



Higher National Unit specification

General information

Unit title: Youth Work: Understanding and Exploring Youth Work (SCQF level 6)

Unit code: H9RC 33

Superclass: PN

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Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 01

Unit purpose

This Unit is designed primarily for those with some experience in the field of youth work either as a volunteer or in paid employment. However, it may be appropriate for those who wish to seek a qualification that introduces them to youth work. The Unit introduces learners to the context, core values and principles which underpin youth work and raises awareness of the issues facing young people and those working with them. It is aligned with the underpinning knowledge and understanding for the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work. This Unit introduces learners to youth work and will normally be delivered as part of the Professional Development Award in Youth Work at SCQF level 6.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Outline the settings and context for delivery of youth work in Scotland
- 2 Explain the roles and responsibilities of an effective youth worker
- 3 Outline the factors which may impact on youth work practice

Credit points and level

1 HN Credit at SCQF level 6: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*)

Recommended entry to the Unit

Entry is at the discretion of the centre, however it is recommended that learners have some experience of youth work practice, either in a paid or voluntary capacity.

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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 a mandatory Unit in the PDA in Youth Work at SCQF level 6.

The content of this Unit reflects aspects of the knowledge requirements of the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Youth Work

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this Unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard. A list of existing ASPs is available to download from SQA's website (<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46233.2769.html>).

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 learners 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. Learners 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

Outline the settings and context for delivery of youth work in Scotland.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Range of settings where youth work occurs
- ◆ Key features of youth work provision
- ◆ Current legislative and policy frameworks relevant to youth work in Scotland
- ◆ Historical context of youth work
- ◆ Current definitions of youth work

Outcome 2

Explain the roles and responsibilities of an effective youth worker.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Principles and core values that underpin youth work
- ◆ Range of roles undertaken by the youth worker
- ◆ Range of skills required to practice effectively
- ◆ Responsibilities and professional boundaries of youth work practice

Outcome 3

Outline the factors which may impact on youth work practice.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Social and psychological influences affecting young people
- ◆ Policies and procedures relating to the organisational context
- ◆ Rights and responsibilities of young people in relation to youth work
- ◆ Risk assessment and management relating to youth work settings

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards

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Evidence Requirements for this Unit

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

- ◆ Describe the settings in which youth work may take place.
- ◆ Outline how national priorities affect local provision.
- ◆ Explain the key features of youth work provision.
- ◆ Identify the main legislation and policies covering working with young people.
- ◆ Identify key responsibilities of youth workers.
- ◆ Explain what youth work is.
- ◆ Identify key historical influences.
- ◆ Describe one current definition of youth work in practice.
- ◆ Identify core values relating to youth work.
- ◆ Describe how two key principles of youth work impact on youth work practice.
- ◆ Describe the social and psychological influences affecting young people.
- ◆ Describe how organisational policies and procedures impact on youth work practice.
- ◆ Identify potential risk factors.
- ◆ Identify the rights and responsibilities of young people.



Higher National Unit Support Notes

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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 is the first of three Units introducing participants to youth work and will normally be delivered as part of the Professional Development Award in Youth Work at SCQF level 6. This Unit is designed to introduce learners to the core values, principles and theory which underpin working with young people and to raise awareness of the issues facing young people and those working with them.

The content of this Unit has been aligned with aspects of the knowledge requirements of the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Youth Work.

Learners will normally be following a training programme for youth workers.

Successful completion of this Unit, and specifically that of the Professional Development Award, may lead to opportunities for further study in other SQA Community Learning & Development programmes such as the PDA in Community Involvement: an Introduction at SCQF level 6, the PDA in Community Involvement at SCQF level 7, the NC and HNC: Working with Communities and the SVQs in Youth Work.

Outcome 1 introduces learners to the current context and definitions of youth work in Scotland.

This Outcome focuses on the current context in relation to policy and practice. Learners should develop an understanding of current legislative policies and guidance documents such as:

- ◆ Working and Learning Together (WALT),
- ◆ The United Nations Convention on the rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- ◆ Current National Youth Work Strategy
- ◆ The Children and Young Peoples' (Scotland) Act 2014
- ◆ Valuing Young People (Youth Framework)
- ◆ National Occupational Standards for Youth Work
- ◆ Curriculum for Excellence
- ◆ 16+ Learning Choices
- ◆ More Choices More Chances
- ◆ Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)
- ◆ The Equality Act (2010)
- ◆ The Data Protection Act (1998)
- ◆ Working with Scotland's Communities — A survey of who does community learning and development in Scotland

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Learners should examine a range of key policies in relation to their specific situation. It should be noted that although the references given are current at the time of publication centres should ensure that learners can access the most up to date legislation and policies relating to youth work in Scotland.

Learners should also be made aware of the key responsibilities of staff, the types of staff, eg paid and voluntary, full or part time and the particular roles and responsibilities within their own organisation. They should understand how Government priorities feed into local provision, for example through community planning processes, single Outcome agreements, etc.

Learners could examine a range of local and thematic contexts for youth work such as youth clubs, youth cafes, uniformed groups, outdoor and detached work, online, health initiatives, single issue work and peer education. Learners should also be given information on approaches and methods, for example formal, non-formal and informal.

Learners should be introduced to the current definitions of youth work in Scotland. The focus should be on the current policy definition of youth work and definitions from employers and other professionals and academics.

Current definitions include:

Working and Learning Together (WALT)

‘Engaging with young people to facilitate their personal, social and educational development and enable them to gain a voice, influence and a place in society’.

This definition is usefully complemented by reference to the Statement on the nature and purpose of youth work (2005) developed by the youth work sector, led by YouthLink Scotland, the national agency for youth work.

Professional and National Occupational Standards in Youth Work should be explored. In the Functional Map the key purpose of youth work is to:

‘Enable young people to develop holistically, working with them to facilitate their personal, social and educational development, to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their full potential.’

Alternative definitions include Youthlink Scotland, which states:

- ◆ Build self-esteem and self-confidence.
- ◆ Develop the ability to manage personal and social relationships.
- ◆ Create learning and develop new skills.
- ◆ Encourage positive group atmospheres.
- ◆ Build the capacity of young people to consider risk, make reasoned decisions and take control.
- ◆ Develop a ‘world view’ which widens horizons and invites social commitment.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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It would be beneficial for learners to be introduced to the historical context of Youth Work in order to set the scene and allow an opportunity to examine how Youth Work has developed over the years.

Learners should explore at least one current definition with reference to the historical context of youth work. This could include reference to the early Sunday School, church and voluntary youth group movements from the middle of the 19th century, the beginning of uniformed groups towards the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries, the growth of statutory provision following the Albemarle Report (1960) and the developments in more issue-based and targeted work in the latter half of the 20th century. Specific focus on the place of youth work within a community education service following the 1975 Alexander Report would also be relevant.

Outcome 2

Outcome 2 introduces learners to the range of roles the youth worker may fulfil and the core values, principles and responsibilities that inform youth work practice.

Learners should be made aware of how values and principles influence the planning, development and evaluation of all youth work activities.

Learners could also draw on national values and should be made aware of YouthLink Scotland's Statement on the nature and purpose of youth work (2005) which was endorsed by the sector in Scotland and sets out the context, purpose and three essential features of youth work:

- ◆ Young people choose to participate
- ◆ The work builds from where young people are
- ◆ Youth work recognises the young person and the youth worker as partners in the learning process

Learners could also refer to UK wide values and principles for youth work as defined in:

- ◆ The Professional and National Occupational Standards for Youth Work and related professions.
- ◆ Comparisons could also be made with reference to Government definitions as referred to in Working and Learning Together (WALT) and the National Youth Work Strategy, featured in Outcome 1.

The primary purpose of youth work is to help facilitate personal and social development in young people, by helping them learn new skills, improve their confidence and self-esteem, fulfil their potential and support them to become responsible citizens. Youth workers do this by engaging with young people in a range of settings, including community-based youth clubs, churches, uniformed organisations, eg Scouts, Girl Guides, Cubs and schools, etc. Other approaches include detached youth work (street based), working with ethnic groups, young offenders or those with disabilities.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Youth workers require a broad skillset. Essential to those are strong communication skills (listening, verbal and non-verbal). They should be self-motivated, well organised with good leadership and time management skills. They must have a knowledge and understanding of issues which affect young people, including child protection issues. They must develop a range of strategies which enable them to support the young person's development and well-being. Youth workers should also have the skills to work effectively with partner organisations and other agencies. A non-judgemental and confidential approach is critical to building strong trusting relationships with young people.

Responsibilities of the youth worker can include the following:

- ◆ Organising recreational activities to engage young people which could involve art, craft, drama, sport and music.
- ◆ Befriending and helping individual young people (whilst always maintaining professional boundaries).
- ◆ Mentoring and supporting young people through challenging situations in their lives, often through collaborative work with partner agencies and third parties.
- ◆ Managing and administering youth resources.
- ◆ Providing counselling for young people, or signposting young people to agencies which specialise in this area.
- ◆ Preparing and delivering activities that tackle particular issues such as bullying, crime or drugs.
- ◆ Taking young people on residential trips away.
- ◆ Identifying sources of funding and writing funding applications to raise financial support for particular youth projects.
- ◆ Meeting with police, social workers and other professionals working within the community.
- ◆ Writing reports.
- ◆ Delivering activity geared towards specific young people who have particular disadvantages or vulnerabilities.
- ◆ Referring young people to third party agencies to provide support and assistance where and when necessary.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Professional boundaries exist in youth work practice to protect the young person, the youth worker and the organisation which employs them. They make clear what is acceptable and reasonable to expect in the relationship between youth worker and the young person. It is important that everybody understands what these limits mean. Professional boundaries include:

- ◆ Maintaining a professional relationship between the youth worker and the young person at all times.
- ◆ Youth workers should not reveal personal information about themselves to a young person, which might be considered inappropriate or unnecessary.
- ◆ Youth workers should not meet a young person outwith the working environment, or beyond the scope of their employment.
- ◆ Young people should be given the opportunity to develop a clear understanding of the boundaries set out within the youth club environment.
- ◆ Youth workers should present themselves as positive role models.
- ◆ Youth workers must not use, or tolerate inappropriate language.
- ◆ Youth workers must challenge and report any over-sexualised actions displayed by a young person.
- ◆ Youth workers must promote equality and diversity.

Outcome 3 outlines the factors which may impact on youth work practice.

Learners should be aware of the social and psychological influences affecting young people. These include:

- ◆ Personal relationships
- ◆ Peer, adult and media
- ◆ Health effects, abilities/disabilities
- ◆ Use and misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances
- ◆ Isolation, stigmatisation and discrimination
- ◆ Inclusion and exclusion
- ◆ Inequalities and stereotyping, eg race, religion, gender, sexual orientation
- ◆ Community safety and risk
- ◆ Violence and conflict
- ◆ Political and social barriers
- ◆ School

It is important to note that the list above is not exhaustive, and also that candidates are not required to cover all aspects/influences set out in the list. It is, however, important that the discussions and research should be relevant to the needs of young people in the particular youth organisation.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

This Unit is one of three mandatory Units in the PDA in Youth Work at SCQF level 6 which is designed to provide learners with the underpinning knowledge and professional values and skills related to working with young people in a youth work setting. The focus of the Units is on the needs of the youth worker to perform efficiently. This Unit should be delivered in a way that enables the learner to appreciate the relevance of the definitions and/or policy to his/her own occupational area, therefore throughout the Unit learners should be encouraged to apply what they are learning to their practice.

This Unit is normally delivered as the first of the three Units in the PDA Youth Work SCQF level 6, as it provides the underpinning knowledge for the other two Units. However, it is a free-standing Unit and may be delivered as such for purposes of Continuing Professional Development.

As the Unit is knowledge-based, learners should be encouraged to research aspects of specific interest. There could also be opportunities for input from practitioners. Case studies could be used to allow learners to explore and examine particular aspects of youth work, while considering the values and principles.

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

The Unit has three Outcomes and each of these Outcomes could be assessed separately by one or more open-book assessment modes such as short answer questions, multiple choice questions, or an extended response which can be based on case studies or portfolio based projects. Alternatively the Unit could be assessed holistically, eg by one open-book extended response covering all Evidence Requirements.

Where authentication of assessment is required, this should be validated by accurate and appropriate referencing.

It should be noted that although the historical context of youth work is taught within this Unit, it is recommended that it is not necessary to assess it in any great detail. The weight of assessment should be focused on the current context and practice.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

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 learner 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.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

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

There are opportunities to develop aspects of the Core Skills in *Communication* (Written and Oral), *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* and *Working with Others* through the assessments for the Unit.

Learners will also develop their transferable skills, eg a range of research techniques, time management, presentation, social awareness and responsibility and accountability.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Youth Work: Understanding and Exploring Youth Work (SCQF level 6)

This Unit is designed to introduce you to the values and principles which underpin working with young people. It is the first of three Units on Youth Work which make up the Professional Development Award (PDA) in Youth Work at SCQF level 6.

The Unit introduces you to the context, core values and principles which underpin youth work and raises awareness of the issues facing young people and those working with them.

This Unit is for you if you work with young people in youth work settings, either as a volunteer or in paid employment or are seeking an introductory qualification in youth work.

On completion of the Unit you should be able to:

- ◆ Outline the settings and context for delivery of youth work in Scotland
- ◆ Explain the roles and responsibilities of an effective youth worker
- ◆ Outline the factors which may impact on youth work practice

Assessments methods may include short answer questions, multiple choice questions, an extended response, case studies or portfolio based projects.

Throughout this Unit you will develop the following Core Skills: *Communication* (both written and oral), *Working with Others* and *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*.

You will also develop your transferable skills, eg a range of research techniques, time management, presentation, social awareness and responsibility and accountability.

Successful completion of this Unit, and specifically that of the PDA in Youth Work can lead to opportunities for further study in related Community Learning and Development programmes, eg:

- ◆ SVQs in Youth Work
- ◆ NC in Working with Communities
- ◆ PDAs in Community Involvement
- ◆ HNC in Working with Communities

The Scottish CLD Standards Council may offer associate membership to learners who successfully achieve the Professional Development Award in Youth Work.