



Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Communication: Producing and Presenting Complex Information

Unit code: F577 34

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to develop skills in presenting and responding to complex communication in a context related to the candidate's area of study or employment. It will be particularly appropriate for candidates who need to interpret, analyse and convey complex written and oral information.

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

- 1 Produce documents that present complex information.
- 2 Present complex information orally.

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: Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, skills in Communication at SCQF level 6 or equivalent as evidenced by C115 12 Higher English or its component units or National Unit D01B 12 *Communication* or National Unit F3GB 12 *Communication* or National Unit EE3T 12 *Communication* or similar qualifications or experience would be a preferred entry level. C222 12 Higher English for Speakers of Other Languages or IELTS level 6 would also be acceptable.

Core Skills: There are opportunities to develop the Core Skill of *Communication* at SCQF level 6 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components. Further detail is provided in the Support Notes.

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.

Outcomes may be integrated with elements of the course which require the production of written and/or oral communication. It may, however, also be delivered as a stand-alone Unit, developing communication skills for a wide range of vocational contexts.

General information for centres (cont)

Assessment: There are two assessments in the Unit which will require the candidate to demonstrate skills in written and oral communication. Tasks could be integrated with other elements of a Group Award or contextualised to a vocational situation. Both Outcomes could be linked.

Centre arrangements should be in place to ensure the authenticity of all evidence submitted by the candidate.

The assessment for Outcome 1 will consist of one or a series of linked tasks. Text produced should be in the range of 1,000–1,500 words.

The assessment for Outcome 2 will consist of one task with an oral input from the candidate of at least eight minutes.

Assessments should generally be carried out towards the end of Unit delivery, when candidates have had the opportunity to develop the required skills.

Higher National 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

Produce documents that present complex information

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Accessing, analysing and evaluating a range of source materials
- ◆ Summarising, synthesising and presenting relevant information
- ◆ Using formats and structures appropriate to vocational contexts
- ◆ Using language and style appropriate to purpose, readership and context
- ◆ Conforming to conventions of spelling, punctuation and syntax
- ◆ Recording reference sources as appropriate

Evidence Requirements

The candidate must meet all of the minimum Evidence Requirements for the Outcome in order to pass the Unit.

The use of model documents, business templates, dictionaries and software support should be encouraged.

Centre arrangements should be in place to ensure the authenticity of all evidence submitted by the candidate.

The candidate must demonstrate his/her ability to:

- ◆ produce one or more documents which present complex information
- ◆ use an appropriate format, including source referencing where relevant
- ◆ use appropriate language and style
- ◆ use accurate spelling, punctuation and syntax

Evidence for the Knowledge and/or Skills in this Outcome must be the original work of the candidate. Text produced should be in the range of 1,000–1,500 words.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Communication: Producing and Presenting Complex Information

Performance Overview

The candidate is able to analyse, evaluate and synthesise a range of source materials to produce structured text(s) of the required length and complexity using a format, terminology and style appropriate to intended purpose and readership. Complex information, arguments and ideas are coherently expressed and developed. Conclusions and recommendations are included if appropriate. The required word count may include any associated or supplementary papers produced by the candidate, such as letters, surveys, press releases, meetings records or annotated graphics. Text produced should follow accepted conventions for the vocational area. The communication is factually and technically accurate and error is minimal. Word processing is not mandatory but is to be encouraged. Dictionaries and/or appropriate software packages are used to support accurate use of spelling, punctuation and syntax.

Assessment Guidelines

Evidence of achievement could be provided by successful completion of one of the following or similar:

- ◆ a portfolio of business documents, including meeting records and associated papers relevant to the candidate's area of study or work
- ◆ a report or a paper in a context relevant to the candidate's area of study or work
- ◆ a specification for a business proposal or strategy related to work for Outcome 2

Although not mandatory, use of technology in sourcing and presenting information is to be encouraged.

Outcome 2

Present complex information orally

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Planning and managing formal oral delivery of vocational information and ideas
- ◆ Accessing, analysing and selecting complex information
- ◆ Using appropriate terminology, tone and pace
- ◆ Using appropriate verbal and non-verbal techniques and strategies to progress interaction
- ◆ Using a range of active listening techniques
- ◆ Producing relevant documentation
- ◆ Self-evaluation

Evidence Requirements

The candidate must meet all of the minimum Evidence Requirements for the Outcome in order to pass the Unit.

The assessment will consist of one task with an oral input from the candidate of at least eight minutes.

Centre arrangements should be in place to ensure the authenticity of all evidence submitted by the candidate.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Communication: Producing and Presenting Complex Information

The candidate must demonstrate his/her ability to:

- ◆ select and present complex vocational information
- ◆ use strategies to manage oral delivery effectively
- ◆ use appropriate verbal and non-verbal techniques to progress interaction
- ◆ demonstrate listening skills
- ◆ produce relevant documentation
- ◆ evaluate own performance

Performance Overview

The candidate uses strategies and techniques to manage delivery of the oral communication effectively, including use of technology if appropriate. Complex information, proposals and ideas are coherently expressed, developed and presented in a well-structured form. A wide range of vocabulary relevant to the area of study or work is used with confidence. The candidate shows in-depth understanding of the topic and can support statements with appropriate evidence and explanation.

Effective verbal and non-verbal communication techniques are applied to enhance and progress communication with the listener(s). Listening skills are such that meaning of questions and comments are understood and inferred and approaches modified as necessary. Questions or comments are dealt with effectively. Records/support materials are well presented in a format acceptable in the vocational area.

Assessment Guidelines

Evidence of achievement could be provided by successful completion of one of the following or similar:

- ◆ a formal presentation, including some analysis and discussion of vocational topic
- ◆ preparation for and contribution to a meeting involving analysis, problem solving or decision making
- ◆ participation in a detailed interview or performance review, with response in depth to questions, comments and discussion

Tasks can be undertaken in formal settings, in a group or one-to-one situations, in person, by telephone, videophone, video-conferencing and web cam or similar. Evidence to be retained for verification should include a recording of performance and/or a detailed observation checklist with supporting materials and/or records. In order to cover the Evidence Requirements effectively the meeting should involve manageable numbers and would be likely to include at least four people.

Administrative Information

Unit code: F577 34

Unit title: Communication: Producing and Presenting Complex Information

Superclass category: AF

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History of Changes:

Version	Description of change	Date

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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Communication: Producing and Presenting Complex Information

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 may be taught as part of a Group Award or as a free-standing Unit. Although the Unit is expressed in generic terms, it should be related to a context that is familiar to candidates. If it is taught as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area/context of the Group Award to which it contributes. Content will vary according to the vocational discipline of the award and communication media should be linked to the needs of typical business organisations or specific industries. Candidates should be encouraged to consider strategies for the effective use of written or oral communication and should understand the benefits and limitations of technology.

Communication skills may be better assessed towards the end of the session when there has been skills development over the year and, if practical, in the context of written or oral work for other Higher National Units.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

Where candidates lack the recommended formal entry requirements, a discrete assessment approach which develops skills and includes additional support over an extended period of time may be particularly useful. Open Learning Access programmes which include Core Skill Units could also be used to develop skills to an appropriate level for an HN award and ensure that any Communication Units selected will be achievable. Early advice should be sought from SQA if candidates have significant difficulties with aspects of the Unit. For particular language needs the ESOL Unit DE1K 33 *Workplace Communication in English* is included in all HN frameworks and can provide a pathway to the SCQF level 7 *Communication* Unit.

Exemplar and reference material, including appropriate software when available, should be available to support candidates. User-friendly candidate guides in DDA-compliant fonts can provide both useful advice and clear examples of acceptable responses. If candidates are unfamiliar with meeting procedures and documentation, the use of pro forma, which is common practice in the workplace, is recommended. The use of technology for researching, communicating and presenting written and oral communication may be appropriate although candidates without such resources should not be disadvantaged.

Each Outcome could be assessed separately, but linking the two Outcomes can reinforce development of the practical skills needed in a vocational environment. Personal research on any relevant vocational issue could be a part of the preparation for a meeting or one-to-one review, with a report or proposal being written up either before or after the oral task; candidate-generated records of the oral task could contribute to the total written evidence. Where the Unit is delivered within a Higher National framework, there may be the potential for some integration with other Units which require the production of one or more original written documents that present complex information, and/or oral communication that presents complex information. In such a situation, it is critical that candidates 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.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Communication: Producing and Presenting Complex Information

Accessing a range of websites to check for accuracy and bias before editing and collating information is a useful skill particularly when other primary and secondary sources are used to support analysis and critical evaluation. The difficulties and problems associated with plagiarism should be discussed. Some written work may be undertaken outside the centre but centre conditions should be in place to ensure the authenticity of all evidence submitted by the candidate. Undertaking personal research, surveys and interviews can provide a context for original writing. Linking the content of the Outcomes could provide opportunities to question candidates on their understanding of text produced. The retention of drafts, outlines and planning or tracking documents signed by the candidate and the assessor may also assist authentication.

The context and conduct of oral work should be business-like and any papers produced should reflect this formality. The emphasis should be on developing transferable skills suitable for the vocational area. Oral assessment may be linked with the written Outcome; it may provide a useful source of information for a report or a focus for an oral presentation of researched information. If candidates are working on a Practical Assignment, an in-depth review with the assessor may also demonstrate and reinforce vocational knowledge and skills. The time allocated to oral assessment should reflect the type of task and the numbers involved. Each candidate must talk for a total of at least eight minutes, and a meeting, discussion or review should be timed and managed to accommodate this. Ideally there will be some recording of oral work in order to provide examples of standards for candidates as well as to support internal and external verification procedures. If an Observation Checklist is used, assessor notes should be detailed and comprehensive.

Formalising detailed feedback to candidates on areas of competence which need to be improved can ensure that activities are seen to be meaningful and specific. Precise but supportive comments on written work are particularly helpful. Retention of draft work, and of any tracking records or e-mail exchanges between staff, and staff and students, can be a valuable aspect of quality assurance, mark progress and provide helpful information for the verification process. If candidates have not been able to demonstrate competence in formal assessments, assessors should consider examining written and oral evidence produced in the vocational context later in the session, when there may be naturally occurring evidence of developed communication skills.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop Core Skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components.

The Unit overtakes the demands of components of *Communication* at SCQF level 6, namely Writing, Speaking and Listening.

The Unit could enhance skills in Reading as candidates analyse source materials and apply knowledge from text books, Internet sites, DVD/CD based databases and news archives. Analytical evaluation of information might include checks on the currency, authority, accuracy and balance of all information accessed. Candidates will be aware of the influence and impact of purpose and readership on language and format.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Open learning

This Unit could be delivered by distance learning provided suitable centre arrangements are in place to ensure the authenticity of all evidence submitted by the candidate.

For Outcome 1 of this Unit, delivery could be by on-line or distance learning, with tutor support at all stages of draft.

In Outcome 2, candidates must be directly observed and may have to be assessed in the presenting centre if supervised video-conferencing or similar interactive communication links are not appropriate or available. Alternatively assessment may be made of a video recorded performance which meets all assessment criteria.

Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs

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 on Alternative Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs*, which is available on SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk).

General information for candidates

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The Unit may be studied as part of a Group Award at HNC or HND levels, as a stand-alone Unit, or as a means to proceed to further study at degree level (or similar). If you are studying for a Group Award in a specific vocational sector, the tasks that you do will be relevant to this.

Conveying and responding to a range of information by reading, writing, listening and talking is the basis of Communication. Written and Oral Communication skills are essential to promote good relationships and the best working practice in a workplace environment and are highly valued by employers.

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. Your work will be monitored to ensure authenticity of all evidence submitted for assessment purposes. The content and the assessments for the Unit will take account of the needs of your work or vocational studies.

For the Writing Assessment you will be asked to produce either one document or a portfolio of documents totalling 1,000–1,500 words presenting complex information and relating to an aspect of your work or study. You will analyse and evaluate a range of source materials before producing and presenting documents such as proposals and reports. You will be allowed to use reference notes and any software support, and to draft and redraft your work as needed.

For the Oral Assessment you have to analyse and present complex information orally, speaking for at least eight minutes. You will learn how to research and present information and how to respond to comments and questions effectively. You will learn about group processes and the formal proceedings involved in work situations, including how to analyse situations and agree and record decisions.

There are opportunities to develop components of the Core Skill of *Communication* at SCQF level 6 in this Unit, namely Writing, Listening and Speaking.

If you do not achieve a Pass in any of the assessment tasks there will be an opportunity to be re-assessed.