



Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Dermatology and Nails

Unit code: H1T5 34

Superclass: PB

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Unit purpose

This Unit has been designed to develop the skills and knowledge that candidates will require to understand the function and structure of skin and nails and the impact of this on podiatry clinical practice. It is recognised that knowledge of both abnormal and normal skin and nail presentation and potential treatment methods is necessary in order to carry out footcare in an effective and safe manner. This Unit will also develop knowledge and skills of the drugs used to treat specific medical conditions and the medicaments commonly used in podiatry practice.

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

- 1 Describe the structure and function of skin and nails.
- 2 Assess and evaluate normal and abnormal skin conditions.
- 3 Assess and evaluate normal and abnormal nail conditions.
- 4 Identify common therapeutics and their use in podiatry practice.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Although entry is at the discretion of the centre it is recommended that candidates have previous work or voluntary experience working in a health care environment and are currently employed as a podiatry assistant or trainee podiatry assistant. Candidates should have an understanding of the role and scope of practice of the podiatry assistant and have successfully completed the *Principles of Professional Practice* Unit (FN2C 34) and the *Physiology for Care Professional* Unit (FN2A 34).

General information (cont)

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit 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.*

Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Communication, Problem Solving* and *Working with Others*. There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

Detail on the opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills is 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.

This Unit is mandatory within the Professional Development Award (PDA) in Podiatry Support at SCQF level 7. In terms of sequence of delivery, it is recommended this Unit follows on from completion of the *Principles of Professional Practice* Unit (FN2C 34) and the *Physiology for Care Professional* Unit (FN2A 34). The knowledge and skills highlighted within this Unit provide a theoretical and practical base for further study.

This Unit could be delivered as a stand-alone Unit as part of a personal or professional development programme.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Dermatology and Nails

Unit code: H1T5 34

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

Outcome 1

Describe the structure and function of skin and nails.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Anatomy of nail and skin
- ◆ Clinical presentation of nail and skin
- ◆ Epidermis
- ◆ Dermis
- ◆ Functions of the skin and the layers (strata) of the epidermis
- ◆ Functions of the nail and its component parts

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ Detail the key anatomical structures of the skin
- ◆ Detail the key anatomical structures of nails
- ◆ Name the layers (strata) of the epidermis and describe the function of each of these layers
- ◆ Describe the key structures of the dermis
- ◆ Describe the nine biological functions of skin
- ◆ Describe the key functions and the components of nails

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Dermatology and Nails

Outcome 2

Assess and evaluate normal and abnormal skin conditions.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Normal skin
- ◆ Abnormal skin
- ◆ Acute and chronic skin conditions
- ◆ Patient history
- ◆ Callus
- ◆ Common skin conditions
- ◆ Corns
- ◆ Hyperkeratosis
- ◆ Patient education
- ◆ Benign and malignant skin conditions
- ◆ Skin lesions
- ◆ Skin as an indicator for systemic disease
- ◆ Indications for onward referral

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ Recognise the properties and appearance of healthy skin and compare normal with abnormal skin
- ◆ Identify and describe the clinical features of abnormal conditions affecting skin commonly seen in podiatry practice
- ◆ Define acute and chronic skin conditions
- ◆ Detail the causal factors for a range of skin conditions
- ◆ Obtain a patient history about their skin condition
- ◆ Define and detail the causal factors for callus and corns
- ◆ Describe hyperkeratosis
- ◆ Differentiate between callus and corns
- ◆ Identify and describe different types of corns
- ◆ Differentiate between corns and verrucae
- ◆ Identify and describe a five skin lesions
- ◆ Describe and compare the clinical features of a benign and malignant skin condition
- ◆ Provide patient education and skin care advice appropriate to the presenting skin condition
- ◆ Describe how skin is used as an indicator of systemic disease
- ◆ Recognise and action when an onward referral to a podiatrist is required based on the appearance of skin and demonstrate how this will be discussed with a patient.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Dermatology and Nails

Outcome 3

Assess and evaluate normal and abnormal nail conditions.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Normal nails
- ◆ Abnormal nails
- ◆ Subungual conditions
- ◆ Nail conditions and the differences between nail conditions
- ◆ Patient history
- ◆ Bacterial and fungal infections
- ◆ Nails as an indicator for systemic disease
- ◆ Podiatry instruments
- ◆ Patient education
- ◆ Onward referral

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ Recognise the properties and appearance of healthy nails and compare normal with abnormal nails
- ◆ Identify and describe the clinical features of five abnormal nail conditions commonly seen in podiatry practice
- ◆ Detail five general causal factors for a range of nail and subungual conditions
- ◆ Discuss the possible causes, route of transmission and treatment of bacterial and fungal infections of the nail
- ◆ Obtain a patient history about their nail condition
- ◆ Explain the difference between acute and chronic nail conditions
- ◆ Describe how nails can be an indicator of systemic disease
- ◆ Discuss the podiatry instruments used to treat conditions of the nail
- ◆ Provide patient education and nail care advice appropriate to the presenting nail condition
- ◆ Recognise and action when an onward referral to a podiatrist is required based on the appearance of nails

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Dermatology and Nails

Outcome 4

Identify common therapeutics and their use in podiatry practice.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ British National Formulary (BNF)
- ◆ Classification of medicaments
- ◆ Generic and brand drug names
- ◆ Implications of drugs on podiatry management
- ◆ Clinical conditions
- ◆ Contraindications
- ◆ Drugs used in podiatry treatment
- ◆ Medicaments for skin and nail disorders
- ◆ Topical treatments
- ◆ Prescribed treatments for skin and nail disorders
- ◆ Adverse drug reactions
- ◆ Side effects
- ◆ Onward referral
- ◆ Storage and stock control guidelines

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ Update a patient's drug history and identify drugs that may have implications on a patient's podiatry management
- ◆ Name all the classification groupings for medicaments
- ◆ Detail the use of current drug treatments for a variety of clinical conditions
- ◆ Differentiate between the generic and brand names of common drug therapies for a range of clinical conditions using the BNF
- ◆ Describe the topical treatments and drug therapy used for specific nail conditions
- ◆ Describe the topical treatments and drug therapy used for specific skin conditions
- ◆ Identify the common topical and prescribed therapeutics used in podiatry
- ◆ Recognise and demonstrate the action necessary when an onward referral to a podiatrist is required based on changes to a patient's drug therapy
- ◆ Explain the appropriate action to take when an adverse drug reaction or side effect is observed in practice or reported by a patient
- ◆ Demonstrate the safe operation of local service and health and safety guidelines on the storage, usage and stock control of drugs in a podiatry clinic

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Dermatology and Nails

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 mandatory within the Professional Development Award (PDA) in Podiatry Support at SCQF level 7 and is designed to provide candidates with the skills and knowledge required to understand the function and structure of skin and nails. It is recognised that knowledge of both abnormal and normal skin and nail presentation and potential treatment methods is necessary in order to carry out foot care in an effective and safe manner. This Unit will also develop the candidate's knowledge and skills of the drugs used to treat specific medical conditions and the medicaments commonly used in podiatry practice.

The knowledge and skills highlighted within this Unit provide a theoretical and practical base for further study.

Trainee podiatry assistants studying this Unit as part of the PDA in Podiatry Support at SCQF level 7 will be working with patients in a podiatry clinical environment. In this environment, candidates will be under direct supervision by a Health Professions Council (HPC) registered podiatrist who will identify patients with podiatry conditions that are suitable for the candidate's level of training.

The Outcomes for this Unit are congruent with the Dermatology and Nails section of the training manual developed by the Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists (SOCP) for Podiatry Assistant Practitioners. The clinical content of this manual is a useful reference source.

Outcome 1

The aim of this Outcome is to provide an understanding of the constituent parts and the key functions that skin and nails perform.

The skin is the largest organ of the body and performs multiple functions. Dermatology is the branch of medicine that deals with the skin and diseases affecting the skin.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Dermatology and Nails

There are nine biological functions of skin that candidates should be able to describe. These are:

- ◆ absorption of chemicals
- ◆ barrier to pathogenic organisms
- ◆ indicator of disease, eg yellow skin in jaundice
- ◆ provision of a waterproof layer
- ◆ produces Vitamin D
- ◆ protection from the sun
- ◆ protects underlying structures from injury
- ◆ regulation of body temperature
- ◆ sensation due to presence of nerve endings

The skin has two layers; the epidermis and the dermis. The epidermis is the outer layer of the skin which itself has five layers or strata. These five strata are: germinatum, spinosum, granulosum, lucidum and corneum. Each contains specific cells which have a key purpose. Knowledge of the function of these strata is necessary to gain understanding of how skin is produced and renewed.

The dermis is the deeper layer of skin which lies beneath the epidermis. It contains a dense network of different types of cells such as blood vessels, connective tissue, nerve endings, hair follicles and sweat glands

There is a requirement to describe the five epidermal strata, the components of the dermis and the associated functions of each. Candidates should be familiar with all aspects of skin function and the specific functions of particular cells and strata. Correctly labelled diagrams showing a cross section of skin and its component parts could be used to evidence knowledge of the anatomical structures. Knowledge of the surface features of the skin could be demonstrated in a clinical practice setting.

The key components of nail anatomy include: cuticle, eponychium, hyponychium, lunula, nail bed, nail matrix, nail plate and proximal nail fold. Each part plays a specific role. Candidates should be able to identify the position of each part of the nail anatomy through demonstration on a patient or simulated nail or through correctly labelled diagrams or photographs.

The function of each part of the nail and its role in nail development and growth should be understood. Candidates should be able to describe the purpose of each part of the nail and relate this in a clinical practice.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Dermatology and Nails

Outcome 2

The aim of this Outcome is to build on the knowledge gained from Outcome 1 on the structure and function of skin. This Outcome will broaden the candidates understanding of skin in both its normal and abnormal states and will provide underpinning knowledge to assist candidates in the identification of a broad range of skin conditions.

In order to identify and make a clinical judgement on skin abnormalities, knowledge of the presentation of normal skin is required. Normal skin has a smooth and clear appearance, feels neither too dry nor too moist and is supple with good elasticity.

Skin colour is dependent on three factors; the blood supply, the colour of the cells and the amount of melanin contained within the cells.

Candidates should be able to describe the appearance of normal skin and be able to demonstrate this on at least three patients in a clinical practice setting.

Hyperkeratosis in the form of callus and/or corns is frequently present in a podiatry clinic. Candidates should be able to differentiate between the clinical appearance of callus and corn and be able to provide definitions and detail the causal factors for hard, seed, septic and soft corn. Candidates should also be able to make a differential diagnosis between a verruca and a hard corn detailing the specific characteristics of each.

There are a number of skin conditions that can affect the structure and function of the skin that are commonly seen in the podiatry clinic. These are:

- ◆ atopic eczema
- ◆ birth marks
- ◆ contact dermatitis
- ◆ fissures
- ◆ fungal infections
- ◆ hyperkeratosis
- ◆ ichthyosis
- ◆ psoriasis
- ◆ tumours
- ◆ varicose eczema
- ◆ verruca

If sampling, candidates should be able to identify and describe at least 50% of these conditions.

Skin lesions may be acute or chronic and candidates should understand and apply these terms. Candidates should be able to relate this to the patient reported history of a skin condition.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Dermatology and Nails

Terminology used to describe skin lesions includes the following:

- ◆ benign
- ◆ blister
- ◆ callus
- ◆ eschar
- ◆ fissure
- ◆ macule
- ◆ malignant
- ◆ papule
- ◆ ulcer

Candidates should be able to define each of these terms. Knowledge of the clinical application of these terms could be demonstrated in a clinical practice setting or through review of photographs.

There are specific factors that differentiate between benign and malignant skin lesions and candidates should be able to demonstrate all of these differences through scrutiny of diagrams or photographs. The differential factors relate to border, colour, size and patient reported history about changes to the appearance of the lesion.

In a clinical situation, candidates should be able to obtain a relevant patient history about the skin condition, recognise when onward referral for a skin condition is required and demonstrate this conversation in a clinical practice situation.

Outcome 3

The aim of this Outcome is to build on the knowledge gained from Outcome 1 on the structure and function of nails. This Outcome will broaden the candidates understanding of nails in both normal and abnormal states. It will provide the underpinning knowledge to assist candidates in the detection and comparison of a broad range of nail conditions commonly seen in podiatry clinical practice.

The shape and growth of the nail plate can be affected by age, congenital and hereditary factors, illness, infection, injury or poor self-care. Candidates should be able to identify at least five causal factors and interpret how these impacts on nail growth.

The clinical presentation and route of transmission of bacterial and fungal infections of the nail differs. This will have an effect on the treatment plan put in place and the advice given to the patient. An understanding of this is required to ensure that the correct advice and treatment is given.

In a clinical situation, candidates should be able to obtain a relevant patient history about the nail condition and recognise when onward referral to a podiatrist is required. Nails can be an indicator of systemic disease and many general illnesses can affect nail growth and the shape of the nail plate. This is more evident several weeks after the illness has occurred.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Dermatology and Nails

There are three terms used to describe damage to the nail matrix; atrophy, dystrophy and hypertrophy and candidates should be comfortable with these terms in the presentation of both verbal and written evidence.

Nail conditions may be acute or chronic and candidates should understand and apply these terms. Candidates should be able to relate this to the clinical presentation and the patient reported history of a nail condition.

Clinical judgment will be based on making an analysis of the patient history and applying this to the clinical presentation. Candidates should be able to demonstrate this in practice and the process for onward referral if this is required in at least three patient cases or use of other visual tools such as pictures or video.

Common nail conditions seen in podiatry clinical practice that candidates should be aware of include:

- ◆ involution
- ◆ onychauxis
- ◆ onychocryptosis
- ◆ onychogryphosis
- ◆ onychophosis
- ◆ onychomycosis
- ◆ onychorrhaxis
- ◆ subungual corn

Candidates should be able to compare nail conditions and compile a table detailing at least five of the most common nail conditions from the above list. The table should illustrate a definition of each of these conditions highlighting the clinical features and causal factors of each. There is a similarity in the clinical features in many of the nail conditions therefore an accurate description is required.

A critique of each of the nail conditions will highlight common causes and clinical features allowing comparisons to be made between the conditions.

Outcome 4

The aim of this Outcome is to give the candidate an overview of current drug therapies for a range of medical conditions. Candidates will gain an in depth knowledge on podiatry specific drugs, medicaments and dressings and their application in clinical practice.

Therapeutics is the branch of medicine that deals with methods of treatment and healing.

Every podiatry department or service will have a local health and safety policy around the safe use and storage of drugs and medicaments. Candidates should have a working knowledge of the guiding principles that underpin the safe storage and recording of medicaments and drugs such as the storage facility, temperature, stock control and rotation. Candidates should have a basic understanding of the potential risks involved in the use of drugs in the various stages of pregnancy and be aware of correct action to take when an adverse drug reaction is observed in practice or reported by a patient.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Dermatology and Nails

There are a wide range of items in the grouping system used in podiatry for classifying medicaments. These are anaesthetics, analgesics, antibiotics, anticoagulants, antipruritics, antiseptics, astringents, anti-inflammatory agents, bactericides, bacteriostatics, caustics, creams, deodorants, detergents, disinfectants, dressings, dusting powders, emollients, fungicides, fungistatics, haemostatics, lotions, neutralising agents, ointments, rubefaciants, solvents, styptics, tinctures and vasodilators. Candidates should be able to define and give an example from each group.

Candidates should be able to compare and discuss both the prescribed and topical treatments for common nail and skin conditions such as anhidrosis, eczema, onychomycosis and onychocryptosis.

Patients attending the podiatry clinic will often be taking some form of regular oral medication to treat a medical condition. Candidates should be aware of the generic and brand names of drugs used in the treatment of a range of conditions such as arthritic conditions, cardiovascular disease, depression, diabetes, hypertension, hyperlipidaemia and rheumatoid arthritis.

The generic names for commonly used medicaments in podiatry practice include cetrimide, chlorhexidine gluconate, isopropyl alcohol, phenol and povidone iodine. Candidates should be able to give an example of a brand name for the common generic items.

Some of these drugs may influence the risk status of a patient for example if the patient is taking anticoagulants or corticosteroids. Candidates should be aware that changes in a patient's drug therapy and any indications for further consultation or referral need to be recognised as this will impact on the care or treatment provided.

The British National Formulary (BNF) is published biannually and provides up to date comprehensive information on all drugs. It details the brand and generic names of all drugs and medicaments any contraindications or side effects reported. Candidates should be encouraged to use the BNF for reference and reflection.

Candidates should be able to obtain and update a patient's drug history and identify drugs that may have implications on a patient's podiatry management.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Dermatology and Nails

Indicative reading

Baran, R. and Dawber, R. eds. 2001. *Baran and Dawber's diseases of the nail and their management*. 3rd edition. Oxford: Blackwell Science

British Medical Association. 2011. *British National Formulary*. [online] Available from: www.bnf.org/bnf/

Hopkins, S. J. 1999 *Drugs and pharmacology for nurses*. 13th revised edition. Churchill Livingstone

Lorimer, D. L. ed. 2006. *Neale's disorders of the foot*. 7th edition. Edinburgh: Elsevier Churchill Livingstone

The Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists Training Manual for Podiatry Assistant Practitioners. 2012. The Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists, London

Yates, B. 2009. *Merriman's assessment of the lower limb*. 3rd edition. Edinburgh: Elsevier Churchill Livingstone

Web Pages

Podiatry Dermatology Guidelines [online] Available from: <http://www.podiatryguidelines.co.uk/default.asp>

Guidance on the delivery of this Unit

This Unit is most likely to be studied by candidates undertaking the Group Award. It is primarily designed to equip trainee podiatry assistants with the underpinning knowledge and skills to work with patients with a footcare need.

The candidate should have an understanding of the role and scope of practice of the podiatry assistant and have successfully completed the *Principles of Professional Practice* Unit (FN2C 34) and the *Physiology for Care Professional* Unit (FN2A 34).

This Unit is mandatory within the Professional Development Award (PDA) in Podiatry Support at SCQF level 7. In terms of sequence of delivery, it is recommended this Unit follows on from completion of the *Principles of Professional Practice* Unit (FN2C 34) and the *Physiology for Care Professional* Unit (FN2A 34). The knowledge and skills highlighted within this Unit provide a theoretical and practical base for further study.

Each Outcome is mutually supportive of each other and builds on knowledge and skills in a sequential way. An understanding of each of the Outcomes will be required in order to evidence all the Outcomes of this Unit.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Dermatology and Nails

Guidance on the assessment of this Unit

In order to achieve this Unit, candidates are required to submit sufficient evidence to demonstrate they have met the knowledge and skills requirements for each Outcome. An understanding of the both theory and its application to clinical practice is a requirement for all four Outcomes.

Candidates should be encouraged to complete a reflective log for all learning activities and to maintain this within a portfolio of evidence. This portfolio can be used to support the Evidence Requirements of the candidate's knowledge and skills in relation to all Outcomes. Clinical practice competences will be formally assessed by the supervising podiatrist and documented in a competency record.

A range of assessment strategies could be applied and these could be integrated for all the learning Outcomes where possible.

An understanding of the underpinning theory and its application to clinical practice are required. Primary assessment of theory could be integrated for all four Outcomes. For the complete Unit, this could take the form of structured short response questions in a closed-book environment. In addition for the assessment of Outcomes 1 and 2, candidates could be asked to label or identify key structures of the skin and nails using detailed diagrams or photographs.

Assessment of application within a clinical practice setting will be carried out in a live or simulated clinical setting. This should be applied for all four Outcomes and documented in a competency record. Candidates could be asked to present and discuss the evaluation of clinical findings on a minimum of three patient cases. The correct podiatry anatomical terms should be used in both verbal and written presentations.

Assessment Guidelines

Outcome 1

Candidates could provide written/oral evidence of the anatomy of skin and nails under closed-book conditions with structured short response questions. Consideration should be given to the key functions of skin and nails and their component parts and layers. In addition, candidates could be asked to label or identify key structures of the nail and skin using detailed diagrams or photographs.

The assessment should also broadly cover the differences between normal and abnormal foot anatomy.

To demonstrate clinical practice competency, candidates could be asked to identify the individual parts of the nail and function and relate this to the clinical presentation.

Supporting evidence from the candidate's workplace supervisor and competency record could be used to verify the assessment.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Dermatology and Nails

Outcome 2

Candidates could provide written/oral evidence under closed-book conditions with structured short response questions to demonstrate an understanding of skin in its normal and abnormal states.

It is recommended that the candidate is provided with a series of structured questions relating to the causal factors of skin conditions, skin infections, acute and chronic conditions and the terminology used to define skin lesions. There are specific differences between benign and malignant lesions and skin lesions with assessment directed to identification of the differential factors using photographs, diagrams or in a live clinical practice setting.

To demonstrate clinical practice competency, candidates could be asked to identify normal and abnormal skin, based on the patient history and clinical presentation in at least three patient cases. Specifically, candidates could be asked to define the clinical appearance and presentation of different types of corns and demonstrate knowledge of the differences in the clinical presentation of corn, callus and verruca. Candidates could be observed providing the appropriate advice to patients particular to a presenting condition. This could be assessed in either a simulated or clinical practice setting. The correct anatomical terms should be used by the candidate in any written and verbal descriptions.

Supporting evidence from the candidate's workplace supervisor and competency record could be used to verify the assessment

Outcome 3

Candidates could provide written/oral evidence under closed-book conditions with structured short response questions to demonstrate an understanding of nail in its normal and abnormal states.

It is recommended that the candidate is provided with a series of structured questions relating to the causal factors of nail conditions, nail infections, acute and chronic nail conditions and the terminology used to define nail conditions.

To demonstrate clinical practice competency, candidates could be asked to identify common nail conditions and make a clinical judgement based on the patient history and clinical presentation in at least three patient cases. Candidates could be observed providing the appropriate advice to patients dependent on the presenting condition. This could be assessed in either a simulated or clinical practice setting. The correct anatomical terms should be used by the candidate in any written and verbal descriptions.

Supporting evidence from the candidate's workplace supervisor and competency record could be used to verify the assessment.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Dermatology and Nails

Outcome 4

Candidates could provide written/oral evidence under closed-book conditions with structured short response questions to demonstrate understanding of the drugs used to treat specific medical conditions and the medicaments commonly used in podiatry practice.

It is recommended that the candidate is provided with a series of structured questions relating to general and podiatry specific therapeutics. This should include the classification groups of medicaments, generic and brand names of drugs and treatments for common podiatry conditions.

To demonstrate clinical practice competences, candidates could be asked to discuss any potential impact that a patient's systemic medication may have on the lower limb and any implications that this may have on their treatment plan or if onward referral to the podiatrist is required. Candidates could be asked to demonstrate or describe the appropriate action to take when an adverse drug reaction occurs.

Application of local policy relating to the safe storage and control of stock in a podiatry clinic could be assessed in either a simulated or clinical practice setting.

Supporting evidence from the candidate's workplace supervisor and competency record could be used to verify the assessment.

Online and Distance Learning

The theory elements within this Unit are suitable for online and distance learning with tutor support. It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure the authenticity of the candidate's work. The Evidence Requirements stated must be met for all four Outcomes.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Communication*, *Problem Solving* and *Working with Others* at SCQF level 6 within this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Communication (at SCQF level 6): Written communication will be developed through the production of written work in a variety of formats. The practical aspect of working with patients in a clinical setting will allow opportunity for the development of oral communication through obtaining a pertinent patient history and recording clinical information in a structured format. Identifying and summarising information from reference sources will be required to support the Evidence Requirements for this Unit.

Problem Solving (at SCQF level 6): could be developed through the analysis of clinical and medication information. An overall judgement on a nail or skin condition will be made through combining this information with clinical appearance and patient reported history.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Dermatology and Nails

Working with Others (at SCQF level 6): will be developed through interactions with patients and a range of staff in a clinical environment. It is anticipated that candidates undertaking this Unit will be trainee podiatry assistants or podiatry assistants who will be working with patients within a podiatry department and supervised by an HPC registered podiatrist.

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. 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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General information for candidates

Unit title: Dermatology and Nails

This Unit has been designed to develop the skills and knowledge that you will require to understand the function and structure of skin and nails and how this impacts on clinical practice. It is recognised that the knowledge of both abnormal and normal skin and nail presentation is necessary in order to carry out footcare in an effective and safe manner. This Unit will also develop your knowledge and skills of the drugs used to treat specific medical conditions and the medicaments commonly used in podiatry practice.

This Unit is made up of four Outcomes and on completion of these you should be able to:

- 1 Describe the structure and function of skin and nails
- 2 Assess and evaluate normal and abnormal skin conditions
- 3 Assess and evaluate normal and abnormal nail conditions
- 4 Identify common therapeutics and their use in podiatry practice

Outcome 1 will allow you to develop your understanding of the constituent parts and the key functions that skin and nails perform.

Outcomes 2 and 3 will build on the knowledge gained from Outcome 1 on the structure and function of skin. You will gain a broad understanding of skin and nails in both its normal and abnormal states. This will assist you in the identification of a broad range of skin and nail conditions commonly seen in podiatry practice.

Therapeutics is the branch of medicine that deals with methods of treatment and healing. The aim of Outcome 4 is to give you an overview of current drug therapies for a range of medical conditions. You will gain an in depth knowledge on podiatry specific drugs, medicaments and dressings and their application in clinical practice.

Although entry is at the discretion of the centre it is recommended that you have previous work or voluntary experience working in a health care environment and are currently employed as a podiatry assistant or trainee podiatry assistant. You should have an understanding of the role and scope of practice of the podiatry assistant and have successfully completed the *Principles of Professional Practice* Unit (FN2C 34) and the *Physiology for Care Professional* Unit (FN2A 34).

This Unit is mandatory if you are studying for the Professional Development Award (PDA) in Podiatry Support at SCQF level 7. The knowledge and skills highlighted within this Unit provide a theoretical and practical base for further study.

You may be assessed using a range of assessment instruments and strategies which could include structured short response questions and discussion of the clinical findings on a minimum of three patient cases. Clinical practice competences will be formally assessed by your supervising podiatrist and documented in a competency record.

Over the course of this Unit there may be opportunities for you to develop the Core Skills of *Communication, Problem Solving* and *Working with Others*.