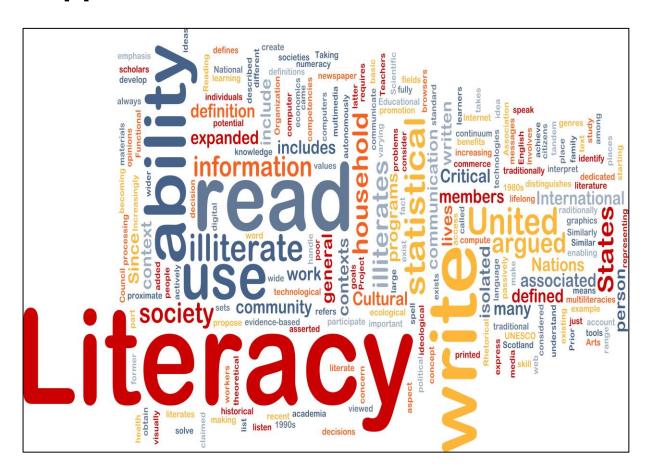# National 4 Literacy Unit

# Additional learning and teaching Support Notes



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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this document for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

# Contents

# Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide additional advice and guidance on approaches to learning and teaching programmes in the National Literacy Unit at SCQF level 4.

These are intended for teachers and lecturers and should be read in conjunction with the:

♦ Literacy (National 4) Unit Specification
♦ Literacy (National 4) Unit Support Notes

And where the National Literacy Unit is part of the National 4 Course in English:

♦ National 4 English Course Specification
♦ National 4 English Course Support Notes

# Additional support for oral communication

In this package, the aim is to offer additional support to teacher/lecturers by clarifying what we understand to be usual practice in aspects of learning and teaching. This is not designed to be something extra for learners to undertake.

This package aims to enhance the support for Literacy (National 4) Unit in its coverage of Core Skills Communication at SCQF Level 4. The learning and teaching approaches mentioned here are not exhaustive and are for guidance only.

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The skills that are being clarified and exemplified are:

♦ oral communication skills in a variety of forms relevant for learning, life and work.

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Learners will develop the ability to produce and respond to straightforward oral communication. At this level, learners may need limited support and reassurance.

Learners should be able to:

♦ convey appropriate information, opinions, and/or ideas
♦ sequence and link information, opinions, and ideas
♦ use appropriate vocabulary in an appropriate range of spoken language structures
♦ take account of situation and audience during delivery
♦ respond to others, taking account of their contributions

**Responsibility of all**
All practitioners have responsibility for the development of learners' literacy. How this takes place will vary depending on the context or subject area. All Centres should have strategies in place to ensure there is a shared understanding of professional roles, of how learners progress in literacy and of sound approaches to literacy teaching and learning.

# Approaches to learning and teaching oral communication skills

The purpose of this section is to provide general advice and guidance on approaches to learning and teaching oral communication skills within Literacy (National 4) Unit.

It is likely that the Literacy (National 4) Unit will be used in school, college, community and vocational settings. The advice and guidance in this section covers these sectors and practitioners will use their professional judgement in designing learning programmes for the Unit so that it is appropriate, relevant and motivating for learners.

Examples of contexts for the development of literacy skills might include subject activities, work experience, cross-curricular activities, work/leisure activities, daily routine, interests/hobbies, local issues, study/learning activities and work based learning.

Practitioners should provide opportunities for personalisation and choice to ensure that learning is relevant and motivating. For example:

♦ asking adult learners to choose oral texts which are relevant to their lives
♦ encouraging learners' own choice of oral presentation topics
♦ adopting a flexible approach to group discussion/presentations
♦ giving individual feedback with suggestions and next steps
♦ generating naturally occurring evidence when individual learners are ready

**Texts**
Oral based texts can be used as the focus for generating evidence of oral communication skills. These texts are most likely to be non-fiction, ie functional or transactional in nature.

Functional texts are texts which are used in everyday life, for example, in school, at home or in the workplace. These texts have a clear purpose, for example, to instruct or to explain.

Transactional texts, often spoken, are texts used to communicate between people. They are also used in everyday life to give information, for example, to describe something that has happened or to persuade someone.

Some examples of oral-based texts in different formats are the following:

| Text Types | Examples |
|---|---|
| Texts | audio-books, webcasts, spoken versions of written texts, discussions, speeches, debates, talks or presentations, telephone conversations, role plays, interviews, verbal instructions, transactions, dialogue with peers or with a teacher/tutor |
| Media texts | informational films, factual radio programmes, TV programmes eg documentaries, broadcast news, spoken word-based advertisements |
| Multimodal texts (texts which contain a number of elements which 'come together' to create meaning) | webcasts, web conferencing, audio clips web pages, audio blogs, wikis |

Where appropriate, and to provide pace and challenge for learners, more complex texts and activities should be introduced and developed.

Learners will be encouraged to communicate clearly and will be given opportunities to practise their oral communication skills in order to build confidence. Self-evaluation and supportive peer evaluation will support learners in building confidence and identifying areas for improvement.

Teachers /tutors should select contexts that will be meaningful and relevant for learners. Using group discussion as a means of learning will support learners in developing oral communication skills.

It is important that learners develop the ability to use language, content and structure which are appropriate to audience and purpose. Modelling can support learners to develop an awareness of appropriateness.

Learners may need support in talking, especially where learners lack confidence, and consideration should be given to such aspects as choice of subject for discussion, room layout, group size, gender and age of the learners and group dynamics. Allowing personalisation and choice in terms of topic, context and audience will support learners.


There are many resources that provide advice on presentation delivery, such as pace, audience awareness, and use of visual aids. Education Scotland has a useful document, "Advice for students on Individual Presentation", available on their site.
See also: http://www2.napier.ac.uk/gus/writing_presenting/presentations.html.

Some learners may benefit from a review of note taking, and how to use prompt headings and methodologies. Education Scotland has produced an online study skills resource that reviews note taking. See also:
http://www2.napier.ac.uk/gus/managing_information/note_making.htmlLearner.

**Examples**

Three learning and teaching ideas[1] related to oral communication are given below, one free standing, one from across learning, and one in a vocational context.

| Learning context | Suggested oral communication activities | Suggested learning and teaching focus |
|---|---|---|
| Standalone Unit | presenting a straightforward informative talk on a topic and then responding to questions from the audience | Selecting and using information; use of visual aids |
| | participating in a small group discussion in order to reach a consensus on a topic | Roles/turn-taking within group discussion |
| | using details from a straightforward oral text, such as a radio broadcast, to support opinions in a group discussion | Roles/turn-taking within group discussion |
| | listening to a radio broadcast, summarising the main ideas and relevant supporting details and presenting to an individual or group | Selecting information; Using appropriate structure; |
| | listening to a short segment of a football match discussing with a partner or group how the radio announcer helps the listener visualise the game | Selecting information; Roles/turn-taking within group discussion |
| Across-learning situation | explaining a cooking procedure to an individual or group and then responding to questions from the audience | Focus on intonation and pace; using appropriate structure |
| | giving an oral presentation about a scientific breakthrough using a timeline to illustrate the order of events | Focus on intonation and pace; using appropriate structure |
| | participating in a group discussion on views and reactions to a major news event in modern studies | roles/turn-taking within group discussion |
| Vocational context | acting on a telephone complaint from a customer which has some detail | Use of appropriate register |
| | discussing a short, straightforward work briefing and taking appropriate action | Roles/turn-taking within group discussion; |
| | following the main thread of a straightforward group discussion on a local issue and contributing with some reasoned argument/opinions | Roles/turn-taking within group discussion; taking account of others |

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[1] For more examples see the talking and listening sections of the *Unit Support Notes for Literacy (National 4) Unit*.

| | taking part in an uncomplicated interview | Using appropriate structure and register; Roles/turn-taking; |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | giving a short informal talk and answering some questions on some aspect of work undertaken | Active listening; selecting information |

# Learning context: Standalone

## Instructions to practitioner

## Discussing effectiveness of a football match on radio

### Learner activity

Listening to a short segment of a football match and discussing with a partner or group how the radio announcer helps the listener to visualise the game.

### Suggested learning and teaching focus

Preparatory activities such as an initial discussion on radio techniques may support learners to engage with what they are hearing. Learners should be able to identify the ideas within the oral communication.

Teachers or lecturers may want to review the following:

Note taking skills — learners should
♦ consider the audience and purpose of the text
♦ select and use relevant information for the activity
♦ try to organise examples from the text

Selecting information
♦ repeating, reflecting, paraphrasing
♦ highlighting key information
♦ summarising
♦ listing ideas and details
♦ selecting particular words/phrases/ideas

Group discussion skills
♦ review how to respond to others appropriately. For example, a learner may repeat information, or ask or answer questions
♦ review appropriate non-verbal conventions — eg making appropriate eye contact, posture or gestures, pausing at appropriate points
♦ provide suggestions for how a learner may contribute to a group such as analysing, supporting, summarising, or challenging what others say
♦ review how learners can take account of the contributions of others — eg by listening and responding to points of view, answering questions, asking questions to clarify, or expanding points briefly if necessary
♦ ensure learner speaks loudly enough for listeners to hear, and that they try to vary pace and tone
♦ review use of vocabulary, register, and sentence structures which are mainly appropriate to purpose and audience. There should be some attempt to vary these as appropriate — eg rephrasing a point in simpler terms to aid the understanding of others

# Learning context: Standalone

## Instructions to learner

## Discussing effectiveness of a football match on radio

### Learner activity

This activity involves developing your oral communication skills. You will have the opportunity to listen to a short segment of a football match from the radio. You will then discuss with a partner or group how the radio announcer helps the listener to visualise and enjoy the game.

During the course of the activity you will make notes and discuss your views of the radio sports broadcast.

### Task 1 – Listening to the football match radio broadcast
You have a short segment of a football match radio broadcast to analyse and make notes on. Consider the purpose and target audience as well as the techniques employed by the broadcast. You might find it helpful to make notes under the following headings:

♦ how effective is the commentator at including details such as names and statistics of players, actions in game, and interesting facts about the teams, location, spectators?
♦ how is the game presented?
  — pace of the commentator to make the game sound exciting/boring/important/ surprising
  — use of background sounds to hold the listeners' attention
  — use of facts and statistics
  — use of words or phrases to convey atmosphere of game and to describe the game
♦ does the radio broadcast work?

Teacher or lecturer may wish to put a brief summary of the radio broadcast here.

### Task 2 – Discuss football match radio broadcast with partner or group
Having listened to and made some notes on the radio broadcast you will have the opportunity to compare your views with a partner. Compare your notes on the news broadcast.

With your partner:

♦ discuss the content and techniques used in the radio broadcast. What were the main things in the broadcast that helped you visualise and enjoy/not enjoy the game? Eg Do you know the score? Do you know who scored? Was there anyone sent off?
♦ What are your reasons for choosing these things?

**Task 3 – Present a summary of your views of radio broadcast (optional)**

Give a brief summary of your views of the radio broadcast to the class. Remember to use examples from the broadcast to support your opinion and when answering questions from the audience.

# Learning context: Across-learning situation

## Instructions to practitioner

## Group discussion in modern studies

### Learner activity

Participate in a group discussion on views and reactions to a major news event in a modern studies class.

**Suggested learning and teaching focus:**
Learning could start with finding out what learners already know about the topic and identify aspects they would like to know more about. A review of bias and exaggeration may be necessary.

Teachers or lecturers may also want to review the following:

Note taking skills — learners should
♦ consider the audience and purpose of text
♦ select and use relevant information for the activity
♦ try to organise examples from the text

Selecting information
♦ repeating, reflecting, paraphrasing
♦ highlighting key information
♦ summarising
♦ listing ideas and details
♦ selecting particular words/phrases/ideas

Group discussion skills
♦ review how to respond to others appropriately. For example, a learner may repeat information, or ask or answer questions.
♦ review appropriate non-verbal conventions — eg making appropriate eye contact, posture or gestures, pausing at appropriate points
♦ provide suggestions for how a learner may contribute to a group such as analysing, supporting, summarising, or challenging what others say.
♦ review how learners can take account of the contributions of others — eg by listening and responding to points of view, answering questions, asking questions to clarify, or expanding points briefly if necessary
♦ ensure learner speaks loudly enough for listeners to hear, and that they try to vary pace and tone
♦ review use of vocabulary, register, and sentence structures which are mainly appropriate to purpose and audience. There should be some attempt to vary these as appropriate — eg rephrasing a point in simpler terms to aid the understanding of others

# Learning context: Across-learning situation

## Instructions to learner

## Group discussion in modern studies

**Learner activity**

This activity involves developing your oral communication skills. During your modern studies class you will have the opportunity to participate in a group discussion which will consider the views and reactions of the press to a news event dealing with democracy in Scotland. You will examine the news articles from two or three different newspapers and identify and discuss their views for example: do you think they are for or against the issue? You may want to think about ways words and pictures are used in trying to make a point.

**Task 1 – Making and organising notes on the activity**

(Teacher or lecturer may wish to put a brief summary of the topic here.)

♦   read the news articles you have been given and write a short list of main points, including any examples of the way words and pictures are used to make a point. Make sure you are able to describe the examples and to give reasons for choosing them.

**Task 2 – Discuss the news articles with a partner or group**

Having examined and made some notes on the news articles you will have the opportunity to compare your notes and views with a partner or group.

With your partner or group:
♦   consider the main points being made in the articles. Compare any ways you thought words and pictures were used to make a point. Remember to describe the examples and justify your decisions with evidence.
♦   consider the amount of detail, the type, and the level of complexity in the source.

# Learning context: Vocational

## Instructions to practitioner

## An interview for a college course

### Learner activity

Take part in an interview such as for a place at a local FE college or job.

### Suggested learning and teaching focus:
Preparatory activities such as an initial discussion about the types of interviews and typical questions may support learners to engage with the activity.

Teachers or lecturers may want to review the following:

Selecting information
♦  repeating, reflecting, paraphrasing
♦  highlighting key information
♦  summarising
♦  listing ideas and details
♦  selecting particular words/phrases/ideas

Listening skills
♦  review how to respond to interviewer appropriately. For example, a learner may repeat information, or ask or answer questions.
♦  review appropriate non-verbal conventions — eg making appropriate eye contact, posture or gestures, pausing at appropriate points

Speaking skills
♦  ensure learner speaks loudly enough for listeners to hear, and that they try to vary pace and tone
♦  review sequencing and linking information clearly and in order when presenting — eg giving instructions in the correct order; giving a short talk with a recognisable beginning and end, and basic linkage
♦  review appropriate non-verbal conventions — eg making appropriate eye contact, posture or gestures, pausing at appropriate points
♦  review strategies to help learners to engage with both topic and audience.
♦  review use of vocabulary, register, and sentence structures which are mainly appropriate to purpose and audience. There should be some attempt to vary these as appropriate — eg rephrasing a point in simpler terms to aid the understanding of others

# Learning Context: Vocational

## Instructions to learner

## An interview for a college course

### Learner activity

This activity involves developing your oral communication skills. You will have the opportunity to take part in an interview for a course at a local further education college.

### Task 1 Preparing for the interview
Consider what questions you may be asked and make some brief notes on how you would answer them. Here are some examples:

♦ why do you want to attend this further education college?
♦ why are you interested in this particular course?
♦ what are your favourite subjects and why?
♦ what are your strengths?
♦ what extracurricular activities do you enjoy?
♦ what are your plans for the future?

Remember to think about how you present yourself to the interviewer.

### Task 2 Responding appropriately to questions
It is important to prepare for the interviewer's questions. The following points will help you:

♦ review your notes and practise. Make sure you can give examples of relevant activities you have done.
♦ think about what questions the interviewer might ask and prepare answers for them.
♦ ask a friend what questions they might ask and answer them. It will be good practice.
♦ use good eye contact.
♦ listen carefully to the question. If you don't understand it, ask the interviewer to repeat it or explain it.
♦ avoid giving one or two word answers — try to speak in complete sentences.
♦ make sure your mobile is turned off.

# Things for learners to think about

**Responding appropriately to questions**

It is important to prepare for your teacher's questions regarding your assignment. The following points will help you:

♦ review your notes, presentation script and slideshow, and /or written assignment. Make sure you know your sources
♦ think about what questions the teacher might ask and prepare answers for them
♦ ask a friend what questions they might ask and answer them. It will be good practice
♦ make sure your mobile is turned off
♦ listen carefully to the question. If you don't understand it, ask your teacher to repeat it or explain it
♦ use good eye contact
♦ avoid giving one or two word answers. Try to speak in complete sentences

**Writing or talking about your topic**

You should write an informative essay for your school magazine, newspaper, or blog on a topic that interests you. Using the notes you have made, remember to refer to specific details and features from the sources.

Remember an informative essay or talk usually has the following features:

♦ it has interesting language and an entertaining style.
♦ the opening:
  — engages the reader

  — conveys your interest of the topic

  — identifies the your topic and a few key details to intrigue the reader

  — provides a description of the topic that helps the reader understand it

♦ The main part:
  — uses specific details from your sources, analyses them, and gives your opinion on why they are effective in illustrating your point

  — uses a clear introduction for each new section and links it with your topic

  — links each section with appropriate words or phrases

♦ The conclusion:
  — makes clear your feelings about the topic as a whole

  — includes a final comment on the sources you used

# Things for practitioners to think about

**Performance criteria for oral presentation**

**Understanding**

The spoken presentation demonstrates understanding of the main point(s) of the subject matter of the assignment through some reference to relevant features of the subject matter.

**Analysis**

The spoken presentation explains some of the more obvious ways in which aspects of structure/style/language contribute to meaning/effect/impact.

**Evaluation**

The spoken presentation reveals a stated or implied personal reaction to the subject matter of the assignment, supported by some evidence.

**Expression**

Audible delivery and some use of verbal and non-verbal techniques indicate an attempt to communicate a discernible line of thought appropriate to purpose and audience.

**Interaction with audience**

Awareness is shown of the requirements and reactions of the audience and responses to questions are mainly relevant.

**Evidence requirements**

The individual spoken presentation, on an approach previously agreed by learner and teacher, in which the learner speaks critically about chosen text(s) or topic(s) not taught in class.

The spoken presentation should last a minimum of five minutes and should be followed by questions from an audience of no fewer than three people.

The learner must meet all of the performance criteria in one spoken presentation.

The learner may refer to materials during the assessment. Such materials will include the learner's chosen text(s) and may include an outline and preparatory notes (no more than the equivalent of two sides of A4 paper in total) which are the learner's own work.

A checklist and/or recording, with the notes used by the learner, should be retained as evidence of performance.

# Appendix 1: Progression in oral communication skills

The following table show skills progression in oral communication at SCQF Level 3, Level 4 and Level 5.

| SCQF 3 | SCQF 4 | SCQF 5 |
|---|---|---|
| **General skill**<br>Produce and respond to simple oral communication | **General skill**<br>Produce and respond to straightforward oral communication | **General skill**<br>Produce and respond to oral communication |
| **Specific skills**<br>♦ convey simple information, opinions, or ideas<br>♦ attempt to sequence and link information, opinions, or ideas<br>♦ use an appropriate range of spoken language structures<br>♦ take account of situation and audience during delivery<br>♦ respond to others, taking account of their contributions | **Specific skills**<br>♦ convey appropriate information, opinions, and/or ideas<br>♦ sequence and link information, opinions, and ideas<br>♦ use appropriate vocabulary in an appropriate range of spoken language structures<br>♦ take account of situation and audience during delivery<br>♦ respond to others, taking account of their contributions | **Specific skills**<br>♦ convey all essential information, opinions, or ideas with supporting detail accurately and coherently<br>♦ show skill in sequencing and linking information, opinions, and/or ideas<br>♦ use vocabulary and a range of spoken language structures appropriate to purpose and audience<br>♦ take account of situation and audience during delivery<br>♦ respond to others, taking account of their contributions |

In Literacy at SCQF **Level 3**, learners will develop simple oral communication which:

♦ enables them to take part in a simple interaction with one or more people — this will usually be a discussion on a simple topic
♦ conveys information, opinions, or ideas at a simple level
♦ sequences and links information clearly and in order — eg giving directions in the correct order
♦ uses simple vocabulary in an appropriate register. Vocabulary and sentence structures will allow the speaker's meaning to be conveyed
♦ speaks loudly enough for listeners to hear
♦ uses appropriate non-verbal conventions — eg making appropriate eye contact or gestures, pausing at appropriate times

♦ responds to others appropriately — eg by repeating information, or asking or answering questions

In Literacy at SCQF **Level 4**, learners will develop straightforward oral communication which:

♦ enables them to take take part in a straightforward interaction with one or more people — this will usually be a discussion on a straightforward topic, although candidates may also deliver a short talk with questions and answers
♦ conveys several items of information, opinions, or ideas
♦ sequences and links information clearly and in order when presenting — eg giving instructions in the correct order; giving a short talk with a recognisable beginning and end, and basic linkage
♦ uses vocabulary, register, and sentence structures which are mainly appropriate to purpose and audience. There should be some attempt to vary these as appropriate — eg rephrasing a point in simpler terms to aid the understanding of others
♦ speaks loudly enough for listeners to hear, and try to vary pace and tone
♦ uses appropriate non-verbal conventions — eg making appropriate eye contact, posture or gestures, pausing at appropriate points
♦ takes account of the contributions of others — eg by listening and responding to points of view, answering questions, asking questions to clarify, or expanding points briefly if necessary

In Literacy at SCQF **Level 5**, learners will develop oral communication which:

♦ enables them to take part in a spoken interaction with one or more people — this may be a discussion which has a clear purpose, is on a relevant topic, and allows for exploration and the reaching of a consensus. The candidate must make a significant contribution.
♦ Alternatively, the candidate can deliver a presentation which includes significant interaction with the audience. The presentation may be supported by images — eg illustrations, OHP handouts, models or images using IT or multimedia tools
♦ conveys all essential information or ideas — eg by developing an argument containing several sets of information, or by giving a demonstration, or by exploring an issue in some detail
♦ sequences and links to present information clearly and in order — eg a presentation, giving an overview in the introduction, presenting information in a logical sequence, and giving a conclusion summarising the main points
♦ uses vocabulary, register and sentence structures which are appropriate to a clear purpose and audience. These should be varied as necessary. Some formal language may be used — eg use of specialist vocabulary
♦ speaks loudly enough for listeners to hear and adjusts pace and modulation to meet the needs of the audience
♦ makes appropriate use of eye contact, posture, and gesture
♦ takes account of the contributions of others — eg by listening and responding to points of view, answering questions, asking questions to clarify or explore in greater depth, summarising or expanding on points made

# Appendix 2: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications on SQA's website: http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14976.html
- Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work
- Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment
- Course Specifications
- Design Principles for National Courses
- *Guide to Assessment* (June 2008)
- Overview of Qualification Reports
- *Overview of Qualification Reports*
- *Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas*
- *Research Report 4 — Less is More: Good Practice in Reducing Assessment Time*
- *Coursework Authenticity — a Guide for Teachers and Lecturers*
- SCQF Handbook: User Guide (*published 2009)* and SCQF level descriptors (to be reviewed during 2011 to 2012): www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/4595.html
- *SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*
- *Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool*
- SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools
- SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education
- SQA e-assessment web page: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/5606.html

# Administrative information

**Published:**        April 2013 (draft version 1.0)

## History of changes to Advanced Higher draft Course/Unit Support Notes

| Course details | Version | Description of change | Authorised by | Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|
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