

## SQA Advanced Unit Specification

### General information for centres

**Unit title:** Communication: Business Communication (SCQF level 7)

**Unit code:** HP75 47

**Superclass:** AF

**Publication date:** August 2017

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 01

### Unit purpose

#### Purpose

This Unit *Communication: Business Communication* sits at SCQF level 7 and is designed to develop skills in analysing, summarising, evaluating, and producing complex written business information. It also develops skills in presenting and responding to complex oral business information.

The Unit enhances skills for learning, life and work and there is a particular emphasis on employability.

The Unit can be taken as part of a Group Award or as a stand-alone Unit for the purposes of continued professional development. Work undertaken for the Unit will be in a context appropriate to the learner's Group Award or relevant to an individual's vocational area/discipline.

The Unit embeds and provides automatic certification of the Core Skill of *Communication* at SCQF level 6.

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### Outcomes

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

- 1 Analyse and evaluate complex written business information.
- 2 Produce complex written business documents.
- 3 Present and respond to complex oral information in a business context.

### Credit points and level

1 SQA Credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7)

### Recommended entry to the Unit

Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners should have competence in communication skills at SCQF level 6 or equivalent. This could be demonstrated by achievement of one of the following:

C270 12 *Higher English*, SCQF level 6  
C222 12 *English for Speakers of Other Languages (Higher)*, SCQF level 6  
F3GB 12 *Communication (Core Skill)*, SCQF level 6  
FA1W 12 *Communication (NQ)*, SCQF level 6  
HR1C 46 *Workplace Communication in English*, SCQF level 6  
IELTS 6.0  
Appropriate work experience.

### Core Skills

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skill	Communication at SCQF level 6
Core Skill component	None

There are also opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills which are highlighted in the Support Notes of the Unit Specifications for this Course.

### Context for delivery

If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes. If this Unit is delivered as a stand-alone Unit, it should be developed in a context to suit the learner's vocational needs and career pathway.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard. A list of existing ASPs is available to download from SQA's website (<https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/90557.10883.html>)

### Equality and inclusion

This Unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website  
<http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements>.

### Unit specification: statement of standards

**Unit title:** Communication: Business Communication (SCQF level 7)

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

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Learners should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

#### Outcome 1

Analyse and evaluate complex written business information.

##### Knowledge and Skills

- ◆ Types, purposes and readership of business information
- ◆ Skills of critically analysing and evaluating complex business communication
- ◆ Skills of summarising complex information
- ◆ Impact of format, structure and layout
- ◆ Impact of language and style
- ◆ The uses and effects of graphic communication
- ◆ Skimming, reviewing and note taking
- ◆ Skills of extracting key information and supporting detail from business documents

#### Outcome 2

Produce complex written business documents.

##### Knowledge and Skills

- ◆ Types, purposes and readership of business information
- ◆ Selecting a range of relevant sources
- ◆ Analysing and evaluating information
- ◆ Collating key information and ideas
- ◆ Producing business documents
- ◆ Conventions of structure, format and layout
- ◆ Conventions of formal language and style
- ◆ Conventions of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- ◆ Impact of graphic communication
- ◆ Methods of referencing sources
- ◆ Reviewing, revising and redrafting

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### **Outcome 3**

Present and respond to complex oral information in a business context.

#### **Knowledge and Skills**

- ◆ Sourcing, evaluating and selecting complex information/ideas
- ◆ Planning and preparing materials to support delivery
- ◆ Presenting essential information
- ◆ Using format and structure appropriate to purpose and context
- ◆ Using language and register appropriate to purpose and audience
- ◆ Refining non-verbal communication
- ◆ Applying listening skills effectively to progress interaction
- ◆ Producing formal written records of oral interactions

#### **Evidence Requirements for this Unit**

##### **Outcome 1**

The learner will provide evidence to demonstrate his/her Knowledge and Skills by showing that he/she can:

- ◆ analyse complex written business information
- ◆ evaluate complex written business information

One business related text of approximately 800–1,500 words will be presented to the learner for analysing and evaluating.

Firstly, the learner will critically engage with and analyse the text.

The analysis should be such that it:

- ◆ demonstrates in-depth understanding of information, ideas and supporting detail
- ◆ expresses key information concisely and coherently in the learner's own words

Secondly, the learner will evaluate the text in approximately 350 words. The quality of the evaluation will be such that it:

- ◆ addresses the extent to which the document is appropriate to the intended reader and whether it meets its overall aims/purpose/objectives
- ◆ assesses the accuracy, sufficiency and relevance of information presented
- ◆ analyses the contribution of the presentation of text to meaning/effect
- ◆ justifies comment by detailed and relevant evidence from the text

Evidence presented can be written or oral.

The assessment will be conducted in open-book conditions. The centre should ensure the authenticity of the learner's work.

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### **Outcome 2**

The learner will provide evidence to demonstrate his/her Knowledge and Skills by showing that he/she can:

- ◆ produce complex written business documents

The text(s) should amount to a minimum of 1,500 words, not including references, but can include appendices or associated or supplementary papers produced by the learner.

The quality of the document(s) should be such that:

- ◆ complex information is selected from relevant sources and conveyed accurately
- ◆ structure is logical, coherent and effective
- ◆ language and style are appropriate to context, purpose and readership
- ◆ spelling, punctuation and grammar are consistently accurate
- ◆ format and layout enhance communication
- ◆ reference sources are recorded as appropriate

The assessment will be conducted in open-book conditions. The centre should ensure the authenticity of the learner's work.

### **Outcome 3**

The learner will provide evidence to demonstrate his/her knowledge and skills by showing that he/she can produce and respond to complex oral communication by planning and delivering an input of at least five minutes to a formal business related event.

The quality of the input should be such that:

- ◆ information contributed is complex, accurate and relevant to purpose and audience
- ◆ ideas are presented clearly and coherently
- ◆ structure is appropriate to purpose
- ◆ evidence is provided to support points made
- ◆ support materials enhance communication
- ◆ language, register and tone are used effectively and adapted to meet the needs of others
- ◆ responses to the contributions of others progress interaction
- ◆ non-verbal skills promote and progress communication
- ◆ written records are to a professional standard

The assessment will be conducted in open-book conditions.

### Unit specification: support notes

**Unit title:** Communication: Business Communication (SCQF level 7)

Unit Support Notes are offered as guidance and are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

### Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit may be delivered as part of a Group Award but can also be taken as a stand-alone Unit, possibly for the purposes of continued professional development.

This Unit HP75 47 *Communication: Business Communication* sits at SCQF level 7 and is designed to develop skills in analysing, summarising, evaluating, and producing complex written business information. It also develops skills in presenting and responding to complex oral business information.

The Unit is designed to develop skills required by business organisations and should therefore be delivered in a context which facilitates this. Tutors should ensure that learners investigate and become familiar with current communication formats, styles and approaches as well as emerging practices within business organisations.

Work undertaken as part of a Group Award must relate to the subject area of that Group Award. Content/context will vary according to the vocational discipline but the focus should always be on communication for business purposes.

If the Unit is delivered as a stand-alone Unit, then it must also be contextualised to suit the needs of a learner's vocational area or to suit future work/employment/career progression or pathways. Again, the focus of the Unit should be on communication for business purposes.

### Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

This Unit is likely to be a core part of an SQA Advanced Group Award and should be delivered as flexibly as is practical to reflect the identified needs of learners. Induction to the Unit should encourage the learner to review and reflect on his/her current communication skills to identify areas of strength and weakness, with a view to developing a personal development plan. Current business communication practice should be investigated and taken into account when drawing up the development plan. This will enhance awareness of relevant employability skills and also the expected standard.

Oral and written tasks may be combined thematically to allow a holistic approach to the development of relevant business communication skills. If practical, integration of work with written or oral assignments for other parts of the Group Award programme should ensure that learning is relevant to the learner's needs and aspirations. If learners are part-time, or the Unit is delivered on a stand-alone basis, negotiation of content and delivery around workplace/employment/career pathway needs will be required.

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The tutor should provide learners with guidance materials that provide:

- ◆ Reference sources for the development of relevant oral, written, and non-verbal communication skills
- ◆ Examples of varied types of communication in different formats/house-styles to reflect current and emerging trends
- ◆ Formative work to practise and develop skills and the allowance of time for the draft and redraft of materials will be important

Formative work to practise and develop skills and the allowance of time for the draft and redraft of materials will be important.

All learning and teaching should be learner-centred, participative, interactive and practical.

The use of new technologies should be encouraged for researching, communicating and presenting information. This will assist in the development of a range of different skills, for example:

- ◆ Research
- ◆ Judicious selection of sources
- ◆ Evaluating sources
- ◆ Note taking
- ◆ ICT
- ◆ Working independently/autonomously and collaboratively
- ◆ Learning and study skills/skills in self-directed study
- ◆ Time management

Learners should be encouraged to become more responsible for their own learning. In using learner-centred approaches, tutors will favour a facilitative, rather than a didactic approach. Such an approach can be pursued either face-to-face with learners or as part of online support, involving appropriate tutor interventions as required to help with the skills development. Passive learning, rote learning, passive reproduction of content and transfer of knowledge is not acceptable practice. Learners must be provided with opportunities and be encouraged to take an active role in their own learning.

Co-operative working with other learners to gather and exchange information, as typical of workplace practice, should be encouraged as far as is practical. Some activities should be pre-planned and learners briefed in advance. In any group work, the tutor should ensure the rotation of roles and responsibilities. Learners should be encouraged and supported, in a secure environment, to try out different roles and learning techniques, and to challenge their 'comfort zone'. This practice will reflect the realities of the workplace where employees are expected to be flexible and versatile. Such an approach to learning and teaching will strengthen skills in:

- ◆ Negotiation
- ◆ Collaboration
- ◆ Team work/interaction with others
- ◆ Recognising the interdependence of team members
- ◆ Initiative
- ◆ Leadership
- ◆ Resilience
- ◆ Peer respect
- ◆ Responsibility/sense of ownership

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- ◆ Personal effectiveness
- ◆ Problem solving

It is important that learners understand the real dynamics of team working/collaborative working, are aware of the differences that exist between team members as a positive factor and treat one another with professionalism and respect. Group work may include the judicious use of social media which may be of particular value to distance learners.

Assessment of learners will normally take place after extended learning and skills development. It is likely that this will be towards the end of Unit delivery. Planning, preparation and record keeping are important aspects of the assessment process. Introductory work should therefore take account of business practice in terms of notes, briefing papers, visual aids, PowerPoint, formal/informal minutes, as appropriate to vocational context. Planning and support notes should be retained to encourage reflective self-evaluation and as an aid to learning from feedback and responding to it in a positive manner.

Some work may be undertaken outside the centre but conditions should be in place to ensure the authenticity of all evidence submitted. The problems and penalties associated with plagiarism should be explained and discussed at the start of the delivery of the Unit.

Materials supplied to the learners should be in an accessible format (Equality Act 2010).

This Unit certifies learners at SCQF level 7. The learner must therefore be working towards and finally produce communication which meets the Evidence Requirements for the Unit. This evidence will also clearly reflect the level descriptors at SCQF level 7. The SCQF level descriptors can be found following the link below:

<http://scqf.org.uk/>

For learners who use English as a second language and may find the demands of this Unit challenging, it is recommended that additional time be provided for language development. This could be through additional supported learning and teaching or through the delivery of Unit HR1C 46 *Workplace Communication in English*, a single credit, 40 hour, SCQF level 6 Unit. This Unit would need to be delivered early in the delivery of the Group Award framework, in order for the learner to progress and achieve HP75 47 *Communication: Business Communication* at SCQF level 7.

## Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

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

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

Assessment approaches should be sufficiently flexible to allow for adaptation to the needs and situations of the learners and their vocational discipline. A thematic approach could look at current business concerns such as, for example, customer awareness or sustainable development. An extended case study or project could provide a context for integrating work in responses to and production of communication media. As an example, Outcome 1

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assessment could proceed after a review of literature on contemporary business issues using a range of paper based and electronic sources.

There may be opportunities for learners to explore and evaluate the relevance of information on innovative business ideas, products or services. Group discussion during formative work could enhance knowledge and support self-directed learning. For summative assessment purposes learners should analyse, summarise and evaluate one text individually, which could be a section of a longer paper, and record individual responses, in writing or orally, using their own words. Further research on aspects of the same topic could be conducted and a range of proposals presented and discussed in a formal meeting (Outcome 3). Alternatively, a pitch taking pioneering ideas to market (Outcome 3) could be supported by a written report presenting key information, supporting detail and conclusions/solutions or recommendations (Outcome 2). Graphic and pictorial information to support both written and oral communication, and the use of technology for researching, communicating and producing effective text and audio-visual support should reflect current business practice.

There may be the potential for some integration with Outcomes in other Units requiring the production of one or more original written documents and/or oral communication. In such a situation it is critical that learners are not disadvantaged by over-assessment, and that they are made fully aware of the need to achieve all the evidence for all Units involved. If learners have not been able to demonstrate competence in formal assessments, assessors could, at the end of the year, consider written and oral communications produced during course work, when there may be naturally occurring evidence of developed skills.

Providing formal, detailed feedback to learners is good practice and this will be particularly valuable for those who need to be re-assessed on any Outcome. Precise, supportive comments should be related to Evidence Requirements. Retention of draft work, notes on any interventions made and tracking records or email exchanges can be a valuable aspect of quality assurance, indicate progress and provide helpful information for the Internal and External Verification process.

### **Outcome 1 — Analyse and evaluate complex written business information**

An appropriate length of text is likely to be between 800-1,500 words. A contextualised text, with content, format and language relevant to business readers, will be used. Graphics such as pictures, diagrams or charts may support or enhance communication.

The text could be a model report, or provide some background knowledge for tasks undertaken in Outcomes 2 and/or 3. The learner should critically analyse the content, identifying and extracting key points and relevant supporting detail in a way that clearly demonstrates understanding. A summary might take the form of organised notes, structured bullet points or a brief oral or written report. Oral responses, which may be particularly appropriate for some learners, should be scribed or recorded. Assessors are reminded that written communication is not being assessed in this task.

Evaluation should examine the effectiveness of the text in terms of meeting the needs of the intended readers and purpose; these may be explicit or could be identified for learners. Accuracy, sufficiency and/or objectivity of content should be considered and challenged. Conventions of presentation can vary according to context and media but learners should be able to comment on good practice in the use of structure, format, layout and language and/or suggest alternative approaches that could enhance communication. If the text is from a web site, learners will be aware of the impact of associated formats and conventions. Some detailed, specific reference to the text should support comment. Evaluation responses would not be expected to exceed 350 words.

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### Outcome 2 — Produce complex written business documents

Although use of technology is not mandatory, learners should understand its importance in the effective sourcing, storing and presenting of information. Efficient use of dictionaries and/or appropriate software should support checks on accuracy in spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

Evidence Requirements may be met by successful completion of, for example:

- ◆ A report, specification, proposal or paper in a context relevant to the learner's area of study or work

Graphic materials, such as charts, tables or diagrams, may be incorporated where appropriate and it should be clear when these are the learner's original work. The 1,500 word count will not include the list of source references but can include any appendices, associated or supplementary papers produced by the learner. These could be in the form of, for example, annotated graphics, survey results, meetings papers or letters/emails. Sources of information should be clearly recorded. Recognition of appropriate referencing styles/conventions could be anticipated. A general list of sources would be acceptable depending on context and required house style or an academic system, such as Harvard or APA may be used.

- ◆ A portfolio of business documents

At least one longer business document (800 words) could be supplemented by related web pages, landing pages or social media accounts. Formal papers associated with the Outcome 3 task such as records of meetings, presentation handouts or overheads could also be used.

All documents should be structured effectively and presented to a professional standard. Planning and organising the process should involve the learner in effective time management to revise and redraft written work prior to submission to a deadline.

Some written work may be undertaken outside the centre but centre controls should be in place to ensure authenticity of the work produced by the learner. Supervising production of first drafts and the retention of drafts, outlines and planning or tracking documents signed by the learner may assist authentication. The problems and penalties associated with plagiarism should be explained to learners. Tracking software may be useful.

### Outcome 3 — Present and respond to complex oral information in a business context

The Oral assessment task for Outcome 3 may be linked with the other Outcomes or with other parts of the Group Award programme where learners apply critical thinking to planning and delivering a complex oral communication.

Evidence Requirements may be met by successful completion of, for example:

- ◆ Preparation for and contribution to a meeting involving problem solving or decision making
- ◆ A formal presentation, including some analysis with response to questions and discussion
- ◆ Preparation for and participation in a detailed interview or performance review, with in-depth responses to questions and discussion

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The time allocated to oral assessment should reflect the type of task and the numbers involved. Each learner must talk for a total of at least five minutes, and the meeting, discussion or review should be timed and managed. Tasks should be undertaken in formal settings, in a group or one-to-one situations, in person, by telephone, video-conferencing, webinar and webcam or similar. Workplace performance may be recorded for assessment purposes.

A discussion during a meeting may provide a useful source of information for a written report. If learners are undertaking a Practical Assignment, an individual or group oral presentation could focus on reporting information, conclusions and recommendations. An in-depth review interview or a one-to-one presentation of business ideas or plans could demonstrate and reinforce knowledge and skills.

If the task is a discussion or formal meeting each learner would be expected to deal with a significant aspect of the interaction. Each person could prepare an agenda item, brief members of the meeting on the issue, and then take questions. In discussion, a workplace group, real or simulated, might prepare and propose different solutions to a problem, then discuss and agree appropriate action. In order to cover the Evidence Requirements effectively, a formal meeting should involve manageable numbers, no more than twelve, and would be likely to include at least four people.

In all cases, the learner would have to demonstrate control of the presentation of information, use appropriate register and language, and should be encouraged to use visual/non-visual aids.

Tasks could be organised using social media or internal websites with formal records written to an appropriate format. Written preparation/planning notes, supporting materials and records must be individually compiled. Interview papers could include an outline CV with identification of skills and abilities, strengths and weaknesses in relation to personal and career development and self-evaluation notes completed post interview. Templates could be used to ensure that documents produced would be suitable for and reflect use in a workplace environment.

Thematically linked documents may form part of the portfolio of evidence for Outcome 2.

Evidence to be retained for verification should include a detailed observation checklist with copies of any supporting materials and an appropriate written record of activity. Assessor notes on the checklist should be detailed, comprehensive and matched to knowledge and skills. Ideally there will be some recording of oral work in order to provide examples of standards and to support Internal and External Verification procedures.

For learners whose first language is not English, a discrete approach to assessment that considers each Outcome in turn and offers additional support throughout the year may be useful.

### Opportunities for e-assessment

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

### Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

#### Communication

This Unit embeds all components of the Core Skill of *Communication* at SCQF level 6. The general skills for this Core Skill are:

**Oral Communication** — *Produce and respond to oral communication on a complex topic*

**Written Communication (Reading)** — *Read, understand, and evaluate complex written communication*

**Written Communication (Writing)** — *Produce well-structured written communication on complex topics*

#### Problem Solving

This Unit provides opportunities for the development of all components of the Core Skill of *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6.

The general skills for this Core Skill are:

**Critical Thinking** — *Analyse a complex situation or issue*

The specific skills for this component are:

- ◆ Identify the factors involved in the situation or issue
- ◆ Assess the relevance of these factors to the situation or issue
- ◆ Provide and justify an approach to deal with the situation or issue

A problem solving task for Outcome 2 and/or 3 could require learners agreeing to address a specific business concern, analysing and presenting a brief paper on the factors involved (eg for recruitment for a new post), an assessment of their relevance and a proposed solution.

**Planning and Organising** — *Plan, organise, and complete a complex task*

The specific skills for this component are:

- ◆ Develop a plan
- ◆ Identify and ensure you have the resources to carry out the plan
- ◆ Carry out the task

Planning a report or short oral presentation as part of an assessment task for Outcomes 2 and/or 3 would require significant planning and organisation. Learners would need to reserve planning notes as essential evidence, and the identification of resources could be stipulated as an essential element.

**Reviewing and Evaluating** - *Review and evaluate a problem solving activity*

The specific skills for this component are:

- ◆ Evaluate the effectiveness of all stages of the problem solving strategy and assess or explain the relevance of the evidence
- ◆ Draw conclusions and justify them with reference to the evidence

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Learners could be encouraged to review and evaluate the success of their contribution to an interview or career development review task as part of Outcome 3.

### Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

This Unit provides opportunities for the development of all components of the Core Skill of *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* at SCQF level 6.

The general skills for this Core Skill are:

**Accessing Information** — *Use ICT independently to carry out complex searches across a range of tasks*

The specific skills for this component are:

- ◆ Use a range of *ICT* devices, observing security procedures
- ◆ Carry out complex searches for information
- ◆ Evaluate reliability of information

Research for a report or meeting/review/interview/presentation task could involve use of *ICT*, which, although it is not mandatory, would reflect business practice.

**Providing and Creating Information** — *Use ICT independently to carry out a range of processing tasks*

The specific skills for this component are:

- ◆ Use a range of *ICT* devices, observing security procedures troubleshoot simple hardware or software problems
- ◆ Make selective use of *ICT*
- ◆ Evaluate information
- ◆ Present findings in an appropriate format

Effective use of *ICT* in presenting complex information in written reports and oral presentations is not mandatory but is likely to be routine. Accessing, using, recording and storing electronic data will develop the skills needed in workplace practice.

### Working with Others

This Unit provides opportunities for the development of all components of the Core Skill of *Working with Others* at SCQF level 6.

The general skills for this Core Skill are:

**Working Co-operatively with Others** — *In complex interactions, work with others co-operatively on an activity and/or activities*

The specific skills for this component are:

- ◆ Analyse own role and the roles that make up the activity and/or activities and the relationship between them
- ◆ Organise own role to contribute effectively to the activity and/or activities, adapting own role as necessary
- ◆ Negotiate working methods

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- ◆ Promote co-operative working with others, progress towards shared goal
- ◆ Use interpersonal skills effectively

Oral work, particularly when there is a problem solving meeting, proposing alternatives and decision making in a business scenario, could support the development of self-reflective approaches to co-operative working.

### **Reviewing Co-operative Contribution** — *Review work with others in a co-operative activity and/or activities*

The specific skills for this component are:

- ◆ Evaluate overall co-operative working, considering own involvement and the involvement of others, referring to supporting evidence
- ◆ Draw conclusions and justify them with reference to supporting evidence
- ◆ Identify learning objectives based on the evaluation and make recommendations for future co-operative working

Reflective self-evaluation of performance in a group activity as a guide to future planning would support useful skills development for business activities. Strategies to promote co-operative working relationships with identification, management and resolution of any potential problems may underpin all practical communication work, as in professional practice.

This Unit has the Core Skill of Communication embedded in it, so when candidates achieve this Unit their Core Skills profile will be updated to show that they have achieved Communication at SCQF Level 6.

### **Essential Skills**

As indicated earlier in the Support Notes, this Unit is designed to develop skills for the workplace and for career progression. Suggestions have been offered as to how these skills could be developed. Tutors should maximise opportunities to develop employability skills. The list on the next page recaps on earlier guidance and also highlights other skills that have been identified by employers as being essential for the workplace. These are not listed any in order of priority.

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Communication  
Leadership and Management  
Interpersonal  
Creativity  
Flexibility/ability to adapt to different situations and environments  
ICT  
Team work/group work  
Working independently/autonomously/self-management  
Using initiative/being proactive  
Problem solving, presenting ideas and solutions, making decisions  
Research and investigation  
Critically analysing and evaluating  
Self-evaluating and being prepared to improve performance/identifying strengths and weaknesses and setting objectives for improvement

Planning and organising  
Setting goals and making action plans  
Time management  
Working effectively to meet deadlines  
Negotiating/persuading  
Positive attitude to work  
Adopting professional standards and working practices  
Paying attention to detail  
Work experience/simulation  
Applying numeracy skills  
Developing an awareness of the global economy  
Developing an awareness of cultural sensitivities/international culture and awareness  
Foreign language skills  
Knowledge of chosen job or career path

### Citizenship

Citizenship is the exercise of rights and responsibilities within communities at local, national and global levels. It is about making informed decisions, and taking thoughtful and responsible action, locally and globally.

Coverage of citizenship could include the following:

- ◆ Having concern for the environment and for others; being aware of rights and responsibilities; being aware of the democratic society; being outward-looking towards society; being able to recognise one's personal role in this context; and being aware of global issues and understanding one's responsibilities within these, and of acting responsibly.

### Sustainability

There are three main interconnected strands to sustainable development. Each can be addressed in learning processes.

**Social:** This strand is about quality of life. Think about educational impacts in terms of citizenship, the ability of groups of people to work together, the impacts of cultural integration, or improving security through crime reduction.

**Economic:** This strand is about infrastructure. The costs and benefits of sustainability are becoming more prominent for all professions, with many groups now considering the impact of current and future environmental directives. Students are going to be affected by changes in working practices as a consequence of the implementation of these directives.

**Ecological:** Animals and plants become endangered or extinct; pollution and emissions are changing the natural systems we all rely on for clean air, water and food. In this strand, the genetic resources, and the systems for food and timber production are considered side by side with metal ore sources, fresh water and clean air. Sustainability recognises that people,

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and all other living things, depend on these resources being maintained rather than depleted or destroyed.

It is important to recognise that these three strands are not independent of each other, but that they should be viewed as an integrated whole. What is critical to the concept of sustainability is the understanding that all aspects of our lives depend on everything else that exists on Earth: be this people, social systems, earth systems, living things or non-living things. What happens in one place at one time can affect what happens somewhere else immediately or in the future.

Opportunities should be sought within teaching and learning to engage with the principles of sustainable development. Some examples might include:

- ◆ Review buying policies: where materials come from, where they go (eco friendly products; fair trade products; using sustainable materials; reducing energy and waste bills).
- ◆ Show an awareness of different alternatives for materials or services.
- ◆ Consider working practices: use of electronic media to communicate rather than face-to-face meetings.
- ◆ Review working practices to ensure that they are environmentally sensitive; recycling, waste reduction; use of clean technologies.
- ◆ Review and evaluate current reports or projects which address issues of sustainability.
- ◆ Review strategies and recommendations from relevant professional bodies/review articles in current trade and professional journals.
- ◆ Look at current environmental legislation and directives.

Teaching, learning and assessment themselves can be used to provide evidence for sustainable development. Some work could be undertaken solely using electronic means. For example, electronic media could be used for discussion groups, dialogue between tutor and learner, and work could be submitted via electronic portfolios, wikis and blogs, etc.

## Administrative information

Version	Description of change	Date

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SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges have made to the development of SQA Advanced Qualifications.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:** Call SQA's Customer Contact Centre on 44 (0) 141 500 5030 or 0345 279 1000. Alternatively, complete our [Centre Feedback Form](#).

### General information for candidates

**Unit title:** Communication: Business Communication (SCQF level 7)

This summary explains what the Unit *Communication: Business Communication* is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start the Unit and what you will need to do and achieve whilst undertaking the Unit. It also outlines other opportunities for further learning and employment.

Effective oral and written communication skills are essential to promote good relationships and effective practice in the work environment. This Unit will focus on the practical approaches needed for successful communication in a business environment.

In order to complete this Unit successfully, you will be required to complete tasks to demonstrate that you can communicate effectively in writing and orally. The content and the assessments will take account of the needs of your work or vocational studies.

You will learn how to research and present complex information orally and in writing and how to respond effectively to comments and questions. You will learn about group processes and the formal proceedings involved in a business environment, including how to work with others, problem solve and record decisions.

#### Assessment

For Outcome 1 — Analyse and evaluate complex written business information — firstly, you will summarise one text of approximately 800–1,500 words and secondly, you will evaluate the text in approximately 350 words. The assessment will be conducted in open-book conditions.

For Outcome 2 — Produce complex written business documents — you will access and evaluate a range of source materials before producing and presenting one or a portfolio of work related documents totalling 1,500 words. The assessment will be conducted in open-book conditions.

For Outcome 3 — Present and respond to complex oral information in a business context - you will present complex information orally, speaking for at least five minutes. You can use reference notes and software support, and you can draft and redraft your work as needed. The assessment will be conducted in open-book conditions.

There will be an opportunity to be re-assessed if you do not achieve Outcomes in the first instance.

Your work will be monitored to ensure the authenticity of all evidence submitted for assessment purposes.

#### Core Skills

This Unit provides the following opportunities to develop Core Skills.

#### Communication

This Unit embeds all components of the Core Skill of *Communication* at SCQF level 6. You will be certificated for this Core Skill. The general skills for this Core Skill are:

## **SQA Advanced Unit Specification**

**Oral Communication** — *Produce and respond to oral communication on a complex topic*

**Written Communication (Reading)** — *Read, understand, and evaluate complex written communication*

**Written Communication (Writing)** — *Produce well-structured written communication on complex topics*

### **Problem Solving**

This Unit provides opportunities for the development of all components of the Core Skill of *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6.

The general skills for this Core Skill are:

**Critical Thinking** — *Analyse a complex situation or issue*

**Planning and Organising** — *Plan, organise, and complete a complex task*

**Reviewing and Evaluating** — *Review and evaluate a problem solving activity*

### **Information and Communication Technology (ICT)**

This Unit provides opportunities for the development of all components of the Core Skill of *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* at SCQF level 6.

The general skills for this Core Skill are:

**Accessing Information** — *Use ICT independently to carry out complex searches across a range of tasks*

**Providing and Creating Information** — *Use ICT independently to carry out a range of processing tasks*

### **Working with Others**

This Unit provides opportunities for the development of all components of the Core Skill of *Working with Others* at SCQF level 6.

The general skills for this Core Skill are:

**Working Co-operatively with Others** — *In complex interactions, work with others co-operatively on an activity and/or activities*

**Reviewing Co-operative Contribution** — *Review work with others in a co-operative activity and/or activities*

### **Other Essential Skills**

You will be given opportunities to develop key employability skills, as well as develop an awareness and understanding of business, enterprise, citizenship and sustainability.

Opportunities may be taken by tutors to develop some of the following skills also.

## SQA Advanced Unit Specification

Leadership and Management  
Interpersonal  
Creativity  
Flexibility/ability to adapt to different situations and environments  
ICT  
Team work/group work  
Working independently/autonomously/self-management  
Using initiative/being proactive  
Problem solving, presenting ideas and solutions, making decisions  
Research and investigation  
Critically analysing and evaluating  
Self-evaluating and being prepared to improve performance/identifying strengths and weaknesses and setting objectives for improvement

Planning and organising  
Setting goals and making action plans  
Time management  
Working effectively to meet deadlines  
Negotiating/persuading  
Positive attitude to work  
Adopting professional standards and working practices  
Paying attention to detail  
Work experience/simulation  
Applying numeracy skills  
Developing an awareness of the global economy  
Developing an awareness of cultural sensitivities/international culture and awareness  
Knowledge of chosen job or career path

The skills developed in this Unit are essential both to you as a learner and to you in your working life.

Progression from the Unit is into further education and training or employment.