

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

General information

Unit title: GP Medical Administration

Unit code: HX5G 47

Superclass: PA

Publication date: February 2018

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 01

Unit purpose

This unit is designed to enhance knowledge and skills in GP medical administration. The specialised nature of this unit prepares candidates for the post of medical secretary within an NHSS general practice. The unit would also be useful for candidates aiming for posts as senior receptionists or assistant practice managers.

On completion of the unit the candidate should be able to:

- 1 explain the structure and functions of general practice within the NHSS and associated job roles
- 2 describe legislation affecting the work of general practice in the NHSS
- 3 explain the role and duties of the medical secretary in general practice

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Access to this unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, it would be beneficial if the candidate had achieved, or was working towards either a relevant administration qualification or had recent work experience.

Credit points and level

1 SQA Credit(s) 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 are opportunities to develop the core skills components of *Written Communication (Reading)*, *Written Communication (Writing)* and *Accessing Information* at SCQF level 6, and *Providing and Creating Information* and *Critical Thinking* at SCQF level 5 although there is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components.

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.

Assessment

Evidence for this unit should be generated through assessment undertaken in open-book, supervised conditions for all outcomes.

Outcomes 2 and 3 should be assessed together.

SQA Advanced Unit specification: statement of standards

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

Explain the structure and functions of general practice within the NHSS and associated job roles.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ General practice within the current NHS Structure.
- ◆ Social services and general practice.
- ◆ Statutory and voluntary services.
- ◆ Roles of staff and impact of professional regulating bodies.

Evidence requirements

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

- ◆ explain the function of general practice within the NHSS
- ◆ explain the relationship between social services and general practice
- ◆ explain the services provided to patients by both statutory and voluntary organisations
- ◆ explain the role of those who work in general practice, ie the medical staff of the primary healthcare team and the administrative support staff
- ◆ explain the impact on staff of professional regulating bodies, eg GMC, NMC

A different sample of **three** of the above must be assessed on each assessment occasion.

Assessment will be carried out in open-book, supervised conditions.

Assessment guidelines

Assessment is likely take the form of a case study or a practical assignment or investigation.

Outcome 2

Describe legislation affecting the work of general practice in the NHSS.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Patients' rights
- ◆ Health and safety in a medical environment
- ◆ Mental health
- ◆ Disabled persons
- ◆ Negligence

Evidence requirements

Candidates should be able to demonstrate their understanding of the above legislation and link to the medical secretary's duties. Refer to Outcome 3.

Assessment guidelines

See Outcome 3

Outcome 3

Explain the role and duties of the medical secretary in general practice.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Customer service and related supporting duties
- ◆ Confidentiality
- ◆ ICT within a general medical practice
- ◆ Organising and administering meetings
- ◆ Information storage and retrieval

Evidence requirements

- ◆ Explain the role of the medical secretary in ensuring that patients' rights are maintained.
- ◆ Describe the specific role of the medical secretary in maintaining health and safety in a medical environment.
- ◆ Describe the various duties of the medical secretary in dealing with patients with mental health problems.
- ◆ Explain the role of the medical secretary in establishing an environment suitable for patients with disabilities.
- ◆ Explain the importance of the medical secretary's duties in avoiding claims of negligence against the general practice.
- ◆ Explain how **two** of the following legislative drivers affect the role of the medical secretary (patients' rights, health and safety, mental health, disabled persons, negligence).

The assessment will be under open-book, supervised conditions.

Assessment guidelines

A holistic case study contextualised within general practice could be used. It is suggested that the candidates should complete this within a 2-3 hour working period.

SQA Advanced Unit specification: support notes

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 intended for candidates either already employed or wishing to gain employment in general practice. The unit is optional within the SQA Advanced Diploma in Administration and Information Technology (GM68 48), but may form part of other group awards or be completed as a free-standing unit.

The content of this unit should prepare candidates for employment within the healthcare sector in the role of administration within a primary healthcare team.

Outcome 1

- ◆ The current structure of the NHS Scotland. Changes occur regularly and students should be kept up to date with the overall structure as well as the position held by general practice. A diagram is a useful tool in demonstrating the hierarchal structure.
- ◆ Policy development and implementation of government initiatives within NHS Scotland, specifically at health board level.
- ◆ The role of social services and the link with general practice (eg key professionals, multi-disciplinary meetings, care packages, main benefits and claimants).
- ◆ The features of voluntary organisations and the services provided to assist statutory organisations.
- ◆ The specific roles of staff, the services provided and their position within the primary healthcare team.
- ◆ The role of the professional bodies (GMC, BMA, NMC).
- ◆ The issues involving the administrator's role, specifically medical ethics and confidentiality.

Outcome 2

- ◆ The rights to which patients are entitled and the administrator's role in protecting and facilitating these.
- ◆ The complaints and suggestions procedures and the current procedure regarding this. (patient complaints officer, role of the Public Services Commissioner, response times, role of the National Health Council).
- ◆ Health and safety legislation particularly in a medical environment and the role of employers and employees.
- ◆ Mental health legislation and the role of the administrator regarding treatment within the practice as well as knowledge of documentation in connection with admission of patients under the terms of the Mental Health Act.
- ◆ The legislation affecting the needs of persons with disability and the role of the administrator ensuring that there is no direct or indirect discrimination.
- ◆ The law of negligence and the "duty of care" to patients that apply to all working in the medical environment.

Outcome 3

- ◆ The function and duties of the medical secretary should include regular reception duties including the importance of communication skills dealing with patients, colleagues, visitors), specimen handling and collection, stock control, mail handling, ordering of ambulances.
- ◆ The use of ICT for a variety of reasons, eg for letters appropriate to the recipient (colleagues, patients, client groups, hospital, consultants), the appointments system, the preparation of prescriptions and the preparation of materials for presentation of information, (posters, leaflets).
- ◆ The organisation of meetings, the preparation of materials for presentation of information at the meeting (agenda, minutes, slides, charts).
- ◆ The suitability and effectiveness of different methods of storage (manual and electronic). The skills to present information from statistical data (eg medical audit, targets, patient groups, practice income, coding).

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this unit

Outcome 1

Examples for Assessment:

- ◆ From a given scenario set in a GP practice, produce a report or training leaflet (500 words minimum) about a statutory and voluntary body comparing and discussing the service each provides to its target group eg elderly, children at risk, disease specific. The information should be appropriate for the target audience and include commonly asked questions regarding benefits, access to help and general advice.
- ◆ The production of material for inclusion in either the practice leaflet or staff handbook, (500 words minimum) for example, the structure of the NHS at both national and local level. This could be used to inform new staff of the role of members of the primary healthcare team. Sources of information and research might include interview and evidence of this would demonstrate good planning, organisation and development of communication skills.

Outcomes 2 and 3

- ◆ The preparation for a local meeting of a multi-disciplinary group at which mental health and disability issues will be discussed. All documentation required before, during and after the meeting should be produced as well as a checklist outlining duties before and after the meeting. (minimum 1,000 words)
- ◆ The candidates are asked to produce two sections for a staff handbook. The first one should include an outline of guidance and procedure for dealing with complaints and suggestions from patients. (Time scales and the role of the Patient Complaints Office should be explained.) The second one should explain the grievance procedure relating to staff and their conditions of employment.

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- ◆ The production of a practice leaflet for patients, in which the services offered by GPs are outlined, including hours of opening, requests for appointments procedure, requests for prescriptions and after hour care. Examples of patients' rights should be included together with an explanation of how these are addressed within the practice.
- ◆ Candidates are asked to prepare material for a staff training session for the topic Negligence and Administration. The object of the training is for the administrative staff to consider how their actions can cause an action of negligence to be raised against the GP.

Opportunities for developing core skills

There are no core skills embedded in this unit. However, it does offer opportunities for candidates to gather evidence which could help them demonstrate achievement for the following core skills. The following table gives further information on the core skills to which the unit may contribute and on the opportunities which the unit provides for core skills development.

Communication

Written Communication (Reading) at SCQF level 6

Candidates are expected to read and understand complex written information — the general skill of this component. They should identify and summarise information, ideas and supporting detail about the functional areas of general practice. Candidates are also expected to evaluate the effectiveness of this information in terms of how well it meets the purpose for which it is intended.

***Written Communication (Writing)* at SCQF level 6**

Candidates can meet the evidence requirements for all or part of this unit by producing written reports and/or a staff handbook. In this way they could provide evidence for the general skill of the component 'Produce well-structured written communication on complex topics'. For example, a good report would present all essential ideas and information on the functional areas of general practice in a logical and effective order as well as providing suitable supporting detail. It would also have a structure which takes account of both the purpose of the report, and the audience, and links major and minor points in ways which assisted the clarity of the report and the impact of the writing.

Information and Communication Technology

Accessing Information at SCQF level 5

Candidate may use the Internet to source relevant information and used an appropriate filing system to store it. They could also explore the merits of relevant software for producing documentation.

Providing/Creating Information at SCQF level 6

Any written information produced by the candidate could provide evidence of the candidate's ability to 'use a range of ICT equipment', and 'present findings in an appropriate format'. Candidates should provide evidence of the accurate, competent use of various software packages in completing the requirements of the assessments.

Problem Solving

Critical Thinking at SCQF level 5

The general skill for this component(s) is 'Analyse a situation or issue'. Candidates are required to explain what is taking place in a particular organisation. They may also undertake formative assessment to help them prepare for the final assessment which can provide evidence towards core skills achievement. Assessing the relevance of factors and developing an approach to deal with a situation can provide evidence of Critical Thinking. An example could be, identifying factors affecting the organisational situation and an assessment of their relevance to particular legislation. This may also include a justification of why the concept or approach is an accurate explanation of the particular situation faced by the medical practice. Candidates could be encouraged to adopt this approach to their assessment to aid the development of this core skill.

Open learning

All outcomes are appropriate to open and flexible learning approaches with tutor support at all stages. Delivering centres will be responsible for ensuring authenticity of candidate's work.

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

The administrator in a medical environment is often the first point of contact a patient has with the NHS, whether verbal or in writing. This first impression of the organisation is crucial to the relationship between the patients, the public and the NHS. This unit will focus on the skills and knowledge required to prepare you to work with the medical practitioners in the primary healthcare team.

Outcome 1 will enhance your understanding of the structure and function of the NHS Scotland, other relevant service providers and the role of the staff within general practice.

Outcome 2 develops your understanding of the legal factors affecting the job role of all staff working in NHS Scotland.

Outcome 3 covers the administrative tasks involved in working in general practice and clarifies role of the medical secretary within the healthcare team.

Assessment may take the form of case studies, extended response questions or practical assignments and will be undertaken in open-book, supervised conditions.