

## Higher National Unit Specification

### General information for centres

**Unit title:** Learning Support: Promoting Access to Information and Learning for Learners with Additional Support Needs

**Unit code:** DP9N 34

**Unit purpose:** This Unit is designed to enable the candidate to demonstrate the ability to assist current/prospective learners who may have additional support needs eg alternative communication and/or interaction needs. The Unit is primarily intended for staff working in an educational/training setting e.g. learning resources; student services; bursaries; receptionists; trainers and lecturers.

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

- ◆ investigate the barriers that can prevent access to information and learning and the relevant legislation and workplace policies on which these barriers reflect
- ◆ investigate a range of alternative modes of communication
- ◆ investigate the effective use of augmentative and alternative means of communication

**Credit points and level:** 1 HN 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 Access 1 to Doctorates.*

**Recommended prior knowledge and skills:** It is recommended that the Candidates should have good interpersonal skills and communication skills. This could be evidenced by achievement at SCQF level 5/6. It would be beneficial if the Candidates have some work experience but it is not essential, although they should be in employment at the time the Unit is undertaken.

**Core skills:** There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or a Core Skill component in this Unit. However there may be opportunities to develop the Core Skill of Working with Others.

**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.

This is a free-standing Unit and could be undertaken as continuing professional development for practitioners wishing to update or develop their skills.

**Assessment:** This Unit should be assessed by 2 instruments of assessment, 1 closed-book assessment covering Outcome 1 and an integrated assessment in the form of a portfolio of evidence including a case study for Outcomes 2 and 3. This should be relevant to work based practice when appropriate or hypothetical situations may be used.

## **General information for centres (cont)**

### CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

In all aspects of this Unit candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of current legislation, eg Data Protection Act, Disability Discrimination Act.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards**

**Unit title:** Learning Support: Promoting Access to Information and Learning for Learners with Additional Support Needs

**Unit code:** DP9N 34

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**

Investigate the barriers that can prevent access to information and learning for current/prospective learners who may have additional support needs and the relevant legislation and workplace policies on which these barriers reflect.

#### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- ◆ specific communication and/or interaction needs of learners
- ◆ barriers that may prevent access to information and learning
- ◆ current legislation in relation to learners with additional support needs
- ◆ workplace policies and procedures which specifically relate to learners with additional support needs and your role and responsibility in relation to them

#### **Evidence requirements**

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

- ◆ provide written and/or oral evidence demonstrating an awareness of barriers that may prevent access to information and/or learning for learners with alternative communication and/or interaction needs
- ◆ candidates must also provide evidence that they have investigated current legislation and workplace policies in relation to learners with additional support needs

All knowledge and skills must be fully evidenced.

#### **Assessment guidelines**

The assessment for this Outcome could be in the form of a closed-book assessment consisting of extended response questions to test knowledge and understanding of all areas.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Learning Support: Promoting Access to Information and Learning for Learners with Additional Support Needs

### **Outcome 2**

Investigate a range of alternative modes of communication to the use of standard text and verbal instruction and interaction.

#### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- ◆ appropriate research skills to investigate specific contexts where alternative communication and/or interaction are required
- ◆ strategies to promote access to information and/or learning for learners with alternative communication and/or interaction needs
- ◆ measures to overcome barriers to information and/or learning for learners with alternative communication and/or interaction needs

#### **Evidence requirements**

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

- ◆ provide evidence of research covering a minimum of three differing contexts where alternative communication and/or interaction are required for learners  
Each context must include a clear explanation of strategies which may be employed to promote access for the learner and measures that can be taken to overcome barriers

#### **Assessment guidelines**

The assessment for this Outcome can be combined with Outcome 3 as part of a single integrated assessment details of which are given under Outcome 3.

### **Outcome 3**

Investigate the effective use of a range of augmentative and alternative means of communication that would encourage independence and participation.

#### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- ◆ appropriate research skills to identify internal practices and procedures and external organisations which can provide support
- ◆ appropriate research skills to investigate a range of strategies which can be used to enhance and promote non-verbal communication
- ◆ investigate and explain the use of a range of assistive technology which can be used to present information in an alternative format

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Learning Support: Promoting Access to Information and Learning for Learners with Additional Support Needs

### **Evidence requirements**

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

- ◆ investigate and explain the use of a range of assistive technology
- ◆ provide evidence of research covering a minimum of three contexts in which appropriate strategies might be employed to promote access to information and learning. This research should cover the identification of traditional strategies as well as assistive technology to facilitate communication.

### **Assessment guidelines**

This can be combined with Outcome 2 as part of a single integrated assessment with a portfolio of written evidence of research into a range of strategies that can be used to promote access to information and learning.

The candidate will then extend their research in one area and produce a report based on an observation/case study of a current/prospective learners' preferred mode of communication and ways in which appropriate assistance may be given to facilitate this. The report should include:

- ◆ details of internal practices and procedures and external organisations which can provide information and/or support for learners who have communication and/or interaction difficulties
- ◆ different models and approaches that can be used to promote and enhance effective interaction with learners with additional support needs
- ◆ details of assistive technology that can be utilised to enable learners with additional support needs to access information and learning

If it is not possible to report on a real person/situation, it would be possible to use a hypothetical situation based on a case study.

### **NB: CONFIDENTIALITY**

Client confidentiality is of primary importance where the report is based on real person/situation and must be respected at all times. Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of current legislation, eg Data Protection Act, Disability Discrimination Act.

## **Administrative Information**

<b>Unit code:</b>	DP9N 34
<b>Unit title:</b>	Learning Support: Promoting Access to Information and Learning for Learners with Additional Support Needs
<b>Superclass category:</b>	GB
<b>Date of publication:</b>	August 2005
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## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes**

### **Unit title: Learning Support: Promoting Access to Information and Learning for Learners with Additional Support Needs**

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 designed to enable the candidate to demonstrate the ability to assist current/prospective learners who may have additional support needs eg alternative communication and/or interaction needs. Learners may have communication and/or interaction difficulties owing to speech, visual or sensory impairments or other physical/mental impairment or because English is not their first language.

The Unit is primarily intended for staff working in an educational/training setting eg learning resources; student services; bursaries; receptionists; trainers and lecturers rather than those who will require to have ongoing dialogue when more substantial communication methods and language are required.

No previous knowledge of learners with alternative communication and/or interaction needs is required to undertake this Unit, as candidates should be encouraged to reflect on their current practice and approaches to all learners and recognise the need to change and/or adapt where necessary, to meet the additional support needs of specific individuals and/or groups.

Candidates should be aware of the importance of recognising alternative modes of communication and interaction, which might otherwise lead to misinformation and misunderstanding. Candidates should be able to demonstrate an awareness of a range of strategies to facilitate effective communication for learners with additional support needs.

Candidates will develop the capacity to effectively provide appropriate information, initial support and services to enable learners who have additional support needs to participate more effectively in the tertiary education environment.

Candidates should be aware of the range of assistive technology that is available to augment and enhance communication skills.

On completion of the Unit candidates should be able to recognise that a current/prospective learner may have an additional support need which would require the adoption of appropriate measures to promote access to information and learning. The candidate will also have knowledge of potential barriers; legislation and policies and an awareness of the key/most commonly available types of alternative communication and the range of assistive technology currently in use.

Whereas candidates should where possible include examples of actual cases from their workplace, care should be taken to anonymise client details to maintain confidentiality. The requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act should be discussed and understood in this regard. Where necessary the use of case studies may be employed when this would provide the breadth of context required.

## Higher National Unit specification: support notes

**Unit title:** Learning Support: Promoting Access to Information and Learning for Learners with Additional Support Needs

The following are indicative examples and are not intended to be exhaustive or prescriptive

### Outcome 1

This Outcome covers the investigation of a range of specific communication and/or interaction needs that may impact on a current/prospective learner's ability to access information and/or learning

Communication and/or interaction needs of learners who have:

- ◆ speech/language difficulty
- ◆ hearing impairment
- ◆ visual impairment
- ◆ physical/dexterity difficulty
- ◆ cognitive/learning difficulty

Candidates should demonstrate an awareness of a range of potential barriers between the 'usual' methods of accessing information and/or learning and the specific requirements of those with alternative communication and/or interaction needs. These could include:

- ◆ lack of awareness of the needs of students with disabilities
- ◆ lack of alternative formats and/or methods of delivery
- ◆ insensitive/inappropriate approaches
- ◆ lack of availability of auxiliary aids and/or assistive technology
- ◆ lack of internal policies/structures designed to promote inclusive practices

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge of:

Current legislation in relation to students with disabilities

- ◆ Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA)
- ◆ The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA)
- ◆ Data Protection Act 1998
- ◆ Freedom of Information Act 2000
- ◆ Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Workplace Policies and Procedures

These will vary according to individual workplaces but may include policies relating to:

- ◆ Equal Opportunities
- ◆ Guidance
- ◆ Inclusion
- ◆ Data Protection
- ◆ Health and Safety

The website, [www.disability.gov.uk](http://www.disability.gov.uk) gives useful links to legislation and related issues which may impact on access to information and learning.



## Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Learning Support: Promoting Access to Information and Learning for Learners with Additional Support Needs

### Outcomes 2 and 3

Outcome 2 and Outcome 3 require candidates to investigate and identify a range of contexts, which might require the use of alternative or augmentative communication and/or interaction to promote access to information and/or learning. Candidates should be encouraged to search and access relevant disability related web sites as well as books, journals, and external and internal sources of information to ensure that their responses are based on current good practice procedures and/or guidelines. Sources might include local Authority services, such as Psychological Services and Social Services, and the Voluntary Sector.

Information regarding internal practices and procedures might include input from the following staff:

- ◆ Support for learning services co-ordinators
  - ◆ Student Support staff
  - ◆ Additional Support Needs staff
  - ◆ Careers Service
- The Careers Scotland website, ([www.careers-scotland.co.uk](http://www.careers-scotland.co.uk)) gives links to a number of web sites relating to students with additional support needs

Candidates should investigate a range of alternative modes of communication to standard text and verbal instruction and interaction and explain the use of a range of assistive technology that can be used to present information in an alternative format:

- ◆ specialist software
- ◆ equipment to enhance sound amplification
- ◆ communication aids with symbols and/or synthesised speech
- ◆ technology to produce information in enlarged font, Braille or audio format
- ◆ other auxiliary aids
- ◆ computer software to support language and literacy

## Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

### *Opportunities for developing Core Skills*

Candidates will require guidance from the centre to ensure that they adopt a suitable approach to the Unit. Centres will also have to allow time to monitor the progress of candidates and for assessment of the candidate portfolios. The number of formal timetabled hours for candidates, however, is likely to be small. The Unit is particularly suitable, therefore, in situations where there is little leeway between the recommended number of teaching hours for a qualification and the maximum number of hours during which candidates can attend.

## Open learning

This Unit is well suited to delivery by distance learning. The evidence for Outcome 1 could be assessed electronically and the evidence for Outcomes 2 and 3 could be held in a portfolio (or electronic portfolio) and sent to the assessor.

## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)**

**Unit title:** Learning Support: Promoting Access to Information and Learning for Learners with Additional Support Needs

### **Candidates with additional support needs**

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs*, which is available on the SQA website [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk).

## **General information for candidates**

### **Unit title:** Learning Support: Promoting Access to Information and Learning for Learners with Additional Support Needs

This Unit is designed to develop your knowledge and understanding of the barriers faced by students with additional support needs.

The Unit focuses on developing your knowledge of effective communication skills and alternative modes of communication to meet the learner's needs. The Unit also looks at underpinning legislation and assistive technology.

The Unit is assessed by a combination of extended response questions and a research report based around a case study of a learner's communication needs which may be drawn from actual work practice or be hypothetical.