

# National 4 English Course 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).

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# Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the National 4 English Course. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering the course and its units. They should be read in conjunction with the course specification, the added value unit specification, and the unit specifications for the units in the course.

# General guidance on the course

## Aims

National 4 English offers learners opportunities to develop and extend a wide range of skills, including communication, independent learning, critical literacy, personal, interpersonal and team working, and creative thinking. In particular, National 4 English aims to enable learners to develop the ability to:

- ◆ read, write, talk and listen, as appropriate to purpose, audience and context
- ◆ understand, analyse and evaluate texts in the contexts of language, literature and media
- ◆ create and produce texts, as appropriate to purpose, audience and context, through the application of their knowledge and understanding of language

## Progression into this course

Entry to this course is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills and knowledge required by the following or by equivalent experience:

- ◆ National 3 English course or relevant component units

In terms of prior learning and experience, relevant experiences and outcomes may also provide an appropriate basis for doing this course.

### Experiences and outcomes

National Courses have been designed to draw on and build on the curriculum experiences and outcomes as appropriate. Qualifications developed for the senior phase of secondary education are benchmarked against SCQF levels. SCQF level 4 and the curriculum level 4 are broadly equivalent in terms of level of demand although qualifications at SCQF level 4 will be more specific to allow for more specialist study of subjects.

Learners who have completed Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes will find these an appropriate basis for doing the course.

# Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this course

This section provides further advice and guidance about skills, knowledge and understanding developed in the course.

- ◆ the development of key communication and literacy skills in reading, writing, talking and listening, as appropriate to purpose and audience
- ◆ understanding, analysing and evaluating straightforward texts in the contexts of language, literature and/or media
- ◆ creating and producing straightforward texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience in a range of contexts
- ◆ knowledge and understanding of language

For the purposes of the course, the skills of reading, writing, talking and listening can be further defined as:

## Reading

- ◆ engage with, consider, and select the main ideas of a straightforward text
- ◆ identify and select straightforward information from a text
- ◆ analyse and evaluate a writer's choice and use of language
- ◆ evaluate the overall effects and impact of a text

## Writing

- ◆ communicate straightforward ideas
- ◆ communicate straightforward information
- ◆ explore, describe and communicate personal experience
- ◆ write creatively and imaginatively in a literary form (for example short story, poetry or drama script)

## Talking

- ◆ communicate straightforward ideas and/or personal experience
- ◆ communicate straightforward information
- ◆ use aspects of non-verbal communication

## Listening

- ◆ engage with, consider and select the main ideas of a straightforward spoken text
- ◆ identify and select straightforward information from a spoken text
- ◆ analyse and evaluate spoken language
- ◆ evaluate the overall effects and impact of a spoken text

Note: teachers and lecturers should refer to the added value unit specification for mandatory information about the skills, knowledge and understanding to be covered in this course, as the course assessment will be based on this.

Skills, knowledge and understanding to be included in the course will be appropriate to the SCQF level of the course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level ([www.sqa.org.uk/scqf](http://www.sqa.org.uk/scqf)).

## **Progression from this course**

Progression from National 4 English includes opportunities for vertical and lateral progression to:

- ◆ National 5 English Course or relevant component units
- ◆ Literacy (National 5) Unit
- ◆ National Certificates
- ◆ further education
- ◆ employment or training

# Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

Learners should have opportunities to build on prior learning and to increase their knowledge about, and use of, Literacy and English skills.

Teachers and lecturers have considerable flexibility to select coherent contexts that stimulates and challenges their learners, offering both breadth and depth. The selection of appropriate and meaningful contexts for learners will depend on the stage reached in their learning and their future needs. It is not essential that the contexts of language, literature and media are all covered in the course; however, we recommend a balance of coverage. For learners intending to go on to study National 5 English, some study of literature is desirable.

Developing communication and literacy skills is fundamental to the course in National 4 English. There is a close, and often seamless, relationship between Literacy and English. This is reflected in the approaches to assessment for the English: Analysis and Evaluation unit, English: Creation and Production unit, and the Literacy (National 4) unit. There will be a cross-over of skills, and teachers and lecturers should encourage learners to make connections in their learning across different aspects of the course: many of the teaching and learning activities chosen will be inter-related. There are opportunities to combine the learning and teaching of the English: Analysis and Evaluation unit with the English: Creation and Production unit and the Literacy (National 4) unit. SQA's secure website contains three assessment support packs containing examples of how to combine the assessment of English units with the Literacy (National 4) unit. You can access these through your SQA co-ordinator.

Literacy has a valuable role in cross-curricular and vocational education. For this reason, when choosing suitable contexts for learning and when combining assessments, the texts are likely to be functional or transactional in nature.

While the English: Creation and Production and English: Analysis and Evaluation units provide ideal preparatory work for the added value unit, in some circumstances it could be the case that discussion of a language, literary, or media text for the added value unit may involve activities that provide assessment evidence for the discussion element of the added value unit as well as evidence for talking in the English: Creation and Production unit and Literacy (National 4) unit. Similarly, an exercise that requires the close and careful reading of a poem or short story might contribute towards the development of the key skills required for the assessment of reading in the English: Analysis and Evaluation and Literacy (National 4) units.

Learning about Scotland and Scottish culture will enrich the learners' learning experience and help them to develop the skills for learning, life and work they need to prepare them for taking their place in a diverse, inclusive and participative Scotland and beyond. Where there are opportunities to contextualise approaches to learning and teaching to Scottish contexts (including Scottish literature), teachers and lecturers should consider this.

It is important to emphasise the significance of thinking skills to success in National 4 English. Teachers and lecturers should give learners opportunities to think for themselves and develop their own ideas and responses. All units require learners to think, for example:

- ◆ dealing with a passage of reading or listening for the English: Analysis and Evaluation unit, or for Literacy (National 4)
- ◆ dealing with the language, literature or media texts they have engaged with for the added value unit
- ◆ thinking through issues as part of discursive writing for the English: Creation and Production unit, and writing for Literacy (National 4)
- ◆ thinking about ideas raised as part of a discussion for the added value unit or for the English: Creation and Production unit, or Literacy (National 4)

It is important teachers and lecturers provide opportunities for learners to apply the skills that they learn during the course. Teaching and learning results in learners acquiring important skills, and it is through assessment that we see and measure these.

### **Approaches to literature**

For National 4 English, there are no restrictions on text selection. This allows for personalisation and choice.

Learners should explore the techniques of writing, in particular the writing techniques specific to the writers and texts they study as part of the course. This allows them to conduct analysis of the techniques of writers they study and nurture the growth and application of their own writing skills. Teachers and lecturers should encourage learners to explore connotative, metaphorical language and how it contributes to meaning and effect.

The study of literature provides opportunities to incorporate discussion-based activities. For example, if a study is being made of a poem, learners could use a group discussion to explore specific stanzas or sections of the poem, following teacher-led introductory work. There could be group annotation, or collaborative annotation of the poems, with groups looking at writers' techniques or themes, or key features of the text(s). These approaches could encourage greater independence of learning.

Learners could develop their listening skills by listening to a podcast, documentary or online interview featuring a writer they are studying.



In responses for the added value unit, and when analysing a writer's use of language for the Analysis and Evaluation unit, learners must make reference to the texts they are studying. A reference does not have to take the form of a quotation, for example a reference could be:

- ◆ a summary of:
  - a play, novel or short story
  - what a character in a play, novel or short story said
  - an important event or a moment
- ◆ an aspect of conflict
- ◆ a description of aspects of setting, or comments on characterisation, for example a character's mental state or feelings

There is a place for a quotation, for example in drama where analysis of a speech or dialogue might reveal key aspects of characterisation or theme. In poetry there could be words and/or expressions where straightforward analysis is required of word choice, use of metaphor, alliteration or repetition. Learners could also use this approach for the analysis of short stories.

Teachers and lecturers should encourage learners to evaluate the impact of reading the texts they are studying. They might want to consider whether the impact was overall or confined to certain sections of the text(s).

### **Approaches to language**

Learners could engage with news, information or opinion texts, written or spoken, either online or in print. There may be scope for personalisation and choice with regard to texts, and teachers and lecturers should encourage learners to investigate topics, issues or themes of interest to them.

Learners could undertake a range of reading and listening activities, including reading print or online news or feature writing, listening to television, radio, or online news with a view to understanding the use of persuasion, bias, and other devices, such as the use layout, headlines and/or slogans. Learners can express their understanding, analysis and evaluation of texts by a range of means, including orally or in writing.

Learners may create and produce their own written or spoken texts and present these to an audience. This helps them to develop their knowledge of written and spoken conventions of language, using techniques, for example register, persuasion, dialogue, questioning, dialect and/or jargon.

## **Approaches to media**

Learners could undertake a range of activities focusing on media texts, involving the study of a film or TV drama, sitcom, soap opera, comedy or documentary. Other types of texts that may be appropriate for language study at this level include song lyrics, reality TV, short biographies and news features.

For film and TV drama, learners should study important scenes or sequences and develop an awareness of the work as a whole. They should develop an understanding of key film and TV drama aspects and techniques, for example use of camera, key sequence, characterisation, mise-en-scène, editing, setting, music or sound, special effects, plot and dialogue.

Learners can express their understanding, analysis and evaluation of texts by a range of means, orally or in writing. There may be scope for personalisation and choice with regard to a text and task; the study may contribute to the added value unit.

## **Supporting and developing talking and listening as integral to teaching and learning**

Teachers and lecturers should encourage learners to develop their discussion and presentation skills, as appropriate, in order to explore and develop their understanding of topics, texts or issues that are important to them. Discussion can be a hugely effective contributor to learning. Group discussion in which there are different perspectives can lead to productive, creative interactions and a deeper understanding for learners.

## **Example of a media study**

Learners analyse and evaluate media techniques in a TV sitcom. The focus is on two characters in a situation which involves conflict. Learners could:

- ◆ work as a whole group with teacher or lecturer modelling the activity based on one episode
- ◆ work in groups on selected examples from a range of episodes
- ◆ individually analyse and evaluate one example of their own choice
- ◆ apply this learning in a written or spoken form

## **An example of texts or sources**

TV sitcom episodes

Teaching and learning could focus on:

- ◆ narrative, characterisation, setting, analysis of language, for example:
  - what 'story' does the sitcom tell?
  - who are two of the main characters, how are they different and how are they in conflict?
  - use of setting, camera, mise-en-scène, music or sound in creating atmosphere, humour or conflict
  - use of word choice to create characterisation and/or conflict, for example use of pun, emotive language, exaggeration, connotation, irony and/or repetition
- ◆ learners working in groups on selected examples of key incidents from sitcoms, using the model of analysis suggested above. The teacher or lecturer can make the selection but could allow for some learner choice
- ◆ learners working individually on their own analysis and evaluation of the selected episodes from sitcoms. They could respond to questions, write a critical response, or deliver an oral presentation based on their findings

# Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

Learners are expected to develop broad generic skills as an integral part of their learning experience. The course specification lists the skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work that learners should develop through this course. These are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and must be built into the course where there are appropriate opportunities. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the course.

## 1 Literacy

- 1.1 Reading
- 1.2 Writing
- 1.3 Listening and talking

## 5 Thinking skills

- 5.3 Applying
- 5.4 Analysing and evaluating

The table below provides some suggested opportunities of how these skills can be further developed within the course.

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work	Approaches for learning and teaching
1. Literacy	<p>1.1 Reading Teachers and lecturer may develop this with activities that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ involve fiction and information texts</li> <li>◆ use discussion to help learners engage with texts and identify the ideas within texts</li> </ul> <p>Activities to support learners in identifying the ideas within texts include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ asking and answering questions</li> <li>◆ comparing and contrasting</li> <li>◆ sorting and sequencing</li> <li>◆ summarising and predicting</li> <li>◆ text completion</li> </ul> <p>Learners will benefit from activities focusing on evaluating the success of a text in relation to audience and purpose.</p>

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work	Approaches for learning and teaching
1. Literacy	<p>1.2 Writing</p> <p>Teachers and lecturers could encourage learners to plan their writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ by creating mind maps</li> <li>◆ through peer discussion where they consider the genre, structure and content of their writing</li> </ul> <p>Learners' writing will benefit from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ discussing structure and layout</li> <li>◆ building up sentences, by linking</li> <li>◆ planning paragraphs</li> <li>◆ use of topic sentences</li> <li>◆ developing vocabulary</li> <li>◆ developing technical skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling</li> <li>◆ using writing frames and scaffolding</li> </ul> <p>1.3 Listening and talking</p> <p>Wherever appropriate, teachers and lecturers should encourage learners to use the language skills in real language situations. In such situations, particularly drawn from life and work, activities may involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ asking and answering questions</li> <li>◆ listening for and making comparisons/contrasts</li> <li>◆ summarising and predicting</li> <li>◆ evaluating the success of the text</li> </ul>
5. Thinking skills	<p>5.3 Applying</p> <p>This is the ability to use existing information to solve a problem in a different context, and to plan, organise and complete a task that reflects what may be required by life or work situations.</p> <p>In order to do this in a supported way at this level, teachers and lecturers should give learners the chance to work at language tasks that are carefully stepped and sequenced, allowing them to work from what they know and to apply it to different situations.</p>

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work	Approaches for learning and teaching
5. Thinking skills	<p data-bbox="699 275 1305 566">5.4 Analysing and evaluating Wherever possible, teachers and lecturers should give learners opportunities to practise developing these skills in real communicative contexts. A range of kinds of texts is vital to developing analysing and evaluating skills in listening and reading in order to develop learners' awareness of such aspects as:</p> <ul data-bbox="699 607 1305 770" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="699 607 1305 678">◆ summarising main ideas and/or important information</li> <li data-bbox="699 689 1305 725">◆ distinguishing fact and opinion</li> <li data-bbox="699 736 1305 770">◆ discussing examples of bias and balance</li> </ul>

# Approaches to assessment

## Added value

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of added value. At National 4 the added value is assessed in the added value unit. At National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, the added value is assessed in the course assessment.

Information in the course specification and the added value unit specification about the assessment of added value is mandatory.

In National 4 English, the added value consists of challenge and application.

Learners must provide evidence of their ability to apply their language skills to investigate a chosen text(s). Learners must demonstrate their ability to understand, analyse and evaluate a text(s) using their reading skills, and present their findings in the form of a critical essay or oral presentation. They must also contribute to a discussion on a topic related to the text(s).

Learners, in discussion with their teacher or lecturer, must select and study one text (or texts), which has particular relevance to them. The text(s) should be drawn from the contexts of language, literature or media.

The assignment will be set by centres within the following guidelines:

- ◆ learners must study one text (or texts)
- ◆ the text(s) can be prose fiction, drama, poetry, non-fiction, web pages, film or TV
- ◆ learners must undertake the assignment after they have studied the text(s)

The assignment has two parts, and learners must complete both.

### Part 1

Demonstrate understanding, analysis and evaluation of a selected text(s) by responding in one of two ways:

- ◆ write a critical essay of between 600 to 800 words
- Or
- ◆ give an oral presentation of approximately 5 minutes

The response must include:

- ◆ using your own words as far as possible, summarise the main points of the text(s), or part of a longer text
- ◆ by referring to examples, explain how the writer has used language effectively

## Part 2

Contribute to a group discussion, or discussion-based activity, on a topic related to the selected text(s). This discussion can take place at any point in the assessment process. It is not necessary to wait until completion of the critical essay or oral presentation.

Taking part in a group discussion will help them develop the following skills and knowledge:

- ◆ investigation and research skills
- ◆ knowledge and understanding of the selected text(s)
- ◆ planning and organisational skills
- ◆ IT skills
- ◆ presentation skills (where appropriate)
- ◆ ability to work independently and in collaboration with others
- ◆ ability to analyse and evaluate the selected text(s)
- ◆ ability to take notes, to draft and edit

Teachers and lecturers should support learners to carry out the assignment by providing:

- ◆ a clearly staged outline of the assessment, with timelines
- ◆ advice on how to choose and investigate the topic
- ◆ advice on how to work independently
- ◆ advice on presentation delivery (where appropriate) for example pace, audience awareness and/or use of visual aids
- ◆ advice on how to contribute effectively to a group discussion (including listening to others, turn taking and contributing ideas)

Topics for investigation in the assignment may include:

- ◆ a critical essay or oral presentation on a main character in a short story, drama, novel, poem, piece of non-fiction, film or TV programme
- ◆ a critical essay or oral presentation on a particular theme or issue in a short story, poem, piece of non-fiction, film or TV programme

More examples are provided in the added value unit assessment pack.



## **Preparation and support**

Teachers and lecturers could:

- ◆ support learners to take appropriate notes and annotations of a text
- ◆ ensure learners are aware of the need to keep a note of sources consulted, as well as the need to use their own words in order to avoid plagiarism
- ◆ support learners in their planning by using a learning log (an example log is in the unit assessment pack) or similar. This could help them to investigate their text(s) and prepare for the presentation of their findings via a critical essay or an oral presentation

## **Preparation for the added value unit (National 4 courses)**

The added value unit includes time that the teacher or lecturer can use to allow learners to prepare for and complete the course assessment. Teachers and lecturers can use this time near the start of the course and at various points throughout the course for consolidation and support. They can use it for preparation for unit assessment, and towards the end of the course for further integration, revision and preparation and/or gathering evidence for course assessment.

The National 4 English Added Value Unit is an assignment in which learners have to show the application of the skills learned in the course and to address the challenge of applying these in an investigation that they have chosen in discussion with their teacher or lecturer.

Reading is central to the added value unit, and teachers and lecturers should encourage reading for enjoyment as a life skill. Regular reading provides opportunities to broaden learners' intellectual, emotional, social and political horizons. The use of some self-selection of texts and peer recommendations could help to encourage pleasure in reading and contribute to the development of a positive attitude towards reading.

## **Showing skills of understanding, analysis and evaluation**

Learners should be able to identify, isolate and extract important information, or a writer's key ideas, from a straightforward text and put into their own words. Teachers and lecturers should encourage the practice of using a dictionary (either print or online) to explore the origins and definitions of words. The skill of vocabulary in context is also valuable for learners: how meaning can be worked out from the surrounding context. Learners should take on the challenge posed by unfamiliar vocabulary; that is, not being defeated or put off by it. Similarly, there is the skill of being able to identify which words are central to understanding the ideas of the passage, and which are not.

Learners should be able to explain a writer's straightforward ideas in their own words. The important word here is 'explain.' Learners must be able to show understanding of meaning. This often goes beyond word-for-word translation.

Learners should be aware of, and be able to recognise, common patterns of structure within pieces of writing. They should be able to comment on how

paragraphs are linked, and the effectiveness of opening and/or concluding sections, or paragraphs as well as the use of subheadings and titles.

### **Literature, film and television**

- ◆ drama: important techniques are characterisation, key scene(s), structure, ending, plot, conflict and/or setting
- ◆ prose: important techniques are characterisation, setting, language, key incident(s), climax, turning point and/or plot
- ◆ poetry: important techniques are word choice, feeling or mood, imagery, structure or shape, rhythm, rhyme and/or sound
- ◆ film and television: learners should study important scenes or sequences, in addition to developing an awareness of the work as a whole. They should develop an understanding of key techniques, for example use of camera, key sequence, characterisation, mise-en-scène, editing, setting, music or sound, special effects, plot and/or dialogue

Note: if dealing with a key scene in a prose or drama, or film and television text, learners should be able to explain what happens in the key scene and go on to explain why it is important for a character or a main idea or theme.

### **Non-fiction writing**

When exploring non-fiction texts the following initial questions will be helpful:

- ◆ What are the writer's main ideas?
- ◆ What is the most important information?
- ◆ Which language techniques are used to get these ideas and/or information across? For example, point of view, perspective, statistics, examples, headings, subheadings, repetition, bullet points, lists, questions, sentence structure, persuasive techniques, personal experience and/or humour
- ◆ What is the writer trying to do with this piece of writing? Is the intention to persuade you of something? Or is it to provoke some kind of reaction? How did you respond to it? Did it make you laugh? Were you sad, angry?
- ◆ What impact did the writing have on you? Was it effective?

### **Text selection**

Text selection has an important part to play in our work towards a diverse and inclusive curriculum where all learners feel they have a voice and a sense of belonging. The texts they study help them to understand their own worlds and the worlds of others. Text selection, therefore, has significance for all learners. Where possible, teachers and lecturers should have a discussion with learners about the texts they want to read (within the confines of available resources). This could be a focus for departmental or faculty planning and discussion.

Learners should experience a range of texts to show that reading offers them choice and is an interactive and enjoyable activity. A narrow focus limits choice and opportunities for learners to find connections with the texts they are studying.

The texts they read should cultivate intellectual and emotional curiosity, helping learners to find their own voice and expression. In order to do so they must find other voices that they can relate to, either in direct representation or indirectly through imaginative or empathetic response. An appropriate reference here is the metaphor devised by Rudine Sims Bishop, 'Mirrors, Windows and Sliding Glass Doors' (The Ohio State University, 1990). Within this metaphor, texts can be:

- ◆ mirrors: readers see themselves directly reflected in the text
- ◆ windows: the text offers readers a new view of their world, or a view of an imaginative world
- ◆ sliding glass doors: the text seems to allow readers imaginative entry into the world of the text

If learners do not feel included by the texts studied, they may feel excluded by the experience of reading critically. Equally, if they see only direct representations of themselves in these texts, they might be encouraged towards a limited and narrow view of the world and its diversity. In summary, learners should feel both included and challenged by the texts they read.

Teachers and lecturers should consider the following reflective questions when selecting texts to study for the critical essay:

- ◆ Does the text provide suitable challenge for the development of learners' skills, knowledge and understanding at National 4 level?
- ◆ Have learners had a say in what they want to read?
- ◆ Does the text meet the needs of a diverse and multicultural learner population?
- ◆ Does the text accommodate multiple perspectives, for example linguistic, religious, faith, ethnic, cultural, racial, gender, sex, sexual orientation, family, age, neurodiversity, disability?
- ◆ How would you address the ways in which the text might promote a certain cultural way of thinking, or view of the world?

Teachers and lecturers should encourage learners to:

- ◆ think critically about, and develop a critical stance towards, the texts they are reading. Taking a wider view, learners increasingly need to be able to think critically in order to be able to judge information and content online
- ◆ have opportunities to respond to texts through discussion and examine texts from different perspectives or through different lenses. The exchange of responses, perspectives and ideas helps to refine understanding and develop critical skills
- ◆ develop conceptual skills (to deal with ideas) in addition to functional skills of analysis. It is important that the texts they study allow them to do this

As a mediator of the texts studied, the teacher or lecturer has a key role guiding discussion in a careful and sensitive way. This may be especially true in the case of problematic or challenging content or language.

As learners read, or following reading, the teacher or lecturer could ask them to consider critical questions, for example:

- ◆ Whose point of view or voice is heard in the text? Why do you think the writer made this choice?
- ◆ Whose point of view might be missing? How would it change the text if their voice was heard?
- ◆ How does your personal experience and identity affect how you engage with the text?
- ◆ Do you think the text is trying to influence or change the way you think? If so, how?
- ◆ What do you think the writer wants you to believe or feel? How has the writer made you feel this way?

Some useful websites include:

Critical reading

[National Literacy Trust](#)

Professional practice

[Building racial literacy](#)

[Breaking the mould: principles for an anti-racist curriculum](#)

[Promoting race equality and anti-racist education: a curriculum which reflects diversity](#)

[Promoting race equality and anti-racist education: Literacy and English](#)

Text suggestions

[Scottish Book Trust: book lists](#)

[Penguin: Lit in Colour](#)

[Glasgow Women's Library](#)

# Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these course support notes is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the course.

It is important that centres are aware of and understand SQA's assessment arrangements for disabled learners, and those with additional support needs, when making requests for adjustments to published assessment arrangements. Centres will find more guidance on this in the series of publications on the [assessment arrangements web page](#).

# Appendix 1: reference documents

The following reference documents provide useful information and background.

- ◆ [Assessment Arrangements](#) (for learners with additional support needs)
- ◆ [Course Specification](#)
- ◆ [Qualification Verification Reports](#)
- ◆ [Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework \(SCQF\)](#)
- ◆ [SQA Understanding Standards](#)
- ◆ [SQA English common questions](#)
- ◆ [National e-Learning Offer](#)
- ◆ [Scottish Poetry Library](#)
- ◆ [The Association for Scottish Literature](#)
- ◆ [BBC Bitesize](#)

# Administrative information

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## History of changes to course support notes

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
2.0	Updated to reflect changes to added value unit assessment.	Qualifications Manager	May 2024

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Note: you are advised to check SQA's website ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version.

## Unit Support Notes — English: Creation and Production (National 4)



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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).



# Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the English: Creation and Production (National 4) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- ◆ the unit specification
- ◆ the course specification
- ◆ the added value unit specification
- ◆ the course support notes
- ◆ appropriate assessment support materials

# General guidance on the unit

## Aims

The general aim of this unit is to provide learners with the opportunity to develop talking and writing skills in familiar contexts. Learners develop the skills needed to create and produce straightforward texts in both written and oral forms.

Learners who complete this unit will be able to:

- ◆ create and produce straightforward written texts
- ◆ participate actively in straightforward spoken activities

## Progression into this unit

Entry is at the discretion of the centre and learners would normally be expected to have attained one of the following:

- ◆ National 3 English
- ◆ Literacy (National 3)
- ◆ other relevant prior learning and experience

## Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the National 4 English Course Support Notes.

If this unit is being delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

## Progression from this unit

Completion of this unit may provide progression to:

- ◆ National 5 English or any relevant component units
- ◆ further study or training
- ◆ employment

# Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

The following examples illustrate ways to develop the skills in this unit:

## **Example 1: approaches to literature: topics and key learning activities which afford opportunities for depth and choice**

Through their study of literature, learners will develop their skills for creative and reflective writing, using literary texts as a model for the production of short stories, script, diary, blog.

Learners will be encouraged to discuss the literature they study, and present their analysis and evaluation of aspects of texts to an audience. They may also have the opportunity to demonstrate this analysis and understanding through presentation of an interview/news bulletin/film/quiz show.

## **Example 2: approaches to developing and encouraging learners to engage in independent study in relation to their own writing programme**

Learners will be encouraged to write in a variety of creative and discursive ways in order to build their skills. They could create a folder of short and extended pieces of writing which demonstrate their learning.

They should be encouraged to reflect on personal experiences and their views on issues of interest and concern to them. They should have the opportunity to build their imaginative skills to create a setting, characters, structured plot, theme for short story or script. They should have the opportunity to develop their use of varied sentencing, paragraphing, and imagery, building on and utilising their skills in reading.

Learners should also have the opportunity to build on their knowledge of argumentative, or informative writing.

## **Example 3: developing writing strategies for the range of written genres**

Learners should have the opportunity to engage in short writing tasks which focus on a particular skill (for example writing an introduction, creating setting/character, using imagery). These will help build the skills and confidence learners need to engage in longer pieces of writing and ultimately the unit assessment.

## **Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work**

Information about developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work in this unit is given in the relevant course support notes.

# Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these unit support notes is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the unit.

Alternative approaches to unit assessment to take account of the specific needs of learners can be used. However, the centre must be satisfied that the integrity of the assessment is maintained and that the alternative approach to assessment will, in fact, generate the necessary evidence of achievement.

# Appendix 1: reference documents

The following reference documents provide useful information and background.

- ◆ [Assessment Arrangements](#) (for learners with additional support needs)
- ◆ [Course Specification](#)
- ◆ [Qualification Verification Reports](#)
- ◆ [Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework \(SCQF\)](#)
- ◆ [SQA Understanding Standards](#)
- ◆ [SQA English common questions](#)
- ◆ [National e-Learning Offer](#)
- ◆ [Scottish Poetry Library](#)
- ◆ [The Association for Scottish Literature](#)
- ◆ [BBC Bitesize](#)

# Administrative information

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**Superclass:** KB

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## History of changes to unit support notes

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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## Unit Support Notes — English: Analysis and Evaluation (National 4)



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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).

# Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the English: Analysis and Evaluation (National 4) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- ◆ the unit specification
- ◆ the course specification
- ◆ the added value unit specification
- ◆ the course support notes
- ◆ appropriate assessment support materials



# General guidance on the unit

## Aims

The general aim of this unit is to provide learners with the opportunity to develop reading and listening skills in the contexts of literature, language and media. Learners develop the skills needed to understand, analyse and evaluate straightforward texts.

Learners who complete this unit will be able to:

- 1 Understand, analyse and evaluate straightforward texts
- 2 Understand, analyse and evaluate straightforward spoken language

## Progression into this unit

Entry is at the discretion of the centre, and learners would normally be expected to have attained one of the following:

- ◆ National 3 English
- ◆ Literacy (National 3)
- ◆ other relevant prior learning and experience

## Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the National 4 English Course Support Notes.

If this unit is being delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

## Progression from this unit

Completion of this unit may provide progression to:

- ◆ National 5 English or any relevant component units
- ◆ further study or training
- ◆ employment

# Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

The following examples illustrate ways to develop the skills in this unit.

## **Approaches to developing and encouraging learners to engage in independent study in relation to their own reading programme**

Learners should be encouraged to engage in personal reading for enjoyment and keep a personal reading log or blog, as well as having the opportunity to engage in oral presentations, discussions, book groups, activities such as poster creation, letter to author, book blurb.

## **Developing close and extended reading strategies**

Learners should be able to recognise and understand some of the effect of key punctuation and sentence structure, such as: colon; parenthesis; dash; sentence type and length; effect of listing; use of imagery, tone, linkage. They should consider the purpose and audience for texts and be able to use the skills of inference making and summary to analyse and evaluate the effect of a text.

Learners should be given the opportunity to develop their understanding of the use of language for specific purposes across a broad range of texts.

# Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these unit support notes is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the unit.

Alternative approaches to unit assessment to take account of the specific needs of learners can be used. However, the centre must be satisfied that the integrity of the assessment is maintained and that the alternative approach to assessment will, in fact, generate the necessary evidence of achievement.

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