National Unit specification

General information

Unit title: Social Media Literacy (SCQF level 4)

Unit code: H7EB 44

Superclass:	CB
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Version:	01

Unit purpose

This Unit is designed for non-specialists who want to acquire knowledge and skills in using and understanding social media.

The Unit covers practical skills in the use of social media (including how to use it safely) and provides a theoretical basis to its historical development, unique characteristics, current uses, and the opportunities and threats it poses. Learners will develop their knowledge of the different types of social media and be given practical experience of using social media for personal and educational purposes.

A particular aim of this Unit, in addition to enhancing learners' digital skills, is to prepare learners for 'digital citizenship' so that they can fully participate in democratic and civil activities, access digital public services, and take advantage of the digital economy.

The Unit also covers the implications of social media for individuals so that learners may engage in debates about privacy, online safety and other issues surrounding social media.

On completion of this Unit, learners will possess basic skills in using social media, have established a social media presence and be able to use social media for personal and educational purposes.

Outcomes

On successful completion of the Unit the learner will be able to:

1   Describe the personal and educational uses of social media.
2   Describe the implications of social media for individuals.
3   Use social media for personal and educational purposes.

National Unit specification: General information (cont)

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Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 4: (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 4)

Recommended entry to the Unit

Whilst entry is at the discretion of the centre, it would be beneficial if learners possessed basic IT Skills. This may be evidenced by possession of:

H3LJ 09 *Computer Basics* (SCQF level 3)

or equivalent qualifications or experience.

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes for this Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skill components in this Unit.

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 may be offered stand-alone or as part of the National Progression Award *Digital Passport* at SCQF level 4. If offered as part of this Group Award, there may be opportunities to combine and integrate teaching and learning across Units. There may also be opportunities to combine Evidence Requirements and integrate assessments.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this Unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard. A list of existing ASPs is available to download from SQA's website **(http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46233.2769.html)**.

Equality and inclusion

This Unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should 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**.

National Unit specification: Statement of standards

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Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

Outcome 1

Describe the personal and educational uses of social media.

Performance Criteria

(a)   State the main milestones in the development of social media.
(b)   Identify the types of social media.
(c)   Define social production and social intelligence.
(d)   Describe the uses of social media for personal purposes.
(e)   Describe the uses of social media for learning purposes.
(f)   Statements, identifications, definitions and descriptions use the correct terminology.

Outcome 2

Describe the implications of social media for individuals.

Performance Criteria

(a)   State the rights and responsibilities of individuals when using social media.
(b)   Describe social presence including digital footprint.
(c)   Describe the potential dangers of social media to individuals including personal safety.
(d)   Describe safety measures that can be taken to protect individuals.

Outcome 3

Use social media for personal and educational purposes.

Performance Criteria

(a)   Establish an appropriate social media presence.
(b)   Use social media for a personal purpose.
(c)   Use social media for a learning purpose.
(d)   Use of social media is mindful and demonstrates attention literacy.
(e)   Use of social media is safe.
(f)   Customise social media to reflect personal preferences including basic privacy and security settings.

National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Assessors should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, and understanding of their learners to determine the most appropriate ways to generate evidence and the conditions and contexts in which they are used.

Evidence is required to demonstrate that learners have achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria. Sampling may be used in certain circumstances (see below) where the sample is sufficiently random and robust to clearly infer competence in the complete domain.

The evidence for this Unit may be written or oral or a combination of these. Evidence may be captured, stored and presented in a range of media (including audio and video) and formats (analogue and digital). Particular consideration should be given to digital formats and the use of multimedia.

One of two approaches must be taken to evidence generation.

1   Evidence may take the form of a written test, combining the knowledge requirements of Outcome 1 and Outcome 2, together with an observation checklist for Outcome 3.

Or

2   Evidence may take the form of an activity log, recording candidate activities over the life of the Unit.

If the first approach is taken, the test will sample the knowledge in Outcomes 1 and 2. There is no requirement for all of the types of social media (Outcome 1) to be assessed in every test. The sample must be sufficiently random and robust to clearly infer competence in the whole knowledge domain. Every performance must be covered in the test; the relative weighting of each one is left to the discretion of the assessor. An appropriate pass mark must be set. The pass mark will be influenced by the instrument of assessment. **All** of the associated Performance Criteria must be satisfied. The observation checklist, in addition to specifying the prescribed Performance Criteria, should also include brief details of the candidate's uses of social media. At least **one personal use** and **one educational use** must be described. At least **two types** of social media must be used.

If the second approach is taken, the activity log would record all of the learning and practical activities carried out by the candidate. The completed log must satisfy **all** of the Performance Criteria in **all** of the Outcomes. For example, the journal entry/entries relating to Outcome 1, Performance Criterion (b), would have to identify **all** of the types of social media. Sampling is not appropriate when this approach is used. While all of the Performance Criteria must be satisfied, the evidence may be distributed across the entire journal. It is not necessary for a specific Performance Criterion to be satisfied entirely within a specific journal entry. Professional judgement should be exercised when a Performance Criterion is evidenced across several entries. The candidate must use social media for **at least one personal purpose and one educational purpose**. At least **two types** of social media must be used.

National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Given that the journal will be completed over an extended period of time, perhaps in a number of locations, the completed log must be authenticated. Authentication may take various forms including, but not limited to, oral questioning and plagiarism checks. A statement of authenticity should be provided by the candidate to verify the work as their own, and also state any necessary sources and permissions (if any). The *Guide to Assessment* provides further advice on methods of authentication.

The *Guidelines on Approaches to Assessment* (see the Support Notes section of this specification) provides specific examples of instruments of assessment.

National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Social Media Literacy (SCQF level 4)

Unit Support Notes are offered as guidance and 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

The general context for this Unit is to consider social media as a communication and information paradigm, no different, in essence, from previous communication or information systems. As such, it is part of a long evolutionary process that commenced with writing, included the printing press, books, newspapers, TV and e-mail, and currently includes instant messaging, social networks, blogs, wikis and virtual worlds. However, its ubiquity, convenience, interactivity, ease of use, reach, richness and scale are unique and make social media an important 21st Century cultural phenomenon.

Social media is widely used in contemporary society but not widely understood. Its use has been largely self-taught, through trial and error, resulting in, sometimes, chaotic or unsafe practices. This Unit will provide a theoretical basis to social media and foster good practice in its use.

Throughout this Unit it is vital to present the implications of social media in a balanced way. At the time of writing, there is inadequate research evidence to make firm conclusions about the positive or negative effects of social media on individuals, communities or societies. For example, the political impact of social media is disputed and it would be inappropriate to present its political impact as unequivocally good (or malign).

Outcome 1 and Outcome 2 present the pros and cons of social media. Outcome 3 provides an opportunity to practice the use of social media and develop a social presence. Outcome 3 also covers how to use social media safely.

A range of social media should be demonstrated and used. It is important that learners appreciate that social media is more than social networks and blogs. The selection of social media should reflect the interests and demographics of the learners. While all learners should be exposed to the most common types of social media (which include social networks and blogs), other types of social media may be better suited to specific types of learners. For example, mature learners may benefit from, and enjoy using, the more immersive forms of media such as virtual worlds; young learners may benefit from, and enjoy using, the more exciting forms of media such as games. The critical aspect is that all of these platforms (social networks, blogs, wikis, virtual worlds and games) are seen as social media.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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It is also important that learners appreciate that Facebook™ (or any other dominant social media service) is one instance of a social network that may, or may not, stand the test of time. Ideally, more than one type of each social media system should be explored (such as Facebook™ and Google Plus™) so that this is reinforced, and learners can compare services.

Outcome 1: This Outcome covers the personal and educational uses of social media. It is likely that learners will have previous exposure to the use of social media but may not have much knowledge of the background to, and theory of, social media. Their previous use of social media is likely to be informal and self-taught and related to their family and friends, so the wider applications of social media may not be known.

The historical context of social media is introduced as part of this Outcome (Performance Criterion (a)). Only the main milestones should be covered. It is important that learners appreciate that social media did not originate with the introduction of Facebook™. The milestones should include non-digital developments such as the introduction of the printing press. The development of social media should be presented as an evolutionary process, albeit with particularly rapid development in the recent past. The current scale and reach of social media should be emphasised.

Performance Criteria (b), (c), (d) and (e) relate to the types and uses of various social media, and are best delivered together. The types of social media include e-mail, web logs, instant messaging, social networks, social games, VOIP, wikis and virtual worlds. It is sufficient for learners to know the names and basic uses of each. It is important that learners appreciate the full range of social media. There may be a perception that social media means Facebook™ and Twitter™ so other social environments, such as virtual worlds, may require careful introduction. Learners may be familiar with the personal uses of social media but may be less familiar with its educational application. The concept of personal learning networks (PLNs) should be introduced. Leveraging social media for purposes other than informal social interaction may be new to many learners and will need careful exemplification.

At the time of writing, a sample of the types of social media available would include:

♦   social networking sites such as Facebook™ and LinkedIn™
♦   collaborative projects using wikis, such as Wikipedia™
♦   blogs; microblogs such as Twitter™
♦   content communities such as YouTube™, Slideshare™
♦   social bookmarking such as Delicious™
♦   content sharing sites such as Pinterest™
♦   virtual game worlds such as World of Warcraft™
♦   social games such as Bejewelled™
♦   virtual social worlds such as Second Life™
♦   file sharing, eg Files Tube™, 4Shared™, or Dropbox™
♦   photosharing, eg Flickr™, Instagram™
♦   communication services such as instant messaging and conferencing using, eg Skype™
♦   mobile social media: Space-timers such as Facebook Places™, which lets people know where you have been, where you are headed and where you are now
♦   space-locators such as Yelp™, an online urban city guide
♦   social knowledge networks such as socialknowledge.com
♦   social sound, eg Soundcloud™ and Spotify™
♦   social geolocation: Foursquare™, Loopt™, Facebook Places™

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Social Media Literacy (SCQF level 4)

The 'socialisation' of all applications should be explained. Applications that were once 'stand-alone', such as music listening and fitness applications, are now having social features added. For example, Spotify™ (a popular music app) permits shared playlists, friend lists and recommendations to friends.

An important part of this Unit is that learners develop their technical vocabularies (Performance Criterion (f)). So, for example, throughout the period of teaching and learning, they must use the correct terminology to describe the various aspects of social media covered in this Unit. Careless use of language would violate this Performance Criterion.

The Unit also aims to develop the learner's knowledge of how these different types of social media can be used to further their personal interests such as social connections with family and friends, leisure pursuits as well as educational interests. The learner is asked to consider and record how these different types of social media can be put to constructive use in their personal lives by, for example, maintaining and developing family connections and relationships particularly when family members are geographically remote. The same considerations could apply to developing and maintaining friendships.

The learner should also be encouraged to reflect on the constructive use that social media can be put to in order to further their leisure pursuits and educational projects. This will have direct relevance to the practical activities which they will engage with as they tackle Outcome 3.

Social media are increasingly being used as learning tools. At the time of writing many universities and colleges are offering courses which combine online educational services with more traditional approaches. A good example is open source software such as OpenClass™ which provides a range of standard online educational services such as: a Gradebook to assign grades and leave feedback for multiples of students; a scheduler to manage dates for class assignments; a reporting system.

It also, importantly, has the facility to make extensive use of social media to expand the leaners educational experience, eg it has the facility to import materials from e-books and YouTube™ videos; it links easily with mobile technology and has dedicated apps for Android and iOS; it uses open APIs/standards integration making it easy to build and connect content; it is integrated with Gmail, Google Docs and Calendar. OpenClass embraces social media. Together, assessors and learners can engage and interact just as they would, for example, in Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Skype and other social networking applications.

GLOW, the Scottish schools network provides a safe environment where pupils can become familiar with aspects of social media such as blogs, web conferencing and e-groups.

Outcome 2: This Outcome covers the implications of social media for individuals. It is a counter-balance to the previous Outcome that, effectively, rehearses the benefits of social media. Although this Outcome is about the dangers of social media, it should be presented in a balanced way, which does not exaggerate the dangers posed by this medium.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Social Media Literacy (SCQF level 4)

Learners are required to know their rights and responsibilities when using social media (Performance Criterion (a)). At this level, there is no requirement for learners to know the laws that relate to online safety; it is sufficient for learners to know what they can and cannot do in non-legalistic terms. Only the main rights and responsibilities should be covered such as those that relate to sex, race, sectarianism, threatening behaviour and terrorism. The concept of social media as a publishing medium — subject to the same rules and regulations as any other publishing medium — should be explained. The permanency of the medium should also be emphasised.

There is an opportunity to explain the steps that can be taken if learners feel that they are the victims of inappropriate behaviour, including the individuals and organisations that they can turn to for help.

While most learners may have previous experience of using social media, many may be unaware of the concept of social presence (Performance Criterion (b)). Learners should be exposed to 'positive' and 'negative' social presence, and be made aware of the implications of having a poor social presence on such things as future employment or relationships. There is an opportunity to help learners to develop a positive social presence.

Learners should be exposed to the potential dangers of social media (Performance Criterion (c)). At the time of writing, the main dangers of social media to the individual include: personal privacy, identity theft, fraud, cyberbullying, stalking, and grooming. This is linked to the previous Performance Criterion since a person's digital footprint can be used to identify and locate victims. Other, less apparent, dangers should be discussed such as the social isolation that can (paradoxically) be fostered through the over-use of social media ('over-sharing') when it is used in place of genuine social contact. Young learners, in particular, may not value their personal privacy and may need help to appreciate its value.

Performance Criterion (d) relates to the steps that can be taken to protect individuals. These range from technical to behavioural. The technical steps include security settings within social media applications. Behavioural steps include the amount of information sharing and general conduct when engaging with social media.

Learners should be exposed to social media etiquette: a set of guidelines for the responsible use of social media. The most useful sets of etiquette guidelines contain clear advice about the steps users should take to protect their privacy, as well as guidelines that will help them to act responsibly and respect the rights of other users. A simple online search will uncover a wide range of examples of social media etiquette. Some etiquette guidelines are aimed at specific types of social media, eg social networking sites such as Facebook™ and others are more general in nature.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Social Media Literacy (SCQF level 4)

Outcome 3: This Outcome relates to the use of social media for personal and educational purposes.

While it is likely that most learners will have already established a social media presence (Performance Criterion (a)) they may have done so unwittingly and may be unaware of their digital footprints. Learners are required to use social media for personal (Performance Criterion (b)) and educational (Performance Criterion (c)) purposes. Both uses can be simple. For example, they might use a social network to have a discussion or arrange an event. There is an opportunity to explore personal uses beyond simple status updates. For example, social networks can be used to ask questions or garner opinions of friends, which, although relatively trivial, may have value to the originator (such as posing the question 'What colour do you prefer?' with respect to an item of clothing). The learning purpose, too, may be straight-forward. Many learners may not appreciate the value of social media for learning, using it exclusively for personal purposes. So, for example, leveraging Twitter™ as a personal learning network may be new to many.

Attention literacy (Performance Criterion (d)) relates to the mindful use (or non-use) of social media. At its most fundamental, it means deciding whether or not to use specific forms of social media at all (it is unlikely that making no use of any social media is 'mindful use'). More commonly, attention literacy relates to deciding when, where and how often to check social media. There is a growing (but inconclusive) body of evidence that social media is affecting attention and attention spans and that its use can be chaotic and disruptive. This Performance Criterion requires learners to demonstrate mindfulness in their use of social media. This involves not only self-control but also managing the expectations of others (in the sense of them not expecting instant replies to their communications). Reactive or disruptive use of social media would violate this Performance Criterion.

Learners' use of social media must be safe (Performance Criterion (e)). Young learners, in particular, may need help with their use of social media, being occasionally guilty of over-sharing and engaging in potentially dangerous practices (such as sharing information with strangers). Mature learners may need to be encouraged to be less afraid of social media and learn to share more.

Attention literacy (Performance Criterion (d)) is linked to customisation of social media applications (Performance Criterion (f)). Most social media applications permit users to customise their notifications, ranging from constant real-time notifications to manual on-demand notifications. The notification setting is one of many that learners should become familiar with. Others include privacy settings and security settings. At this level, only the most basic settings should be covered but enough to protect privacy, security and attention.

Within a school, college or training organisation there may be restrictions on access to various social media which might limit the learner's choice but it is within the scope of this Unit to enable and encourage learners to use social media outwith their educational institution. In that case learners should retain evidence of their work using, eg screenshots, URLs, photos- which can then be authenticated by their assessor.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Social Media Literacy (SCQF level 4)

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

A practical hands-on approach to learning should be adopted to engage learners and exemplify key concepts. However, all practical activities should be underpinned with appropriate knowledge before learners commence these activities.

It is recommended that learners gain hands-on experience of as many types of social media as possible. Where there are institutional based restrictions on access to social media, learners should be encouraged to gain experience of social media out-with their formal learning environment while, at all times, adhering to appropriate safety and etiquette guidelines.

The actual distribution of time between Outcomes is at the discretion of the centre. However, one possible approach is to distribute the available time as follows:

♦ Outcome 1: 12 hours
♦ Outcome 2: 10 hours
♦ Outcome 3: 18 hours

Throughout this Unit, learner activities should relate to their personal or vocational interests. For example learners should use social media relating to their academic work, leisure pursuits such as hobbies, pastimes, recreational, sporting and entertainment preferences in order to stimulate and advance their own personal and educational interests.

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

The Outcomes can be assessed in a variety of ways. A traditional approach would involve the testing of knowledge through a selected response instrument (such as a multiple choice test). It is recommended that if this approach is adopted then **all** of the knowledge and understanding in this Unit is combined into a single test that samples from the knowledge domain, with an appropriate pass mark. For example, a multiple-choice test, comprising 25 questions, each with four options (A−D), could have a pass mark of 15. The observation checklist would **not sample** the practical abilities in Outcome 3.The remaining practical competencies could be assessed through observation of candidate activity throughout the duration of the Unit (and recorded on an observation checklist).

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Another approach to assessment would be the creation and maintenance of a web log, which would record candidate activity throughout the Unit. This would log, on a daily or weekly basis, what candidates learn and what they do. However, their posts would have to satisfy the relevant Performance Criteria. So, for example, the post(s) that relates to Outcome 1, Performance Criterion (b), would have to provide the identifications of the different types of social media (or provide a link to such identifications with some narrative). Practical activities could also be recorded *via* the blog. When practical activity is recorded on a blog (narratively), authentication could involve a photograph or video of candidate activity (this could be included as part of their post). Not every practical task would require authentication; at this level it is acceptable for some posts to be a simple description of appropriate practical activities. When necessary, separate authentication (such as oral questioning) could be used for verification purposes.

The critical aspect is that the blog is an **overall** accurate reflection of the practical activities (and, therefore, the associated skills) carried out by the learner during the life of the Unit.

Another approach would involve the creation and maintenance of an e-portfolio. The e-portfolio would include all of the statements, identifications, descriptions and selections necessary to satisfy the criteria relating to cognitive competencies, together with digital artefacts that provide evidence of their practical abilities. Digital artefacts would include screenshots, digital photographs, audio and video recordings, etc that collectively evidence candidates' competencies. Some form of authentication would be required. This could be as simple as a statement of originality, signed by the candidate and the assessor.

Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres that wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at **www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment**.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Social Media Literacy (SCQF level 4)

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

This Unit provides opportunities to deliver some of the following Core Skills:

♦ *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* (SCQF level 4)
♦ *Communication* (SCQF level 4)
♦ *Working with Others* (SCQF level 4)

Several of the Core Skills in *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* can be addressed in this Unit. There are opportunities to select and start application software, use tools, enter and edit data, locate information, use search techniques, select information, and recognise security risks and act accordingly.

Some of the Core Skills in *Communication* can be addressed in this Unit. There are opportunities to pick out important ideas and key points, choose a format, include information or ideas, present information and use spelling, grammar and punctuation to make your writing clear.

One or more of the Core Skills in *Working with Others* can be addressed in this Unit. There are opportunities to carry out a role in a co-operative activity, and seek and offer support.

In addition to Core Skills, this Unit provides opportunities to develop citizenship skills.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

General information for learners

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

This Unit aims to improve your knowledge of, and skills with, social media. It will also help you to appreciate the importance of social media in the modern world.

This Unit is about using and understanding social media such as Facebook™ and Twitter™. While most people use social media to some extent, the background to social media (what it is, how it came about, etc) is little known. Also, the implications of the use of social media are not well understood. These implications can affect your employment or relationships. There are some extravagant claims made for the influence of social media (such as Twitter-inspired revolutions) and this Unit seeks to put those claims into perspective.

It also shows how social media can be used for a variety of purposes, beyond simple status updates, including the educational potential of the medium.

The social media studied includes a wide range of modern media including, but not limited to, social networks (such as Facebook™), blogs (such as Twitter™), VOIP (such as Skype™), and virtual worlds (such as Second Life™).

The Unit is designed for **beginners**. It covers a wide range of knowledge and skills including:

♦   how social media came about
♦   the types of social media you can use
♦   what you can use social media for
♦   your rights and responsibilities
♦   knowing your digital footprint
♦   how to develop a good social media presence
♦   when to use (and not use) social media
♦   how to avoid the dangers of social media
♦   how to protect yourself
♦   dos and don'ts of using social media
♦   using social media with family and friends
♦   using social media for learning

No previous knowledge or experience of computers is presumed. It is designed for the beginner who wants to learn how to use social media safely and productively.

The assessment may take different forms. It will be straight-forward and not take much time away from your learning. It may involve a short test of your knowledge and some practical tasks, or it may simply be a record of your activities during the Unit. The focus of the Unit is on learning — not assessing.

The key goal of this Unit is to teach you to be a knowledgeable, responsible and active user of social media so that you can confidently use it for personal or educational purposes.

This Unit is part of a series of Units on social media. You may progress to the next Unit in the series (*Social Media Literacy* at SCQF level 5) on completion of this Unit if you wish to improve your knowledge and skills in this area.