



Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Diversity, Health and Sexual Abuse

Unit code: H2X6 34

Superclass: EC

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Version: 01

Unit purpose

This Unit has been developed to support candidates to develop knowledge and specialist skills when supporting a diverse range of high risk domestic abuse clients. The Unit will support candidates to have an increased understanding of the issues faced by diverse client groups and gain knowledge on specialist agencies available for signposting. In addition to diversity this Unit will address health factors related to domestic abuse, how they are linked, the impact on client safety and the support options available. Furthermore, there is a focus on sexual abuse, in particular best practice for responding to disclosure and navigating the options available to clients.

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

- ◆ identify and address the needs of a diverse range of clients and the barriers to accessing support
- ◆ identify and address health issues for clients
- ◆ understand and respond to sexual abuse

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Candidates should work in the domestic abuse sector in a capacity that allows them to demonstrate the evidence requirements for this Unit through work activities, and it is assumed that they will have prior knowledge of the dynamics of domestic abuse.

Candidates should have good communication skills, both written and oral and be able to use IT proficiently. We recommend these Core Skills to be at SCQF level 5.

This can be evidenced by the course application process/interview and/or by an employer's reference. Entry will be at the discretion of the delivering centre.

General information (cont)

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit 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 Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

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.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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Outcome 1

Identify and address the needs of a diverse range of clients and the barriers to accessing support.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Client groups and individual support needs.
- ◆ Barriers to accessing support for specific client groups.
- ◆ Risk and case management implications for a diverse range of clients.
- ◆ Role of advocate in supporting specific client groups.
- ◆ Specialist agencies and services to support the needs of a diverse range of clients.
- ◆ Perpetrator screening procedures.

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ identify different client groups and their unique support needs
- ◆ describe barriers to accessing support for specific client groups
- ◆ evaluate risk and case management implications for specific client groups and your role in addressing these
- ◆ identify agencies and services specific to individual client's needs
- ◆ describe screening processes for identifying perpetrator/victim

Outcome 2

Identify and address health issues for clients.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Health issues for a diverse range of client groups.
- ◆ Barriers to accessing support for clients affected by health issues.
- ◆ Risk and case management implications of health factors.
- ◆ Role of advocate in supporting clients with health needs.
- ◆ Health agencies and services.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Diversity, Health and Sexual Abuse

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ identify issues that may impact on a client's mental and physical health
- ◆ describe the barriers to accessing support for clients with health needs
- ◆ evaluate risk and case management implications for clients with health needs and your role in addressing these
- ◆ identify specialised agencies and services specific to health needs

Outcome 3

Understand and respond to sexual abuse.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Sexual abuse disclosures and the role of advocate.
- ◆ Risk and case management implications of sexual abuse.
- ◆ Options available to victims of sexual abuse.
- ◆ The criminal justice response to sexual abuse.
- ◆ Agencies and services that support victims of sexual abuse.

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ respond to a disclosure of sexual abuse
- ◆ describe risk and case management implications of sexual abuse and your role in addressing these
- ◆ evaluate the options available to clients who have experienced sexual abuse
- ◆ describe the criminal justice response to sexual abuse
- ◆ identify appropriate agencies and services specific to sexual abuse

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Diversity, Health and Sexual Abuse

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

The domestic abuse advocate has a specialised role working with clients who are at high risk of serious harm or homicide. The role is highly specialised, and entails the provision of intensive support to support clients in achieving long-term safety.

Advocates require a wide-range of skills and knowledge to enable them to identify and address immediate safety concerns, and to implement practical plans that will protect clients and their children. Advocates are independent, but work within a multi-agency context alongside both statutory and voluntary agencies, to offer the widest range of options and solutions.

Key elements of the advocacy role include the application of various skills, risk management knowledge and an understanding of the criminal justice and civil legal system. This Unit is part of a Professional Development Award that is designed to provide a formal and nationally recognised qualification for domestic abuse advocates that covers each of these elements.

By undertaking this Unit candidates should develop knowledge and expertise on diversity, health responses and sexual abuse.

This Unit is suitable for those who are:

- ◆ currently working as an independent domestic abuse advocate or domestic abuse practitioner
- ◆ about to start work as an independent domestic abuse advocate or domestic abuse practitioner
- ◆ a manager of a domestic abuse service with a caseload

Guidance on the delivery of this Unit

This Unit should be delivered as part of a Professional Development Award in domestic abuse advocacy. This would be part of a holistic course that covers the role, skills and knowledge required of a domestic abuse advocate. The course would be delivered primarily in-room using a variety of training methods, and supported by comprehensive materials for candidates. There is potential to offer a blended learning environment by offering some on-line learning opportunities.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Diversity, Health and Sexual Abuse

Outcome 1

The emphasis of the Outcome is the need for advocates to be able to recognise and respond to a wide range of individual support needs, dependant on identity, gender, sexuality, culture, ethnicity, etc. It would be useful to introduce candidates to the widest range of client groups, to include black and minority ethnic (BME) communities, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) clients, travelling communities, male clients, women or men involved in prostitution, younger/older clients, clients with a disability, those who live in rural areas, etc. Ideally this would involve using an interactive session that encourages discussion about each specific group, for example, the Race for Life.

Consideration should be given to the support and safety implications for specific client groups and in particular the barriers to accessing safety. It is also recommended that candidates are given an overview of local and national agencies that they can signpost to and work alongside. Candidates will benefit from an opportunity to discuss risk management implications and their role in addressing specific barriers, with an opportunity to share best practice and compare local service provision. Ideally this would involve an opportunity to discuss and reflect on applying the RIC and ISSP when working with a diverse range of clients.

They should also consider how diversity can affect case management, such as when they see clients, where they see them, how to tailor their approach, the need for specialist support provision, etc. Again, candidates would benefit from an opportunity to share best practice.

It is recommended that subject matter experts offer specialised sessions around specific client groups, for example, a speaker from a South Asian service to discuss 'honour'-based violence, or a speaker with expertise around LGBT clients to discuss specific barriers to accessing support.

Perpetrator screening should be introduced as a case/risk management tool when working with same-sex and male clients in order to ensure the advocate is supporting the victim and not the perpetrator of abuse. The value of screening should be addressed and then the process itself, ideally giving candidates the opportunity to practice using a screening tool, for example, using role play.

Elements from Units 1 and 2 could be threaded throughout these sessions, by drawing on the skills of the advocate and using risk management knowledge to facilitate tailored responses to a wide range of client groups.

Outcome 2

This Outcome focuses on how health might impact on the support needs and safety implications for clients. Health issues to focus on may be physical and mental health, substance misuse, pregnancy, etc. Candidates will benefit from an overview of common health needs of clients, ideally from a speaker with specialist health-related knowledge that could relate the specific health needs to domestic abuse, and inform candidates about best practice of the primary and secondary health response, NHS structure, and key practitioners that the advocate can work alongside.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Diversity, Health and Sexual Abuse

It is recommended that there is a focus on how health issues might impact on safety and risk management, for example, client's willingness and capacity to engage, safety implications for client and advocate, etc, and ideally this will include a session on using the RIC and ISSP to address health-related risks and support needs.

Suicide would also be explored, in terms of how to respond appropriately and proportionately and the duty of the advocate. For example, the difference between suicide ideation and intention, when to act on concerns and who to contact regarding these.

Candidates will also benefit from an opportunity to reflect on how health needs might impact on case management, for example, suitable appointment times, liaising with health professionals to co-ordinate support, gaining specialised input to support the ISSP, accountability in terms of suicide etc.

Outcome 3

The emphasis of this Outcome is the effective response to disclosures of sexual abuse, and the implications for risk and case management. Ideally this session would be delivered by a practitioner with in-depth knowledge around sexual abuse.

It is recommended that reference is made to the Duluth Power and Control model, which emphasises the prevalence of sexual abuse within the context of domestic abuse, as well as the national definition. Practical responses to sexual abuse should be explored, allowing candidates an opportunity to suggest how to approach disclosures sensitively and safely, drawing on skills introduced in Unit 1.

As well as their own approach, candidates would benefit from an overview of the medical, forensic and support provisions available to clients, the criminal justice response, and local and national support services.

Consideration should be given to the safety implications for clients and how this can be addressed by advocates within a risk management plan. Ideally this would involve an opportunity to discuss and reflect on how the RIC and ISSP can be applied when sexual abuse is disclosed.

Finally, it is recommended that links are made to case management (Unit 2), in particular the importance of maintaining accurate case documentation in relation to any disclosure of sexual abuse.

Guidance on the assessment of this Unit

Assessment of this Unit should be carried out by the candidates submitting assignments that include reflective accounts, ranging from a maximum of 200 to 1,000 words each, based on real work activities (where possible) and in-room exercises. They would also have to answer a number of short response questions.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Diversity, Health and Sexual Abuse

Assignments could be assessed electronically using a web-based system where tutors can provide feedback electronically to the candidate, or it could be assessed via a paper-based system where candidates submit written assignments.

Assessment Guidelines

Outcome 1

To meet the Evidence Requirements of this Outcome it is recommended that candidates provide evidence that they understand the needs and barriers of a diverse range of clients groups, by selecting specific client groups and describing their specific support needs and potential barriers to accessing services. Ideally candidates would provide a reflective account (of no more than 1,000 words) of real-life case(s) involving clients from a specific group, describing the implications diversity factors can have on case and risk management, and the skills and knowledge they can apply to address them. Candidates should be able to identify local and national support agencies that they can work alongside to provide specialised support, for example, describe their remit and referral procedures. It is also recommended that candidates provide a description of the value and process for perpetrator screening, with specific reference to how it can be applied in practice.

Outcome 2

To meet the Evidence Requirements for this Outcome it is recommended that candidates identify a range of health issues that may impact on the client groups that they are supporting. Candidates should be able to describe how health of clients relates domestic abuse, and identify the safety implications. Ideally candidates would provide a reflective account (of no more than 1,000 words) of a real-life case, describing the implications health factors can have on case and risk management, and the skills and knowledge they can apply to address them. Candidates should be able to identify relevant health services and support agencies that they can work alongside to provide specialised support, for example, describe their remit and referral procedures.

Outcome 3

It is recommended that candidates provide an account (of no more than 500 words) of a best practice response to a disclosure of sexual abuse where they can demonstrate how they might build a relationship of trust with the clients, including the skills and qualities they would use to do this. Candidates should describe risk and case management implications by identifying the safety considerations following disclosure and explaining the process they would take to record and follow up on it. It is recommended that candidates provide information on the different options available to clients, including whether they wish to report to the police and/or seek support from a specialist agency, and reflect on the implications of each option. Candidates should be able to identify relevant sexual abuse services and support agencies that they can work alongside to provide specialised support, for example, describe their remit and referral procedures.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Diversity, Health and Sexual Abuse

Online and Distance Learning

Whilst the majority of this course would be delivered through in-room learning, an emphasis should be placed on blended learning as the assignments and supporting materials could be delivered through a web-based learning package.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

You will be given opportunities to develop your Core Skills in the following areas although these will not be certificated:

Communication: written communication skills could be developed through the production of assignments. Oral communication skills may be demonstrated and developed within in-room exercises and through reflective consideration on how this relates to practice. Communication skills will be practiced and developed through in-room discussion and assignment writing.

Working with Others: could be developed through working as part of a team, within the training and work context, such as participating in group exercises, and interactions with other staff involved in the delivery of the course. It can also be developed by working with clients and colleagues.

Problem Solving: could be developed through reflective evaluations of how you applied skills to practice. Problem solving methods used in assessing risk and applying safety planning could also develop Problem Solving skills.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT): could be developed through using information technology to participate in the course and submit assignments.

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: Diversity, Health and Sexual Abuse

This Unit has been designed as part of the Professional Development Award for Domestic Abuse Advocacy. It will be useful to you if you are:

- ◆ currently working as an independent domestic abuse advocate or domestic abuse practitioner
- ◆ about to start work as an independent domestic abuse advocate or domestic abuse practitioner
- ◆ a manager of a domestic abuse service with a caseload

This Unit will help you to learn about diversity within client groups, health issues and responding to disclosures of sexual abuse when supporting high risk domestic abuse clients.

There are three Outcomes in this Unit. The first Outcome is about ensuring you provide effective support to meet the needs of a diverse range of clients. You will learn about different client groups, the barriers for them in seeking and accessing help, the best way to offer them support, and key agencies that you can work with to ensure they receive a holistic support package to meet their diverse needs.

In the second Outcome you will learn about a wide range of health issues for clients that you are supporting and the impact of those health issues on the clients and the risk and case management systems you can offer. The Outcome will also cover the barriers for clients in seeking and accessing help, how you can overcome these barriers and you will explore local and national agencies/services that can offer specialist support.

In the third Outcome you will learn about sexual abuse, its prevalence amongst clients, how to recognise it and how to respond to disclosures sensitively and effectively. You will explore the options available to clients, the impact on safety, and the sources of help and support available.

On completion of the Unit you will be able to:

- ◆ identify and address the needs of a diverse range of clients and the barriers to accessing support
- ◆ identify and address health issues for clients
- ◆ understand and respond to sexual abuse

You will be assessed on these Outcomes by submitting assignments that will include a number of written reflective accounts about your work practice (ranging from a maximum of 200-1,000 words) as well as answering short response questions.