Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Protection of Individuals from Possible Harm and Abuse

Unit code: DH3P 34

Superclass:	PN
Publication date:	August 2004
Source:	Scottish Qualifications Authority
Version:	03

Unit purpose

To enable candidates to study the reasons for, and symptoms of abuse and vulnerability, and to understand how these are connected to behaviour and development. The Unit should equip candidates with methods of working which promote good practice, recognising the limits and responsibilities of their role in the work setting.

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

♦ Work in accordance with the Scottish Social Services Council's Code of Practice, policies and procedures to value individuals, taking account of their choices while also protecting them.
♦ Examine issues relating to the protection of individuals from abuse.
♦ Describe the legislative and policy frameworks designed to protect individuals.
♦ Understand the social care worker's role in relation to protection of individuals, including working collaboratively with staff in the same agency and with other agencies and professionals.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

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

General information (cont)

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit 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.

Core Skills

Candidates will have the opportunity to develop the following Core Skills:

Communication: Oral communication skills may be demonstrated and developed by candidates in relating to individuals in a sensitive manner. Written communication skills will be developed through the production of reports and plans of care.

Working with Others: will be developed, as the case study requires the candidate to undertake the work in collaboration with immediate colleagues, and with people in other agencies who may be able to provide additional support and services to individuals who may have been abused.

Problem Solving: will be developed as candidates need to analyse received information about individuals who may have been abused, and then develop a suitable response/plan of action.

Context for delivery

This Unit forms part of the HNC Social Care. It should be taught and assessed within the context of this particular Group Award.

Assessment

All three Outcomes will be assessed holistically in an extended case study.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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

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

Outcome 1

Examine issues relating to the protection of individuals from harm and abuse.

Knowledge and/or skills

♦ Values which inform an understanding of abuse
♦ Definition of abuse
♦ Types of abuse
♦ Indicators, signs and symptoms of abuse
♦ Vulnerability to, and causes of, abuse
♦ An appreciation of cultural differences
♦ Impact of abuse

Evidence Requirements

The evidence generated must demonstrate that candidates:

♦ Understand the value base informing this area of work and the dilemmas involved in protecting individuals while respecting their rights and responsibilities for their own care and protection.
♦ Can define abuse relevant to the individuals identified in the case study.
♦ Are aware of the different types of abuse and the impact of abuse on the individual in the short and long term.
♦ Have an awareness of the causes of abuse.
♦ Can describe and identify the physical, emotional and behavioural signs of abuse in individuals.
♦ Have an awareness of how differences between cultures may influence an understanding of abuse.
♦ Understand the effects of abuse on individuals.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Protection of Individuals from Possible Harm and Abuse

Outcome 2

Describe the legislative framework and policies and procedures designed to protect individuals at risk of harm or abuse.

Knowledge and/or Skills

♦ Government reports, enquiries and research reports into serious failure to protect individuals and the impact of these on legislation
♦ Relevant current legislation
♦ Policies, procedures and charters relevant to the protection of individuals
♦ The role of other professionals

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

The evidence generated must demonstrate that candidates:

♦ Are aware of Government reports, enquiries and research reports into serious failure to protect individuals and their impact on legislation.
♦ Can identify and explain current, relevant legislation.
♦ Can identify and explain protection procedures in their work setting, including the reporting and recording of suspected abuse and disclosure of abuse, confidentiality and how these relate to other procedures, charters and codes such as the SSSC Codes of Practice and The Charter for Children and Young People.
♦ Understand the roles of other agencies and professionals and be able to work with them in relation to the protection of individuals from abuse and in the support of those who have been abused or have been affected by abuse.

Outcome 3

Understand the social care worker's role in relation to the protection of individuals.

Knowledge and/or Skills

♦ How to respond to and support individuals who may have been abused
♦ Disclosure of abuse
♦ Reporting and recording incidences of abuse
♦ Communication and joint working within and between agencies
♦ Prevention of abuse
♦ Understand how to work with those who have or may be at risk of abusing others (if relevant to the worker's role)
♦ Support to staff

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Protection of Individuals from Possible Harm and Abuse

Evidence Requirements

The evidence generated must demonstrate that candidates:

♦ Are aware of how developmental and needs assessments relate to assessment of risk of harm or abuse for the individuals concerned.
♦ Know how to respond to individuals who may have been abused.
♦ Have the skills to respond sensitively and to support individuals disclosing abuse or affected by abuse.
♦ Know how social care workers can contribute to the prevention of abuse by promoting good practice. This may include contributing to risk assessment, safe caring, supervision and support to staff, whistle-blowing and empowering individuals.
♦ Are aware of issues associated with working with individuals who have abused or may be at risk of abusing and understand their role in relation to this.
♦ Understand the need for support and identify sources of support available to staff working in this field.

Assessment guidelines for the Unit

All of the Outcomes for this Unit should be assessed through a single assessment. The assessment should take the form of a case study taken from a work setting. Evidence should be generated through responses to questions based on this case study. It should allow candidates to display relevant knowledge and reflect on their roles and the practice issues arising from these roles at its different stages. Scenarios should start from a situation where candidates have to identify if abuse has taken place and move on to appropriate responses demonstrating sensitivity in supporting individuals who have been abused and respecting their rights while also protecting them. They would need to be able to describe the roles and responsibilities of agencies and professionals in the situation and how these are defined by legislation, policies and procedures and how they would work with these other professionals. They would then also need to describe the long and short-term support needs of those involved, including themselves, and what can be done to promote good practice in preventing abuse. In addition they would be required to comment more widely on the Regulation of Care Act and enquiries that have shaped legal and organisational responses to abuse.

For candidates with experience, the case study should be a real experience from their own workplace. In the case of full-time candidates, a case study, provided by the tutor may be more appropriate.

Centres delivering the Unit will be required to have a bank of case studies covering different vulnerable groups of adults and children and young people, which address the different legislative and policy frameworks applicable in each case.

Centres should define word limits to the responses to each section of the scenario. The total for the whole assignment should be around 2,500 words.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Protection of Individuals from Possible Harm and Abuse

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

Lecturers should be aware of candidates' own life experiences, which might include abuse, and be sensitive to their needs for support. Guest speakers from a variety of agencies involved in the support and protection of individuals who have experienced abuse may enrich the candidates' learning experience. Opportunities should be used throughout the Unit to integrate relevant issues relating to culture and disability into the teaching, for example in relation to vulnerability to abuse.

This Unit is primarily intended to equip candidates with knowledge and understanding of the issues surrounding protection of individuals from harm and abuse. This Unit is likely to form part of a Group Award, which is primarily designed to provide candidates with professional knowledge and skills related to the occupational area of social care. This Unit is likely to be delivered towards the end of the award, by which time candidates should have developed a broader knowledge base that underpins social care practice. This knowledge will be derived from; Social Care Theory for Practice, Sociology for Social Care Practice, Psychology for Social Care Practice, Social Policy and its Application to Social Services Provision and the mandatory SVQ Units.

Outcome 1

This Outcome could be introduced by recognition of the importance of valuing individuals and rights and responsibilities in line with the Scottish Social Services Council's Codes of Practice as well as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Children (Scotland) Act 1995. This should be explicitly linked to the responsibilities of workers and employers as set out in the Scottish Social Services Council's Codes of Practice. Reference should also be made here to The UN Charter on the Rights of the Child, The Charter for Children and Young People, Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003, The Human Rights Act 1998, The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003, The Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 and other charters and statements of rights. The preferences, best interests and empowerment of those we work with must be at the heart of what we do.

There are several definitions of abuse but it may be defined as causing physical, emotional or mental harm to an individual, failing to protect them from harm or neglect. Additional definitions include 'A single or repeated act or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an older person' (Action on Elder Abuse, elderabuse.org.uk, Oct 2010).

'Child abuse or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.' (World Health Organisation, www.yesican.org, Oct 2010)

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Protection of Individuals from Possible Harm and Abuse

Candidates should have an awareness of social and psychological factors which may give rise to abuse and the need to support those at risk to prevent abuse occurring. Predisposing factors are aspects of family circumstances, economic background or environmental factors which may influence the possibility or incidence of abuse for an individual. They do not automatically lead to abuse; however, research has shown that they may increase the risk, such as:

♦ poverty
♦ poor housing
♦ parents who have unrealistic expectations or who have had a poor parenting model themselves
♦ adults who experienced abuse as a child
♦ children who are separated from their mother early in life which may impact the development of attachment

Teaching should include the formal categories of abuse for the purposes of registering children on the Child Protection Register, physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and non-organic failure to thrive. These should also be discussed in relation to their relevance for Adults at Risk as well as aspects including elder abuse and financial abuse. The forms abuse takes can also be examined including racial abuse, misuse of medication, bullying, self-harm and human trafficking. The issues related to modern technology and its impact on abuse can also be examined.

Caution should be exercised when discussing signs of abuse as they may also have alternative explanations and do not always mean that abuse has actually occurred. However the signs should alert social care staff to consider whether the person has been abused and if there is further information required especially if other factors are present which may indicate increased risk. A range of indicators of abuse should be covered including physical evidence, emotional and behavioural signs and disclosure. Some of these will be common across different ages and service user groups but others will be more specific. Particular importance should be attached to potential symptoms where the explanation is inconsistent with the injury; there are fears of particular places or people and changes in behaviour or emotional state. Listening and communication skills need to be emphasised, as those who have experienced abuse will sometimes disclose in indirect ways eg, non-verbal indicators, withdrawal, and sexualised behaviour.

Candidates should have an awareness of the different service user groups in the workplace and what aspects of their vulnerability make them open to abuse.

Various issues such as communication barriers, discrimination, marginalisation and inequalities of power make individuals and groups more vulnerable to abuse. Candidates should be aware of the support available from different agencies and professionals. Examples are Childline, NCH, Age Concern, Local Authority Social Work/Services Departments, Victim Support, Teachers, Health Visitors, Psychologists, and Counselling Services.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Protection of Individuals from Possible Harm and Abuse

Candidates should be aware of the complexity of the way in which cultural values, beliefs and practices influence how individuals view abuse. This is true of candidates' own cultures as well as of other cultures. Such awareness is designed to be an aid to working sensitively with individuals and does not imply acceptance of abuse nor equally the stereotyping of individuals, cultures or communities eg debates round forced marriage and smacking children.

Teaching should explore the short and long term social, psychological and emotional impact of abuse such as shame, physical harm, fear or anxiety for those who have experienced abuse and shock, guilt or shame for families. Impact on the wider community can also be examined here to think about the views of the public or cultural differences which may impact.

Outcome 2

There will be changes in how individuals at risk of abuse are recorded, including child and adult protection procedures, the child protection register and categories of registration. Centres must teach current legislation and enquiries for example, a small group research task could be undertaken by candidates into one of the enquiries, covering the background to the enquiry, key findings and recommendations and impact on practice and legislation.. They should also teach an awareness of how enquiries have influenced the development of legislation and procedures eg Maria Colwell, Jasmine Beckford, Cleveland, Orkney, Victoria Climbie, Caleb Ness, Skinner Report and other current legislation and enquiries.

Examples of adult abuse should also be included, such as the Miss X Enquiry. There are a number of useful information sources in this field such as the Scottish Government (www.scotland.gov.uk), Mental Welfare Commission (www.mwcscot.org.uk) and the Scottish Social Services Council website (www.sssc.uk.com).

It will be useful to include current research and reports from professional journals and the media eg, local councils have up-to-date information in relation to numbers of investigations, Child Protection Orders etc which could be included. There are also examples of elder abuse and abuse of disabled adults in the care setting eg, McIntyre Undercover. Candidates could debate possible discrepancies between adults and children when it comes to society's response.

The candidate should develop an increasing knowledge of his or her own role and responsibilities and the limits of these. Legislation that could be investigated should include various service user groups, including Children (Scotland) Act 1995, Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007, Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001, Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 and Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007, with the candidate gaining more depth of knowledge in relation to their own service user group. Candidates should be encouraged to examine various policies and procedures in different workplace settings. Candidates could share their workplace experiences and request examples of agency policies, protocols, and procedures. The Scottish Social Service website is another source of useful information in this area. The relationship between these and the statutory framework should be examined along with the roles of different professionals involved in protecting vulnerable individuals eg social workers, police, procurators fiscal, sheriffs, reporters to the children's panel and professionals working in health, education and for voluntary organisations.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Protection of Individuals from Possible Harm and Abuse

The differences between child protection and adult protection, in terms of public profile and consequences should be explored in the class setting. The role of effective joint working and communication between and within agencies should be explored and useful reference can be made to enquiry Outcomes, such as Victoria Climbie. The role of professionals and agencies that are involved in the protection of the individual should be investigated. As in Outcome 1, guest speakers may be a valuable resource in teaching this material.

Outcome 3

In this Outcome candidates should develop a clear understanding of the important role they will play in being alert to potential abuse, identifying signs and symptoms and in recording and reporting abuse; also their role in supporting individuals through any process of disclosure and in the longer term with the effects of abuse. At all times their responsibilities and the limits of those responsibilities should be clarified in line with local policies, procedures and Scottish Social Services Council. For example when workers should pass on concerns and who should then follow up on these and the care which needs to be exercised in supporting disclosure of abuse without questioning inappropriately.

Candidates should examine communication skills in relation to disclosure of abuse and supporting people who have been abused. They must be aware of the importance of not pressurising individuals or asking them leading questions which might contaminate evidence. Candidates must be aware of the need to minimise the number of people/professionals involved in the investigation process process to help reduce unnecessary intrusion and anxiety for the individual involved. Candidates must be aware of the boundaries of confidentiality and that they cannot guarantee that what is disclosed will not be shared. Aspects of good practice could be exchanged within the group. Connections can be made here with Social Care Theory for Practice relating to values dilemmas in this area. A case study may be useful to help demonstrate these complexities.

Candidates should be enabled to explore anxieties in relation to reporting abuse/ suspected abuse, including by colleagues, and supporting those who have been abused. They should be aware that they may be working in settings where they are required to work with family members or others who have abused or with individuals they support who have abused or are at risk of abusing.

Good practice and recording would include keeping immediate, factual and accurate records and informing/reporting to line managers. Candidates should be aware of the importance of such recordings to investigative and legal processes.

Candidates should explore the policies, procedures and practices which prevent abuse and promote safe caring. This would include supporting vulnerable individuals and families. In this context risk assessment would not only be about specific risk of abuse but of other potentially harmful activities which may be a normal part of an individual's life eg travelling unaccompanied or alcohol use. Here sharing examples of good practice and inviting external speakers would be useful teaching methods.

Unit title: Protection of Individuals from Possible Harm and Abuse

Joint working with other agencies and professionals should be explored further in this Outcome. Candidates should be enabled to examine the formal responsibilities of staff in this area. They should also be enabled to consider how workers can support those at risk of harm and abuse and support intervention where there has been abuse.

Protection policies exist to support staff and protect them and it will be important to explore the potentially stressful nature of this work and ways in which candidates can get support for themselves.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This information is contained within Evidence Requirements and support notes.

SVQ Links

Evidence from this Unit may provide evidence of some of the Knowledge of the following SVQ Units:

♦ *HSC34: Promote the well-being and protection of children and young people*
♦ *HSC35: Promote choice, well-being and the protection of all individuals*
♦ *HSC325: Contribute to protecting children and young people from danger, harm and abuse*
♦ *HSC335: Contribute to the protection of individuals from harm and abuse*
♦ *HSC395: Contribute to assessing and act upon risk of danger, harm and abuse*

If the candidate writes a case study about a real work situation then this may also provide evidence for PCs of the SVQ Units.

Open learning

The learning for this Unit could be developed for open learning mode of delivery but there should be an appropriate support system available to candidates as their own life experiences might include abuse.

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

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website **www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements**

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Narrative relating to assessment guidance transferred from Evidence Requirements section to Assessment Guidelines section. Evidence Requirements are unchanged, however they are now expressed in terms of each Outcome.	08/05/07
03	Updating of information provided in the Support Notes Section	11/04/11

General information for candidates

Unit title: Protection of Individuals from Possible Harm and Abuse

Undertaking this Unit will give you knowledge of legislation to protect children and vulnerable adults as well as understanding the issues in relation to abuse — definitions, causes, impact on individual, families etc.

This Unit should equip you with methods of work that promote good practice in the protection of individuals.

You will be assessed through an extended case study where you will need to show that you understand the situation of a particular individual and how to respond with a plan of care. To do this work you will need to have good communication skills and sensitivity towards individuals who may have been abused — or who are at risk from abuse.