

SQA Advanced Unit specification: general information for centres

Unit title: Preparation for Employment in Travel and Tourism

Unit code: HV7L 47

Superclass: HC

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Unit purpose

The aim of this Unit is to enable candidates to develop their awareness and understanding of the purpose and structure of the selection interview process as carried out by sectors of the travel and tourism industry.

An experiential approach will be applied throughout, enabling candidates to prepare for and handle complex interview situations effectively. There will be particular emphasis on the development of personal and interpersonal skills which are essential to many customer contact situations in travel and tourism.

This Unit is part of the SQA Advanced Certificate and SQA Advanced Diploma in Travel and Tourism.

On completion of this Unit the candidate should be able to:

- 1 Develop and apply a range of skills required for effective employment in travel and tourism.
- 2 Plan and participate in selection processes for employment in travel and tourism.
- 3 Evaluate personal progress in preparing for employment in the travel and tourism industry.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Candidates should have qualifications or skills in English as well as underpinning knowledge and skills relating to travel and tourism. These may be demonstrated by possession of the National Course in English at SCQF level 6 (grade C or above) or the National Unit F3GB 12

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Communication at SCQF level 6 and any of the travel and tourism Units in the SQA Advanced Certificate in Travel and Tourism.

This Unit would offer a natural progression for candidates who had previously completed F3PL 11 *Travel and Tourism: Enhancing Skills for Employment* at SCQF level 5.

Credit points and level

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

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from National 1 to Doctorates.*

Core Skills

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit. However, opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills in *Communication* and *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6 are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit specification.

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.

The assessment exemplar for this Unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable instrument of assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the assessment exemplar to ensure a comparable standard. Assessment exemplars are available on SQA's secure website.

SQA Advanced Unit specification: statement of standards

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or Skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

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. Candidates 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

Develop and apply a range of skills required for effective employment in travel and tourism.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Current recruitment and selection developments and trends in travel and tourism
- ◆ Personal goals
- ◆ Motivation theory
- ◆ Personal competencies and development needs
- ◆ CV preparation

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ Identify the personal and interpersonal characteristics/skills which underpin effective working with others in travel and tourism
- ◆ Produce a summary of their own personal goals
- ◆ Undertake an audit of their own strengths and development needs, including communication skills (verbal and non-verbal), negotiating skills, assertiveness skills, stress handling skills, time management, problem solving and task management abilities
- ◆ Produce a plan for the development of personal competencies as appropriate to employment in the travel and tourism industry
- ◆ Create a CV

Outcome 2

Plan and participate in selection processes for employment in travel and tourism.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Different types of interview methods
- ◆ Analysis of job descriptions/specifications and requirements for the job role
- ◆ Online job applications
- ◆ Selection interviews

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Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ Identify desirable skills and qualities required for a position within a chosen travel and tourism company
- ◆ Provide an analysis of their personal and interpersonal skills while planning and participating in a complex interview process. A complex interview process should include at least two from the following:
 - telephone interview (pre-interview)
 - group interview
 - panel interview
 - face-to-face interview
 - personality test
 - 'speed dating' interviews
 - online test
 - on the spot test
- ◆ Complete an online job application to an acceptable standard
- ◆ Participate in a group interview event
- ◆ Participate in a face-to-face or telephone interview

Outcome 3

Evaluate personal progress in preparing for employment in the travel and tourism industry.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Review personal goals as a result of feedback.
- ◆ Evaluate personal competencies and development needs.
- ◆ Identify opportunities for development/training.

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ Seek and react positively as a result of feedback
- ◆ Identify training and development needs
- ◆ Adjust their plan for development of personal competencies as a result reflection and evaluation of their experiences

SQA Advanced Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Preparation for Employment in Travel and Tourism

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes 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 is part of the SQA Advanced Certificate and the SQA Advanced Diploma in Travel and Tourism at SCQF levels 7 and 8. The Unit may be delivered as a free-standing Unit but would also lend itself to integrated delivery with other practical Units in these courses.

This Unit will involve the candidate using practical techniques to help prepare her or him for successful employment in the travel and tourism industry.

The Unit is focused on developing an understanding and awareness of skills needed to participate well in typically complex interview situations such as those used in current industry practice. The importance of prior research, preparation and the application of self-presentation skills for employability success in the travel and tourism industry will be stressed. The Unit is also intended to help candidates assess their strengths and weaknesses and to encourage engagement in reflective learning.

To achieve the Outcomes for this Unit, candidates must demonstrate, through the evidence gathered and presented in an employment preparation portfolio, the ability to:

- ◆ Analyse the factors which contribute to success in the selection and recruitment of potential employees.
- ◆ Analyse, on the basis of the above, his/her achievements, abilities, and interests; and relate these to a personal plan which should include a set of clear, measurable and achievable targets.
- ◆ An appreciation of what makes an effective CV and completed application form.
- ◆ Participation in a complex interview selection process, which should include and individual interview plus a group activity or a test.
- ◆ Review and evaluation of his/her plan following feedback.
- ◆ Gather, present and summarise evidence of the above in his/her employment preparation portfolio.

The importance employers in the travel and tourism industry place on exceptional skills in personal presentation, self-management, interpersonal communication, customer service and product knowledge should be stressed throughout.

This Unit builds on the skills developed in Unit F3PL 11 *Travel and Tourism: Enhancing Skills for Employment*. Reference to this Unit would be appropriate.

Guidance on the delivery of this Unit

Centre staff delivering this Unit should have previous knowledge and experience of selection, recruitment and training of individuals in a travel and tourism environment.

Guidance on the assessment of this Unit

This Unit could be assessed holistically. Candidates could create, maintain and present a portfolio of evidence — ie an employment preparation portfolio. The activities associated with the Unit should provide ample opportunities for candidates to generate and gather the evidence required for achievement. Please refer to Knowledge and/or Skills and Evidence Requirements after each Outcome.

Assessment Guidelines

Outcomes 1, 2 and 3

Each candidate could create and maintain a personal employment preparation portfolio, which could include a personal plan, to demonstrate that he/she can fulfil the assessment requirements of the Unit. (See Evidence Requirements for each of the three Outcomes).

The portfolio could contain a record of the tasks, job opportunities and activities that the candidate has undertaken together with the outputs/evidence arising from any tasks set in relation to each Outcome.

The portfolio could also include the following:

- ◆ details of self-assessment of skills, qualities and achievements
- ◆ identified strengths and development needs
- ◆ a record of selection interview preparation including:
 - background information about the organisation and the job
 - a description of appropriate company standards and protocols, for example, in relation to dress codes and grooming standards
 - a list of questions to ask at interview
 - answers to prepared interview questions
 - a summary of appropriate skills, behaviours and attitudes
- ◆ a detailed record of what occurred, personal response and a review of effectiveness in the situation
- ◆ a record of feedback received from the interview process, eg scores, comments, praise, advice, criticism
- ◆ an evaluation of own performance in a selection interview
- ◆ an evaluation of progress or learning gained from the experience
- ◆ a review of employability skills based on progress made
- ◆ a record of how future behaviour/performance may be modified in similar situations
- ◆ a review of development/training opportunities identified

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Performance evidence could consist of participation in a complex interview process, including at least two of the following:

- ◆ telephone interview (pre-interview)
- ◆ group interview
- ◆ panel interview
- ◆ face-to-face interview
- ◆ personality test
- ◆ 'speed dating' interviews
- ◆ online test
- ◆ on the spot test

These activities may be carried out in either in a simulated environment, or if the opportunity arises, in a real situation. If a simulated interview format is adopted, a group interview, should last no more than 40 minutes. A face-to-face interview could last approximately 5-10 minutes.

An assessor observation scoring sheet or checklist could be used to provide evidence of candidate performance in each interview.

Candidates should create and maintain a portfolio of information and containing evidence of their progress throughout the Unit. They will also be required to devise and implement a career plan, which should include an appropriate set of clear, measurable and achievable targets.

Outcome 1

The evidence presented for assessment by each candidate should show that they have, acquired an understanding of the principles involved in preparing for employment in travel and tourism, developed the skills/knowledge necessary to undertake a systematic review and analysis of their how prepared they are for employment including previous experience, achievements, learning, interests and particular job preferences; together with any identified development needs. It should demonstrate that they have seriously considered personal, educational and career aims and opportunities; have used this analysis to devise a career plan; and desirable course of action, based on clear, measurable and achievable targets. Candidates should be given opportunities to examine a range of methods of personal review and analysis, together with guidance and support in their use.

The evidence should demonstrate that the candidate has been able to review what they have done in the past and what they would like to do in the future. Gathering, analysing, summarising and presenting, in a portfolio, evidence of this is a key feature of the process. The evidence presented should include:

- ◆ interview techniques, for example, face-to-face, telephone, group, panel
- ◆ a personal account by the candidate of their review of previous experience. This should include identifying:
 - achievements and existing attributes in terms of personal, social, sporting, leisure/cultural and educational contexts
 - interests and preferences, career/personal aims, together with implications for educational and other developmental requirements
- ◆ a description of their personal career plan, showing that it stems from the above review/analysis, and makes reference to communication skills (verbal and non-verbal), negotiating skills, assertiveness skills, stress handling skills, time management, problem solving and task management abilities. It should also demonstrate that the candidate

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- has been able to translate their aims into clear, measurable and achievable targets as part of a personal career plan which will ideally be compiled over an academic session
- ◆ A CV based on the above analysis and a covering e-mail or letter

The initial self-assessment of current skills should be completed early on in the Unit.

Lecturers should devise practical exercises to help develop an understanding of the necessary skills for self-analysis, goal setting and the development of employability skills.

Outcome 2

Candidates may present evidence based on real experiences. However to ensure all candidates benefit, a simulation will probably have to be set up. The centre will select an appropriate sector of the industry and provide the opportunity for the candidate to respond to an advertisement for a position through completion of an online application form. Each applicant should receive appropriate information on the organisation or company, the department and the vacant post. The application form should be prepared by the presenting centre for the specific employment area chosen, eg visitor information centre assistant. The format of the application form should be consistent with normal industry practice. Personal data including age, sex, marital status, dependants, nationality and ethnic origin will normally not be sought on the application form.

This will be followed up by an invitation to participate in a complex interview selection procedure which should include at least two of the following:

- ◆ telephone interview (pre-interview)
- ◆ group interview
- ◆ panel interview
- ◆ face-to-face interview
- ◆ personality test
- ◆ 'speed dating' interviews
- ◆ online test
- ◆ on the spot test

During the interview process the candidate should be scored on the basis of their performance. If interviewing is carried out by a selection panel, a minimum of three staff is recommended. Ideally at least one member of the panel should not be familiar with the candidates. The centre could request someone from HR or Guidance Services to participate.

Questions asked at interview must be justifiable in terms of gathering relevant data to enable a decision to be made on the candidate's suitability for the post.

In the group interview, the candidates will be put in a room together. During the interview, the candidates should be asked to listen to information about the company and the position, and could be asked to answer questions or participate in a group activity. The centre could devise an appropriate activity based on the type of company or organisation involved. This activity should monitor how well candidates interact. Group activities could involve the candidates in some sort of game and should be fun and informative.

Alternatively candidates could be asked to discuss a topical issue.

The activities should allow recruiters to spot team players and an ability to follow and take direction.

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An increasing number of companies in travel and tourism are using group interviews to screen job applicants. Group interviewers look for strong candidates who know how to work well with others and behave properly and competently in a work environment. Specific things that should be scrutinised during the interview:

Appearance: attire, hygiene, and anything else that relates to the candidate's appearance is judged.

Presentation skills: interviewers should pay special attention to how the candidate presents themselves. Do they slouch or fidget? Do they make eye contact in conversation? Did they shake hands with everyone in the room?

Communication skills: specific skills that group interviewers should look for is the candidate's ability to listen, follow instructions and get ideas across.

Interest level: from the time the interview starts until it ends, interviewers must try to assess how interested the candidate is in the job they are applying for.

Face-to-face interviews (including panel interviews) should take the form of question and answer sessions. Interview questions and test based activities should include testing of industry and product knowledge developed through the Units studied on the course.

Where panel interviews are used, questions should be divided between the panel members. As the interview progresses, each interviewer should make brief note of how the candidate responds to each question, and might also note down any comments relevant to the candidate's answer.

Scoring the Interviews

Once the each interview session is concluded, each interviewer should independently scores the candidate's performance during the interview process

Scores could be allocated on a scale of 1–5.

1 = poor, 2 = below average, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = excellent

Scores would be entered on pre-prepared sheets. Each interviewer enters the score box for each criterion or question the number that most closely corresponds to their assessment of how appropriate and relevant the applicant response is. Individual interviewer's scores for each question could then be entered into a composite chart.

If relevant, the interview panel would then discuss the individual scores given and reach agreement on a final score for each question. It will also be useful to calculate an overall score.

Finally after completion of the interviews the panel needs to make a decision to recommend the applicant for employment or to reject their application.

Each panel member could complete an individual record of assessment of each candidate after each interview. The assessment criteria must correspond to the job specification and should be recorded on an appropriate feedback form. The reasons for the selection or rejection should be recorded and signed by all members of the selection panel.

Although course, HR and/or guidance staff may play a significant part facilitating role in this part of the Unit, the evidence presented must demonstrate that the candidate has taken responsibility for his/her own action and for learning from the experience of carrying it out.

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The evidence should include a personal account by the candidate describing his/her experience of the interview process. This should demonstrate the candidates understanding of the requirement to plan ahead; to organise; to use time and opportunities effectively; and, to review progress. This should highlight the achievements, learning and development which he/she believes to have arisen from the interview process and identify the likely impact on his/her overall career plan. The account should also describe the use of any formal learning situation — perhaps linked to an SQA Advanced travel and tourism Unit or any relevant out of college experiential activity relevant to this Outcome in the Unit. This personal account should be retained in the portfolio.

Outcome 3

The evidence that a candidate gathers and presents should show that they have been able to:

- ◆ review/monitor, on an ongoing and summative basis — experience of devising and implementing his/her career plan; and where/how the plan was modified
- ◆ identify, describe and give evidence for personal achievements, learning and development
- ◆ identify knowledge, skills, attitudes learned; what are the implications for future learning
- ◆ identify opportunities for further development/experiences and performance and amend their career plan accordingly

Full and timely feedback from tutors will be necessary. Candidates are unlikely to improve on all the necessary skills in the allotted timescale. They should be coached to accept any shortcomings and criticisms identified during interviews and view them as an opportunity for self-improvement. Above all they should be encouraged to remain positive throughout to boost confidence.

Lecturers should encourage candidates to reflect on their own experience and challenge them to use their personal reflection to generate insights and understanding of their own strengths and development needs. Specifically, candidates should be helped to identify achievements, learning and developments which have arisen from their experience and reflection; and, they should be helped to identify ways in which they might improve further their learning and performance.

Online and Distance Learning

This Unit is not well suited to delivery by distance learning due to the requirement to participate in a group and individual interview activities. Although there is a considerable element of self-learning related to Outcomes 1 and 3, there is also a substantial amount of lecturer input and ongoing support required.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

In this Unit candidates will develop knowledge and skills in preparing for employment and in doing so are able to apply them in participating in a selection process.

Candidates will compile a portfolio which will include

- ◆ Creation of a career plan
- ◆ Participation in an interview selection procedure
- ◆ Review and evaluation of their experience and making recommendations in light of experience

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Candidates will develop some aspects of the Core Skills of *Problem Solving* and *Communication* through completion of the Outcomes and Evidence Requirements.

Skills in *Problem Solving* including Critical Thinking, Planning, Organising, Reviewing and Evaluating, will be developed naturally as candidates undertake the Unit. Candidates will research, plan and prepare for interview, modifying original ideas as necessary to meet the requirements of a job specification. Formal review and evaluation of approaches taken at interview will be integral to achievement.

Skills in Written Communication will be developed naturally if candidates produce well-structured written communication in response to job advertisements. Production of a well-structured, accurately spelled, punctuated and grammatically correct portfolio that presents all essential ideas/information and supporting detail in a logical and effective order, taking account of purpose and target audience will provide much of the evidence necessary for this Core Skill Component. In addition, producing e-mail communications and appropriately completed online job applications will allow written communication to be developed.

Skills in Oral Communication may be developed by participation in various telephone interviews, face-to-face interviews and contribution to group activities.

There may be additional opportunities to develop skills in *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* — Accessing Information. Where candidates use the internet to research information on travel and tourism companies for their portfolio and evaluate the results, they will be demonstrating this skill.

Similarly if candidates use ICT independently, effectively, and responsibly to carry out a range of processing tasks in relation to folio production, the general skill — Providing and Creating Information — will be demonstrated.

Equality and inclusion

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

Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

History of changes to Unit

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: Preparation for Employment in Travel and Tourism

This Unit will help you to clarify and to achieve your personal and career aims in travel and tourism. One of the particular qualities a potential employer will look for is the degree to which you can manage your own development as an employee. Completing this Unit will help you to demonstrate that you are capable of doing this.

The Unit focuses on three main areas:

- 1 Develop and apply a range of skills required for effective employment in travel and tourism.
- 2 Plan and participate in selection processes for employment in travel and tourism.
- 3 Evaluate personal progress in preparing for employment in the travel and tourism industry.

This Unit will enable you to:

- ◆ Identify employer expectations for employment in travel and tourism
- ◆ Carry out a review of your existing personal skills, strengths and development needs
- ◆ You will need to be able to:
 - review all your relevant experience — in terms of personal and formal learning and development
 - analyse your achievements, abilities, and interests; and identify career aims
 - create a career plan based on your review with clear, measurable and achievable targets, then gather and present, in a personal development portfolio, evidence of achievements, interests and preferences in a range of contexts — formal learning, personal, social, sporting, leisure activities. This will include production or enhancement of your CV.
- ◆ Adapt your CV when completing an online application for a position in travel and tourism
- ◆ Take part in a complex interview procedure including a group interview and an individual interview/activity
- ◆ Evaluate your performance in an interview and how the experience contributed to the continued development of your employability skills

You will be able to relate the activities and Outcomes of this Unit to your own personal and career development.

For purposes of assessment you will gather evidence in a portfolio to show that you have been able to complete the Unit activities and that you are able to meet the Unit Outcomes.

Your tutor will provide you with guidance and support in completing the Unit activities. However, because the Unit focuses on your preparation for interview, it is your responsibility to gather, and present in your portfolio, sufficient evidence to demonstrate that you have met the assessment requirements associated with each of the three main Outcomes.