed to help learners to develop:

- ◆ skills and knowledge in a broad vocational area
- ◆ Core Skills
- ◆ an understanding of the workplace
- ◆ positive attitudes to learning
- ◆ skills and attitudes for employability

A key feature of the Courses is the emphasis on experiential learning. This means learning through practical experience and by reflecting on that experience.

The knowledge and experience acquired by learners helps in developing transferable employability skills and also prepares them to work within the context of the health sector in Scotland.

The general aims of the Courses are to:

- ◆ assist learners to develop employability skills
- ◆ allow learners to experience vocation-related learning
- ◆ provide learners with a broad introduction to the health sector
- ◆ encourage learners to develop a good work ethic
- ◆ provide opportunities to develop a range of Core Skills through practical experiences in a vocational environment
- ◆ encourage learners to take responsibility for their own learning and development
- ◆ facilitate progression to further/higher education, training and/or employment

Unit specifications

Centres vary in the delivery of individual Units and group awards. This has resulted in the introduction of new and appropriate learning and teaching strategies that meet the specifications of the Units. This contemporary approach to learning exhibits the level of knowledge and interest that centre staff have in these awards. Centres can choose to deliver one or more Units in each Course, and completion of each Course level provides a holistic approach to developing the knowledge and skills required for the world of work. A key, and popular, feature of these Courses is the emphasis on experiential learning.

Mandatory Units: Intermediate 1 (SCQF level 4)

Health Sector: An Introduction	1 Unit credit
Health Sector: Roles and Responsibilities	1 Unit credit
Health Sector: Health Awareness	1 Unit credit
Health Sector: Working Safely	½ Unit credit
Health Sector: Working Life Sciences Industry	½ Unit credit

Mandatory Units: Intermediate 2 (SCQF level 5)

Health Sector: Working in the Health Sector	1 Unit credit
Health Sector: Life Sciences Industry and the Health Sector	1 Unit credit
Health Sector: Improving Health and Well-being	1 Unit credit
Health Sector: Physiology of the Cardiovascular System	½ Unit credit
Health Sector: Working in Non Clinical Roles	½ Unit credit

Instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

It is generally agreed that the documentation for the Skills for Work: Health Sector Courses is relevant and supportive. All centres find the assessments and exemplification materials extremely helpful and user friendly.

Both levels of this award are accompanied by comprehensive teaching packs and National Assessment Bank (NAB) materials. The NAB is on the secure area of the SQA website. The NAB includes exemplification materials to assist centres in the delivery and assessment of these Courses.

Learning and teaching support packs (Intermediate 1) have been produced by Scotland's colleges to support this Course.

Learning and teaching support packs (Intermediate 2) are available to download from the secure area of the SQA website.

To achieve the Course awards, the candidate must successfully achieve all the Units which make up each Course.

Assessment across the Units of these Courses allows candidates to demonstrate, in the context of the health sector:

- ◆ generic employability skills valued by employers in the health sector
- ◆ knowledge and skills in relation to working in the health sector
- ◆ practical vocational skills
- ◆ skills in communication and working with others
- ◆ investigation skills
- ◆ presentation skills
- ◆ evaluation skills

Evidence Requirements

Again the standard of materials which accompanies these Courses ensures that academic staff understand the evidence required to achieve Units and group awards. Evidence Requirements over both Courses involve written and/or recorded oral and performance evidence relating to the individual Units. This includes practical performance supported by the assessor, observation checklists, and candidate self-evaluation reviews. Further details about Unit assessment for these Courses can be found in the Unit specifications and the NAB materials

Administration of assessments

Internal Unit assessment using the appropriate NAB material is administered by centres. Exemplar materials to assist centres in the assessment of these Courses are included in individual NAB material. The nature of the Skills for Work: Health Sector Courses allows centres to be creative in the application of assessments, further meeting the needs of all learners.

Areas of good practice

In all centres visited, staff appeared to be highly motivated in developing these Courses. As experience and confidence grows in the delivery and assessment of Units, the level of corroborative work increases in order to maximise the

candidates' opportunities for achievement and progression. In particular, career services participate in the development of employability skills and co-operate with teaching staff. This avoids duplication of work and allows more time for practical activities enjoyed by learners.

Some candidates undertaking these Courses are young with no care experience. Students who have gained experience in placement through undertaking other Courses, are encouraged to act as mentors for these introductory Courses. This appears to be very successful. It should be noted that there is a broad age range of candidates participating in these awards, and feedback confirms the value of the awards for candidates who need to develop study and employability skills.

Candidates are well prepared for visiting speakers and external visits. Prior to the visits, questions relating to the required outcomes are prepared. Following the visits, candidates complete a reflective log which is linked to Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) competencies.

Centres have strong links with local healthcare providers including GPs, pharmacy, community healthcare staff, and higher education healthcare staff and students. This has enhanced the experience of the learners and is reflected in the standard of the work produced.

Integration of Skills for Work Units is evident in the majority of centres and incorporation of the Health Sector: Working in the Health Sector Unit and the Building Own Employability Skills (F787 10) Unit provides candidates with additional and relevant skills for employment.

A number of centres continue to display innovative practices in the use of role play to simulate health sector situations and procedures. Lecturers take on the role of patients, and candidates assess in the role of various healthcare professionals.

Throughout the assessments, candidates are encouraged to expand and develop their coursework activities to produce rich and comprehensive material which demonstrates a high level of engagement.

A wide range of activities is encouraged to make the process of assessment valuable for the candidates. Video recording of candidates' work provides an excellent record of candidates' skills used in a practical manner. This sits squarely within the ethos of Skills for Work.

Specific areas for improvement

Some issues relating to plagiarism and internet research remain problematic. Although this has been addressed by staff, some candidates continue to view the internet as the only source of information and need to be made fully aware of the implications. Plagiarism appears to be challenging in a number of areas within education.

Expanding the delivery of Units to allow candidates to complete the group award should be considered by centres. Although each Unit has value in employability, the group award would be advantageous to learners.

It is suggested that feedback be given to all candidates and not only used to identify remediation and areas for improvement. The majority of assessment materials demonstrated this approach, however candidates would benefit from this being standard practice.