XSQA

Group Award Specification for:

Professional Development Award in Supported Employment Practice at SCQF level 7

Group Award Code: GJ1J 47

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Contents

1.   Introduction

The purpose of this document is to:

♦ Assist centres to implement, deliver and manage the qualification.
♦ Provide a guide for new staff involved in offering the qualification.
♦ Inform course managers teaching staff, assessors, learners, employers and higher education institutes (HEIs) of the aims and purpose of the qualification.
♦ Provide details of the range of learners the qualification is suitable for and progression opportunities.

The award originally came about in May 2012 as the result of the Scottish Government's initiative to develop and expand the provision of Supported Employment (SE) services in Scotland.

In 2013 ScotGov commissioned an evaluation of the pilot college delivery and, in response to the evaluation report, convened a panel comprised of members of the qualification development team, SQA, FE and SE employers. The panel was tasked to make recommendations to address issues identified within the report.

This revised award is the result of those recommendations.

The government strategy for supported employment is set out in the policy document, *A Working Life for All Disabled People: The Supported Employment Framework for Scotland (2010),* which acknowledges that many disabled people in Scotland face substantial barriers to gaining and sustaining work and that more needs to be done to support those who want to work.

Supported Employment services provide individualised support to secure a sustainable, paid job in the open labour market for people with disabilities, long term conditions and multiple barriers to work. The scope and diversity of Supported Employment has had to expand to meet the growing needs of clients in the face of significant reforms to the welfare system and changing economic climate.

The lack of a nationally certificated award for this part of the sector was seen as a large gap in provision and development of a qualification was required in order to increase the value and recognition of practice at national level.

The development of this Award was therefore initiated by the Scottish Government Implementation Board for Supported Employment in 2010.

The revision of the Professional Development Award in Supported Employment Practice at SCQF level 7 was completed in January 2014. The PDA is designed primarily for staff and/or volunteers involved in face to face delivery of employment/work placement opportunities for clients with additional needs. This award provides individuals with the opportunity to improve their knowledge, skills and understanding needed to work with clients with additional needs and other stakeholders within a variety of work opportunity settings.

The development and subsequent revision of this PDA is set against the backdrop of the above Action Plan and a number of other significant external factors:

♦ The United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (2006) is an international human rights instrument intended to protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities Parties to the Convention are required to promote and protect the human rights of people with disabilities and ensure that they enjoy full equality under the law.

♦ European Union of Supported Employment has a set of values and principles that are consistent with the concepts of empowerment, social inclusion, dignity and respect for individuals. Supported Employment is a dynamic process driven by the individual. A five-stage process has been identified and acknowledged as a European model of good practice and one that can be used as a framework within Supported Employment.

♦ High levels of unemployment, particularly amongst the young and people with disabilities.

♦ Impact of the current global economic downturn and stagnant economic growth in the UK and in Europe leading to worries that Europe and the rest of the world may be on the verge of a return to recession.

♦ Impact of welfare reform in the UK and changes to incapacity benefit and the disability living allowance. As a result, more disabled people are being assessed as fit for work, which has a knock on effect on the need for more support for them in the workplace.

2. Qualification structure

The design principles for PDAs stipulate that there must be at least 16 SCQF credit points at the level of the award. The award presented exceeds this minimum condition.

All five Units in the award are mandatory and are designed to meet the occupational requirements of working at frontline delivery in a supported employment environment.

The PDA in Supported Employment Practice at SCQF level 7 will be awarded on successful completion of all five component Units. This PDA carries 40 SCQF points at SCQF level 7.

2.1 Structure

Mandatory units:

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
H1J1	34	Supported Employment Practice: Values and Principles	1	8	7
H1HX	34	Supported Employment Practice: Engaging with Clients	1	8	7
H1HY	34	Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support	1	8	7
H1J0	34	Supported Employment Practice: Promoting Equality and Diversity in the Workplace	1	8	7
H69J	34	Supported Employment Practice: Engaging with Employers	1	8	7

3.   Aims of the qualification

The primary aim of the Award is to provide staff (paid, full or part time/sessional and volunteers) with the underpinning knowledge and skills required to work in a supported employment setting.

3.1   General aims of the qualification

1. To provide a formal qualification for those who work directly with clients in supported employment and work settings.

2. To develop the skills and experience of those who support clients with additional needs in finding and sustaining work opportunities.

3. To support staff to respond to ever-changing environment of policies and initiatives at both local and national level.

4. To improve the confidence and ability of staff to raise issues, challenge practice, question values and attitudes and suggest new and innovative ways of engaging and working with clients and employers.

5. To enhance confidence and put into practice skills and knowledge gained through training.

6. To develop in learners the appropriate attitudes, skills and knowledge to work effectively and collaboratively with employers and other agencies.

7. To develop in learners transferable interpersonal and communication skills

3.2   Specific aims of the qualification

1. To develop a common understanding of what can be achieved by engaging with clients with additional needs through supported employment.

2. To develop skills required to effectively engage with employers in relation to securing appropriate work opportunities for clients.

3. To understand and utilise the methodology, styles and approaches embedded in the practice of supported employment practitioners.

4. To improve service delivery in response to the needs of clients and employers.

5. To develop awareness, sensitivity and empathy to work with clients with disabilities and/or disadvantage.

6. To develop knowledge and understanding of national and international policies and legislation in relation to finding and sustaining work.

4.   Recommended entry to the qualification

Entry to this qualification is at the discretion of the centre. The following information on prior knowledge, skills, experience or qualifications that provide suitable preparation for this qualification has been provided by the Qualification Design Team (QDT) as guidance only.

During the selection and admission process, presenting centres should ensure that each prospective learner has sufficient academic ability and the appropriate personal qualities to succeed. It is essential that learners are in an appropriate work or volunteering environment in order that they can meet the Evidence Requirements of the component Units.
Learners would benefit from having attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by one or more of the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

♦   SQA qualifications (or their equivalent from other Awarding Bodies), eg English/ Communication or other based language-based subjects to a minimum of SCQF level 5
♦   SVQ at level 2 in a related area, eg Advice and Guidance
♦   Process of application and interview
♦   Current relevant evidence from the workplace, eg reference from employer

In addition, it would be beneficial if prospective learners had experience gained in paid or voluntary work in a Supported Employment setting providing services to clients and employers.

4.1   Core Skills entry profile

The Core Skill entry profile provides a summary of the associated assessment activities that exemplify why a particular level has been recommended for this qualification. The information would be used to identify if additional learning support needs to be put in place for learners whose Core Skills profile is below the recommended entry level or whether learners should be encouraged to do an alternative level or learning programme.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	5	Written/Verbal reports, responses to questioning.
Numeracy	5	Learners will be required to calculate client salary/benefits and provide information to employers in relation to financial subsidies or aids.
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	5	Labour Market Information research and using professional and social media communication. Use of word processing packages/online platforms for communication
Problem Solving	5	Overcoming barriers, persuasion and negotiation techniques.
Working with Others	5	Client and employer engagement, working as part of a team.

5. Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs

This qualification was designed to meet a specific purpose and what follows are details on how that purpose has been met through mapping of the units to the aims of the qualification. Through meeting the aims, additional value has been achieved by linking the unit standards with those defined in national occupational standards and/or trade/professional body requirements. In addition, significant opportunities exist for learners to develop the more generic skill, known as Core Skills through doing this qualification.

5.1 Mapping of qualification aims to units

General aims:

Code	Unit title	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4	Aim 5	Aim 6	Aim 7
H1J1 34	Values and Principles	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
H1HX 34	Engaging with Clients	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
H1HY 34	On and Off the Job Support	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
H1J0 34	Promoting Equality and Diversity in the Workplace	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
H69J 34	Engaging with Employers	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Specific aims:

Code	Unit title	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4	Aim 5	Aim 6
H1J1 34	Values and Principles	X		X		X	X
H1HX 34	Engaging with Clients	X	X	X	X	X	X
H1HY 34	On and Off the Job Support	X	X	X	X	X	X
H1J0 34	Promoting Equality and Diversity in the Workplace	X	X	X		X	X
H69J 34	Engaging with Employers	X	X		X		

5.2   Mapping of National Occupational Standards (NOS) and/or trade body standards

No current NOS or Trade body standards were available for mapping.

5.3 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualifications

Communication

Unit code	Unit title	Written (Reading)	Written (Writing)	Oral
H1J1 34	Values and Principles	X	X	
H1HX 34	Engaging with Clients	X	X	X
H1HY 34	On and Off the Job Support	X	X	X
H1J0 34	Promoting Equality and Diversity in the Workplace			X
H69J 34	Engaging with Employers	X	X	X

Numeracy

Unit code	Unit title	Using Number	Using Graphical Information
H1J1 34	Values and Principles		
H1HX 34	Engaging with Clients	X	X
H1HY 34	On and Off the Job Support	X	
H1J0 34	Promoting Equality and Diversity in the Workplace		
H69J 34	Engaging with Employers	X	

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Unit code	Unit title	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information
H1J1 34	Values and Principles	X	X
H1HX 34	Engaging with Clients	X	X
H1HY 34	On and Off the Job Support	X	X
H1J0 34	Promoting Equality and Diversity in the Workplace	X	X
H69J 34	Engaging with Employers	X	X

Problem Solving

Unit code	Unit title	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating
H1J1 34	Values and Principles			
H1HX 34	Engaging with Clients	X	X	X
H1HY 34	On and Off the Job Support	X	X	X
H1J0 34	Promoting Equality and Diversity in the Workplace	X	X	X
H69J 34	Engaging with Employers	X	X	X

Working with Others

Unit code	Unit title	Working Co-operatively with Others	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
H1J1 34	Values and Principles		
H1HX 34	Engaging with Clients	X	X
H1HY 34	On and Off the Job Support	X	X
H1J0 34	Promoting Equality and Diversity in the Workplace	X	X
H69J 34	Engaging with Employers	X	X

5.4 Assessment strategy for the qualifications

Note to writers: here you should provide information on the main assessment methods that learners may encounter, including:

♦ *the recommended assessment method(s) for each unit, bearing in mind that there may be more than one assessment in a unit.*

♦ *the conditions in which the evidence must be produced, eg open/closed book, length of time for assessment (if appropriate)*

Unit	Assessment: Outcome 1	Assessment: Outcome 2	Assessment: Outcome 3
Supported Employment Practice: Values and Principles	Series of structured questions which may be based on a case study.	Outcomes 2 and 3 are jointly assessed by a report or an oral presentation.	Outcomes 2 and 3 are jointly assessed by a report or an oral presentation.
Supported Employment Practice: Engaging with Clients	Series of structured questions	Outcomes 2 and 3 are jointly assessed by a report or an oral presentation.	Outcomes 2 and 3 are jointly assessed by a report or an oral presentation.
Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support	Action Plan accompanied by structured questions or a report.	Observation of performance supported by a report or work diary or portfolio.	Observation of performance supported by a report or work diary or portfolio.
Supported Employment Practice: Promoting Equality and Diversity in the Workplace	Series of structured questions.	Assignment in the form of a completed risk assessment.	Assignment which may be based on a case study.
Supported Employment Practice: Engaging with Employers	Series of structured questions or one extended response.	Report based on own practice or where appropriate a case study.	Series of structured questions accompanied by a reflective account based on one worker/employer scenario.

6.   Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment

This PDA has been designed to be delivered by SQA approved centres. This Group Award will be available to learners across Scotland and should be delivered in an accessible and flexible manner without any learner being disadvantaged due to their geographical location or other structural factors. The delivery mechanisms adopted for each approved centre should be flexible and demonstrate a widening access approach to recruiting learners. Delivery approaches such as distance learning, e-learning and workplace learning are actively encouraged and where possible used to enrich all learners experiences of the Group Award, and not just for those individuals living and working at a distance.

Any references to legislation and policy are correct at the time of publication, however centres should ensure that their own materials are current and up to date.

Face to face and other forms of directed/self-directed learning can also be facilitated via video conferencing or other web applications (as appropriate) to the learners and approved centre's needs/capabilities.

Learners should be encouraged to apply their learning to the experiences of the clients, organisation/agency and employers with whom they work.

Learners should be encouraged and supported to carry out their own research. They should also consult with colleagues and other stakeholders and participate in group work. This approach will provide a basis of information for the analysis and evaluation required throughout the award.

The learning and teaching for all Units could be complemented by group discussion, visiting speakers, lectures from senior practitioners, self-study and investigation.

The Unit specifications provide the approved centres with details of the Outcomes, Evidence Requirements and detailed guidance on the content, context, method of delivery and assessment requirements for each Unit.

This qualification allows Centres to develop a range of flexible assessment methods to allow learners to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Wherever possible, the holistic assessment of Outcomes within Units is encouraged. The provision of a clear and accessible Recognition of Prior Learning process is also encouraged given the nature and purpose of the award.

The focus of the qualification is on the development of competence, skills and knowledge. As such, assessments should allow learner evidence to be based, where appropriate, on naturally occurring circumstances during the course of day to day work activity. This approach will encourage learners to reflect on the nature of their job role in relation to implementing a person-centred approach to their practice.

Assessments could take a variety of forms including case studies, reports, reflective accounts and structured questions.

Learners could be encouraged to compile a portfolio of evidence. This will facilitate a holistic approach to delivery and assessment. A portfolio is a collection of the work that has been produced by the learner.

Portfolios of evidence will normally include:

♦ Records completed by the learner
♦ Written assignments
♦ Reflective accounts of practice
♦ Case studies
♦ Structured questions
♦ Assessor/tutor observation reports and checklists

It is expected that learners completing the award will collect evidence when working in real work settings. This will normally be the learner's own workplace or volunteer position.

The Unit specifications detail the Evidence Requirements for each Unit. Centres should devise varied assessments in order to meet the needs, learning styles and environments of learners.

6.1   Sequencing/integration of units

There are opportunities to integrate assessment of Unit *Supported Employment Practice: Engaging with Employers* with assessment of the Unit *Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support*, however this will require careful planning by the delivering centre.

The delivery of the component Units may be either concurrent or sequential. However the recommended sequence of delivery is suggested as follows:

♦ *Supported Employment Practice: Values and Principles*
♦ *Supported Employment Practice: Engaging with Clients*
♦ *Supported Employment Practice: Engaging with Employers*
♦ *Supported Employment Practice: Promoting Equality and Diversity in the Workplace*
♦ *Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support*

It is strongly recommended that learners start with the Unit, *Supported Employment Practice: Values and Principles,* to fully understand the value base and philosophy underpinning the provision of employment support.

6.2   Recognition of prior learning

SQA recognises that learners gain knowledge and skills acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts.

In some instances, a full group award may be achieved through the recognition of prior learning. However, it is unlikely that a learner would have the appropriate prior learning and experience to meet all the requirements of a full group award.

The recognition of prior learning may **not** be used as a method of assessing in the following types of units and assessments:

♦ HN Graded Units.
♦ Course and/or external assessments.
♦ Other integrative assessment units (which may or not be graded).
♦ Certain types of assessment instruments where the standard may be compromised by not using the same assessment method outlined in the unit.
♦ Where there is an existing requirement for a licence to practice.
♦ Where there are specific health and safety requirements.
♦ Where there are regulatory, professional or other statutory requirements.
♦ Where otherwise specified in an assessment strategy.

More information and guidance on the *Recognition of Prior Learning* (RPL) may be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk.

The following sub-sections outline how existing SQA units may contribute to this group award. Additionally, they also outline how this group award may be recognised for professional and articulation purposes.

6.2.1　Articulation and/or progression

No formal articulation or progression routes have been identified.

6.3　Opportunities for e-assessment

Aspects of the qualification offer opportunities for e-assessment, for example the use of e-portfolios.

6.4　Resource requirements

The Unit specifications provide the approved centres with details of the Outcomes, Evidence Requirements and detailed guidance on the content, context, method of delivery and assessment requirements for each Unit.

It is recommended that teaching and assessment staff are experienced practitioners and/or hold relevant qualifications in this area at this SCQF level or above.

7.　General information for centres

Equality and inclusion

The unit specifications making up this group award have been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners will 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.

Internal and external verification

All assessments used within these qualifications should be internally verified, using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

External verification will be carried out by SQA to ensure that internal assessment is within the national guidelines for these qualifications.

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in *SQA's Guide to Assessment* (www.sqa.org.uk/GuideToAssessment).

8. Glossary of terms

Embedded Core Skills is where the assessment evidence for the unit also includes full evidence for complete Core Skill or Core Skill components. A learner successfully completing the unit will be automatically certificated for the Core Skill. (This depends on the unit having been successfully audited and validated for Core Skills certification.)

Finish date: The end of a group award's lapsing period is known as the finish date. After the finish date, the group award will no longer be live and the following applies:

♦ learners may not be entered for the group award.
♦ the group award will continue to exist only as an archive record on the Awards Processing System (APS).

Lapsing date: When a group award is entered into its lapsing period, the following will apply:

♦ the group award will be deleted from the relevant catalogue.
♦ the group award specification will remain until the qualification reaches its finish date at which point it will be removed from SQA's website and archived.
♦ no new centres may be approved to offer the group award.
♦ centres should only enter learners whom they expect to complete the group award during the defined lapsing period.

SQA credit value: The credit value allocated to a unit gives an indication of the contribution the unit makes to an SQA group award. An SQA credit value of 1 given to an SQA unit represents approximately 40 hours of programmed learning, teaching and assessment.

SCQF: The Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) provides the national common framework for describing all relevant programmes of learning and qualifications in Scotland. SCQF terminology is used throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF visit the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk.

SCQF credit points: SCQF credit points provide a means of describing and comparing the amount of learning that is required to complete a qualification at a given level of the Framework. One National Unit credit is equivalent to 6 SCQF credit points. One National Unit credit at Advanced Higher and one Higher National Unit credit (irrespective of level) is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points.

SCQF levels: The level a qualification is assigned within the framework is an indication of how hard it is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HNCs and HNDs are available at SCQF levels 7 and 8 respectively. Higher National Units will normally be at levels 6–9 and graded units will be at level 7 and 8. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2–6 and will normally be made up of National Units which are available from SCQF levels 2–7.

Subject unit: Subject units contain vocational/subject content and are designed to test a specific set of knowledge and skills.

Signposted Core Skills: Refers to opportunities to develop Core Skills arise in learning and teaching but are not automatically certificated.

History of changes

It is anticipated that changes will take place during the life of the qualification and this section will record these changes. This document is the latest version and incorporates the changes summarised below. Centres are advised to check SQA's APS Navigator to confirm they are using the up-to-date qualification structure.

NOTE: Where a unit is revised by another unit:

- ♦ No new centres may be approved to offer the unit which has been revised.
- ♦ Centres should only enter learners for the unit which has been revised where they are expected to complete the unit before its finish date.

Version number	Description	Date
02	Revised to meet accessibility criteria (format only)	27/11/23

Acknowledgement

SQA acknowledges the support received from the sector in the development of this qualification.

Template version: September 2022.

9. General information for learners

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

The PDA in Supported Employment Practice at SCQF level 7 is a practice-based qualification. It offers you the opportunity to develop your knowledge and skills of the barriers/issues faced by clients with additional needs in finding and sustaining employment and to work with them using a Supported Employment approach to overcome these barriers.

This award is for you if you have taken up work recently in a supported employment setting, or are volunteering in a work/learning environment. It will also be of value to you if you have some experience in this sector but have no formal qualifications. It is particularly relevant if you are already working in a Supported Employment environment where the remit involves directly working with clients with additional needs.

There are five units which you must complete to achieve the PDA:

H1J1 34   Supported Employment Practice: Values and Principles
H1HX 34   Supported Employment Practice: Engaging with Clients
H1J0 34   Supported Employment Practice: Promoting Equality and Diversity in the
           Workplace
H1HY 34   Supported Employment Practice: On and Off the Job Support
H69J 34   Supported Employment Practice: Engaging with Employers

Assessments take a variety of forms including case studies, reports, reflective accounts and structured questions. Evidence may be drawn from your practice in a Supported Employment setting.