



**COMMUNICATION**  
**SCQF Level 5**  
**40 Hour Unit (F3GB 11)**

# CORE SKILLS UNIT

## What are Core Skills?

Core Skills are skills and abilities that everyone uses in their family and personal life, at work, in public, in the community, and in education and training.

The Core Skills are:

- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Numeracy
- ◆ Information and Communication Technology
- ◆ Problem Solving
- ◆ Working with Others

They are important because they help you to be effective in almost everything you do. That's also why employers value them.

Improving your Core Skills helps you cope with today's quickly changing world. It will make you more confident, help you to learn more easily, and improve your career prospects.

## What is this Core Skills Unit about?

This Unit is about using reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in situations in your personal life, at work, and in education.

If there are any words you don't understand in this Unit, your tutor will explain them to you.

## What should I know or be able to do before I start?

You may have achieved the Core Skills Unit in Communication at SCQF level 4. Alternatively, you may be able to show that you have similar experience, for example writing letters, short essays or reports; reading instructions, articles, or leaflets; giving a short talk to friends or fellow students; listening to and acting on instructions.

## What do I need to do?

### When you are reading:

- ◆ Pick out the important ideas and supporting detail in a piece of non-fiction writing.
- ◆ Evaluate a piece of writing (for example, is it clearly laid out, has the writer chosen an appropriate format, does it contain all the information a reader would need, does it present both sides of a difficult issue, how complete is the information, is it well structured, does it use appropriate images, and does it contain appropriate vocabulary, including technical/specialised words where necessary?)
- ◆ Decide whether or not a piece of writing has achieved its aim or purpose, giving evidence for your answer.

### When you are writing:

- ◆ Choose a format that is appropriate to the readers and the subject matter (for example, a report, minutes of a meeting, a blog, or an article).
- ◆ Choose layout, structure, vocabulary, and graphics (if appropriate) that make your piece of writing clear, suit your topic, and are appropriate for your readers.

- ◆ Vary your sentence structure, paragraphing, and vocabulary to suit the purpose of your writing and your intended readers.
- ◆ Present the information/ideas, with some supporting detail, in a logical order, linking related information or ideas.
- ◆ Highlight the main points in your piece of writing.
- ◆ Use spelling, grammar, and punctuation accurately (for example, structure of sentences, clauses, tenses of verbs, capital letters, full stops, commas, question marks, dashes, brackets, colons, and semi-colons).

### When you are speaking and listening:

- ◆ Express your spoken ideas clearly (for example, by choosing language that fits the topic and the situation, and which your listeners understand; speaking clearly, and loudly enough; varying speed and tone; pausing at appropriate points).
- ◆ Present the information/ideas, with some supporting detail, in a logical order, linking related information or ideas (for example, a presentation with a beginning or overview, a middle section with information in logical sequence, and a conclusion/summary of main points; making a significant contribution to a discussion, stating and expanding on an opinion).
- ◆ Emphasise the main points in what you say (for example, through your tone, gestures, and volume of speaking).
- ◆ Use body language to help the way you speak (for example, by smiling; leaning forward; using appropriate gestures; making eye contact).
- ◆ Listen carefully to what others say, taking account of their contribution, and respond accordingly (for example, by responding to their point of view; explaining your point of view; repeating information; giving extra information; summarising; rephrasing what you have said; asking questions to clarify anything you do not understand; exploring subjects in greater depth).

## How do I get this Unit?

You will need to show that you have all the skills in the Unit.

### Reading

You will be asked to read an extended piece of non-fiction writing. You might then write a short report, or your tutor might ask you questions and make notes or record what you have said.

### Writing

You will produce a document (or a series of related documents) totalling at least 500 words that is concerned with the presentation and analysis of information and/or with developing an opinion or argument. If you produce a series of related documents, one of these must contain no fewer than 300 words. Your document(s) can be hand written or word processed.

### Speaking and listening

You will take part in a discussion or give a short talk to one or more people. Your tutor will observe you and make notes or a recording.

You should also keep a brief record explaining the situation (for example, who was present, what was being discussed, and what was the purpose of the discussion). Your record might include any plan that you developed for your presentation/discussion.

## What might this involve?

The Unit can be achieved in many ways. Examples of activities you might do are:

- ◆ Summarise the benefits and possible side-effects of a prescribed medication described in the detailed leaflet that is supplied with the drug, and evaluate how well the leaflet has conveyed the key messages.
- ◆ Follow detailed on-screen instructions for a new piece of software and evaluate how effective these instructions were.
- ◆ Write minutes of a class meeting, including the detail of issues discussed.
- ◆ Produce a report on the options for new premises for your drama club with appropriate subsections and headings.
- ◆ Take part in a meeting with neighbours to decide on the best course of action in response to a problem with vandalism.
- ◆ Give a presentation on your interest in rap music, supported by visual aids, and respond to questions from the audience.

## What can I do next?

You could move on to the Communication Unit at SCQF level 6. You could consider doing other Core Skill Units in:

- ◆ Numeracy
- ◆ Information and Communication Technology
- ◆ Problem Solving
- ◆ Working with Others

Your tutor can advise you about this.

## Guidance for tutors

Learners at SCQF level 5 are required to deal with language that is sometimes complex and conveys different strands of information or ideas, not all of which will be familiar from the everyday context. They should require little support in completing their activities.

### Reading

Reading materials may deal with topics and use vocabulary that learners may reasonably have been expected to encounter through a general awareness of vocational or current issues. They may sometimes feature unfamiliar, abstract ideas and complexity in tone, point of view or central argument. A suitable text will combine factual content with analysis, or present a sustained point of view. It may use some complex vocabulary and sentence structures that allow for exemplification. It may include images (for example, diagrams, maps, tables, sketches, or photographs) as well as words. The text may have more than one purpose, for example to inform and report, or evaluate; to express a reaction; to persuade.

Learners must prove that they can do the whole of the activity at one time. They should not gather evidence from different situations for different parts of the activity.

### Writing

Learners must produce a document (or a series of related documents) totalling at least 500 words that is concerned with the presentation and analysis of information and/or with developing an opinion or argument. If a portfolio of related pieces is used, it should include a substantive piece of no fewer than 300 words.

### Speaking and listening

The oral communication must be one spoken interaction between the learner and one or more people. This may be a discussion (lasting a minimum of four minutes) or the learner may give a short presentation lasting a minimum of three minutes, with additional time for questions. A discussion must have a clear purpose, be on a relevant topic, allow for exploration, and reach a conclusion. The learner must make a significant contribution.

Further guidance is available in the accompanying Assessment Support Pack.

## **Disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs**

The additional support needs of individual learners 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](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).

## ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

### Credit value

6 SCQF credit points (1 SQA credit) at SCQF level 5



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