



Higher National Unit specification

General information

Unit title: Career Information, Advice and Guidance: Supporting Customers to Access and Use Career-Related Information (CRI)

Unit code: H506 34

Superclass: GF

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Unit purpose

This Unit has been designed to enable candidates who work or wish to work in the careers information, advice and guidance (CIAG) sector to develop and apply their knowledge and skills in supporting customers to access and effectively use career-related information (CRI) that is appropriate to their requirements. Candidates will also develop their reflection and evaluation skills as they will carry out a review of the effectiveness of the support and information given to customers.

Outcomes

On successful completion of the Unit the candidate will be able to:

- 1 Describe the range of career-related information and its uses.
- 2 Support customers to access and use relevant career-related information.
- 3 Review the effectiveness of the career-related information given to support customers.

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7)

Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

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Recommended entry to the Unit

Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, candidates would normally be expected to have competence in communication skills at Intermediate 2 (SCQF level 5) or equivalent. It would be beneficial if the candidate has some previous knowledge and experience of the career information, advice and guidance sector and the advisor's role within it.

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes for 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.

This Unit is contained within the framework of the HNC in Career Information, Advice and Guidance but can also be taken as a stand-alone Unit, perhaps for the purposes of continued professional development.

Equality and inclusion

This Unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards

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Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

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

Describe the range of career-related information and its uses.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Range of career-related information
- ◆ Sources of career-related information
- ◆ Uses of career-related information
- ◆ Current legislation relevant to information handling and sharing

Outcome 2

Support customers to access and use relevant career-related information.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Customer career-related information requirements
- ◆ Benefits and potential limitations of CRI for the customer
- ◆ Barriers that may prevent access to career-related information and how to overcome them
- ◆ Enabling customers to access, interpret and use career-related information relevant to them

Outcome 3

Review the effectiveness of the career-related information given to support customers.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Importance of reviewing own performance in supporting customers to access and use CRI
- ◆ Methods of measuring effectiveness of support given to customers
- ◆ Effectiveness of information given to support customers

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Career Information, Advice and Guidance: Supporting Customers to Access and Use Career-Related Information (CRI)

Evidence Requirements for this Unit

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

Outcome 1 Describe the range of career-related information and its uses.

- ◆ describe a minimum of three types of CRI.
- ◆ describe a minimum of three sources of CRI.
- ◆ explain the uses of three of the sources of CRI described previously.
- ◆ outline key aspects of current legislation that is relevant to the handling and sharing of information.

Outcome 2 Support customers to access and use relevant career-related information.

Candidates should support their customers to access and use relevant career-related information on two occasions for the purposes of this assessment*.

- ◆ clarify the information and/or support required by the customer.
- ◆ explain the benefits of the CRI identified for the customer.
- ◆ identify the potential limitations of CRI identified for the customer.
- ◆ identify and overcome barriers that may prevent the customer accessing and using the information they need.
- ◆ enable customers to access, interpret and use the information they need in a style or format that is appropriate to the situation; signposting, verbal information (face to face or telephone), electronic information (computer based, e-mail, social and professional networking sites), paper based information.

*Two different support activities delivered to the same customer or,

*Two different support activities delivered to two different customers

Outcome 3 Review the effectiveness of the career-related information given to support customers.

- ◆ explain why it is important to reflect upon own performance in supporting the customer.
- ◆ describe the different methods that can be used to review the effectiveness of the support given to customers.
- ◆ review a minimum of one session where customers have been supported to access and use career-related information relevant to their needs. The review must include:
 - reflection on own practice
 - evaluation of relevance and effectiveness of information and support given
 - promotion of equality and inclusiveness
 - identification of a minimum of one strength and one area for further personal development
 - development in the support and information to be offered to customers in the future.



Higher National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Career Information, Advice and Guidance: Supporting Customers to Access and Use Career-Related Information (CRI)

Unit Support Notes are offered as guidance and 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 examines the role of career-related information (CRI) in CIAG decision-making and planning. Access to relevant information is important for effective CIAG. Those working in CIAG will need to be competent in facilitating the process of information-giving and supporting their customers to access and interpret a range of sources of CRI to help them in their decision making. The candidate should ensure that CIAG customers have access to relevant, sufficient and impartial information for the decision making process, but are not overwhelmed by information. Candidates should be able to identify the customer's information needs and select and interpret appropriate information and resources. A key purpose of the advisor is to support customers to develop their own ability to access, use and interpret relevant information.

Within the CIAG process, the range and scope of CRI includes the following types of information:

- ◆ Occupational information
- ◆ Labour market information (LMI)
- ◆ Formal and informal learning opportunities and entry requirements
- ◆ Entry and progression routes and pathways in learning/training/continuing professional development
- ◆ Qualifications' frameworks
- ◆ Training opportunities/volunteering opportunities
- ◆ Financial support
- ◆ Decision-making programmes
- ◆ Job search, recruitment and selection
- ◆ Providers of related specialist support and information

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Career Information, Advice and Guidance: Supporting Customers to Access and Use Career-Related Information (CRI)

Sources of information may include:

- ◆ Prospectuses produced by colleges or universities
- ◆ Sector skills councils
- ◆ Recruitment websites
- ◆ Career service website (eg My World of Work)
- ◆ Job fairs or open days
- ◆ Professional body information

Candidates should also consider the influence of informal sources and how the adviser can be regarded as a 'trusted source' along with eg peers, teachers and parents.

The particular information required will depend on the individual circumstances and needs of the customer in relation to decision making and planning for their career/learning/employability.

CRI is available in both paper based format (such as leaflets, brochures, hand-outs, prospectuses, newspapers, books) and electronic media (websites and social media). Candidates should be aware of the different methods of accessing CRI and understand the reliability, accuracy, currency, advantages and limitations of different sources, methods and formats of CRI.

In Outcome 1, candidates will gain detailed knowledge of types of CRI, such as occupational information; labour market information; formal and informal learning opportunities and entry requirements; entry and progression routes and pathways in learning/training/continuing professional development; qualifications' frameworks; training opportunities; volunteering opportunities; financial support; decision-making programmes; job search, recruitment and selection; providers of related specialist support and information.

The importance of legislation covering the handling and sharing of information, eg Data Protection and aspects of the Equality Act should also be covered within the context of CIAG.

In Outcome 2, candidates will gain knowledge of the relevance of different types and sources of information to meet particular needs of CIAG customers at different stages of their planning and decision making process. They will develop practical skills in clarifying the information and/or support required by customers. They will also need an awareness of the appropriateness and effectiveness of different methods of giving information to customers and the importance of the comprehensive nature of the information, its impartiality and accuracy. Methods of information sharing could be verbally (individually face to face or by telephone or in a group setting) and/or electronically (email, websites, software, social and professional networking sites).

Candidates will review these in relation to format and presentation, language, accessibility, ease of use, accuracy, currency/date, impartiality, comprehensiveness and promotion of equality and diversity. They should be able to explain the benefits and potential limitations of sources of CRI for customers.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Career Information, Advice and Guidance: Supporting Customers to Access and Use Career-Related Information (CRI)

Candidates should explain how different types and methods of CRI might effectively support customers to increase their awareness of opportunities available, increase their self-awareness in terms of interests, abilities and personal circumstances, make decisions about their career choice/learning/training/employment and gain a realistic context for planning and taking action. Candidates will identify any barriers that might prevent customers from accessing the range of information sources, both paper-based and electronic, and identify approaches that help overcome these barriers. It is important for candidates to consider how they can support customer to proactively identify, access, understand and review information sources relevant to meet their needs.

In Outcome 3, candidates will develop as a reflective practitioner by thinking about their own work performance. They will review the relevance and effectiveness of the information support given to customers and identify their own strengths and areas for future development.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

It is recommended that the Outcomes be delivered in the order presented. A candidate-centred, participative and practical approach is recommended.

Delivery of Outcome 1 provides opportunities for group discussion and sharing experience of practice. The use of case studies, action research and practical exercises is appropriate to exemplify the learning and teaching, supported by reference materials and resources to develop underpinning knowledge and understanding.

Outcome 2 is a practical application of candidate skills in identifying the information and/or support needs of customers and knowledge of sources of CRI. This can be based on the use of case studies or, where appropriate, candidates' own workplace practice.

Candidates should be made aware of the resources that are available and appropriate to support the customer to meet their needs related to CRI. Awareness of the skills required to effectively clarify and meet the customers' information needs should be raised as this will be further examined in Outcome 3.

Candidates should be made aware that rarely will one piece of information be enough to provide all the answers for a customer. Candidates should be made aware of both paper based and electronic formats and sources of information across the range of potential needs of CIAG customers.

It is important that candidates understand that, as well as providing information to the customers, a key purpose of the advisor's role is to enable customers to proactively access, interpret and use information relevant to their own particular CIAG needs from a range of sources.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Career Information, Advice and Guidance: Supporting Customers to Access and Use Career-Related Information (CRI)

Resources may include assistive technology, aids and adaptations and use of specialist technical equipment to meet the needs of customers.

Data protection requirements should be explored in relation to the use electronic sources of information, communication with customers and record-keeping.

For Outcome 3, candidates should be made aware of how they can use reflection and evaluation to improve their work practice and why this is important. As part of the overall review, candidates should be encouraged to reflect upon their own performance in supporting customers to access and use career-related information effectively and introduced to various methods that can be used review the effectiveness of support given to customers, such as peer observation and customer feedback. As career information, advice and guidance is customer-centred, the review must include reference to how the support given to customers and the candidate's own practice ensured data protection and promoted equality and inclusion for the customer.

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to candidates.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met.

Where candidates experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

Outcome 1 may be assessed by a series of extended response questions or one extended response in an appropriate format to cover all the Evidence Requirements. It is recommended that questions are structured to establish the candidate's range of knowledge and allow them to expand upon the three specific areas which are most important to them in their current role.

For Outcome 2, an appropriate assessment would be an assessor observation of a minimum of one candidate interaction with a customer to support them to access and use career-related information. The observation should be supported by an observation checklist, a record of the Outcomes of the support activity and resource materials used. Candidates should use the observation checklist to record their interaction with another customer or a further different support activity with the same customer. Candidates could use the observation checklists to help form their review in Outcome 3.

The use of professional discussion or additional questioning may be used to clarify the candidate's underpinning knowledge from the Outcome particularly those not evidenced in the observed session. The use of observation and questioning will also authenticate the work of the candidate.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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For Outcome 3, candidates should produce a reflective account including a review of their own performance, the effectiveness of the support given to the customer based on feedback from a variety of sources and identification of areas for own future improvement. They should also explain how equality and inclusiveness were promoted during the support activities.

Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment.

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

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

There will be opportunities to develop aspects of the Core Skills of *Communication* at SCQF level 6, *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6 and *Working with Others* at SCQF level 6. There may be opportunities to develop the Core Skill of *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* at SCQF level 5 if the candidate is involved with electronic information sharing.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for candidates

Unit title: Career Information, Advice and Guidance: Supporting Customers to Access and Use Career-Related Information (CRI)

This section will help you decide whether this is the Unit for you by explaining what the Unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the Unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

It would be beneficial if you have some previous knowledge and experience of the career information, advice and guidance sector and the advisor's role within it.

Within the CIAG process, there is a wide range and scope of career-related information (CRI) available and in undertaking this Unit you will develop the ability to support customers to proactively access, interpret and use the information that is relevant to their needs.

You will examine the range of CRI and the benefits and potential limitations of different sources. You will also have the opportunity to practice the skills needed to identify and respond to the information and/or support needs of CIAG customers to help them in their decision making. You will develop the transferable skills required to be a reflective practitioner by undertaking a review of your own performance when interacting with customers.

In summary, upon successful completion of the Unit you will be able to:

- ◆ describe the range of career-related information and its uses.
- ◆ support customers to access and use relevant career-related information.
- ◆ review the effectiveness of the career-related information given to support customers.

Assessment for the Unit will include a mix of observed practice, responses to questioning and a reflective account.

By undertaking this Unit, you will also have the opportunity to develop Core Skills in *Communication, Problem Solving, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Working with Others*.