Higher National unit specification

General information

Unit title: Supporting Improvement (SCQF level10)

Unit code: HH7R 37

Superclass: VD

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Version: 01

Unit purpose

This unit is designed to enable learners to demonstrate their understanding of how scrutiny contributes to improvement in public services.

Successful learners will demonstrate their understanding of, and ability to, apply a number of key strategies and factors which are instrumental to securing improvement. These may include rights, relationships and the significance of leadership. There is an expectation that learners will evaluate improvement models and apply them to scrutiny practice.

The Inspection of Health and Social Care Standards developed specifically for those scrutinising health and social services are relevant to this unit. As such, the unit will provide the opportunity to gain some of the underpinning knowledge and critical understanding related to the NOS. The unit also forms part of the PDA in Scrutiny and Improvement Practice (Social Services), which is approved by the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) for registration purposes for Authorised Officers of the Care Inspectorate. Other professional bodies may also recognise the contribution that the award would make to practice development for professionals working in scrutiny organisations.

Higher National unit Specification: General information (cont)

Unit title: Supporting Improvement (SCQF level 10)

Outcomes

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

1   Critically evaluate the contribution of the range of quality improvement theories, models, tools, audit and review to the improvement of services
2   Critically analyse and reflect upon human rights and practice codes in relation to the needs and wishes of people using scrutinised services
3   Critically evaluate and demonstrate the importance of relationships with stakeholders in affecting improvement
4   Critically analyse the meanings and significance of leadership when scrutinising and improving services
5   Critically evaluate and demonstrate the recording and reporting processes and skills essential to effective scrutiny and improvement

Credit points and level

2 Higher National unit credits at SCQF level 10 (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 10)

Recommended entry to the unit

Learners should have well developed communication and inter-personal skills. They should be able to demonstrate their ability to critically review and consolidate knowledge, skills, practices and thinking in their areas of practice. This may be demonstrated by: relevant professional qualifications at SCQF level 9 (or equivalent), or above with relevant experience in a social services or other related settings. Acceptance of relevant equivalent qualifications and experience will be at the discretion of the centre.

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.

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

Unit title: Supporting Improvement (SCQF level 10)

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.

Outcome 1

Critically evaluate the contribution of the range of quality improvement theories, models, tools, audit and review to the improvement of services.

Knowledge and/or Skills

♦ Theories, models and tools for quality improvement
♦ Difference between quality assurance and quality control
♦ Current models in own area of practice and their application
♦ Improvement science

Outcome 2

Critically analyse and reflect upon human rights and practice codes in relation to the needs and wishes of people using scrutinised services.

Knowledge and/or Skills

♦ Human rights legislation
♦ Statutory care standards
♦ Professional codes of Practice
♦ User/carer standards

Outcome 3

Critically evaluate and demonstrate the importance of relationships with stakeholders in affecting improvement.

Knowledge and/or Skills

♦ The meaning of power
♦ Stakeholder relationships, partnerships and the use of power
♦ Trust and mistrust in scrutiny relationships

Higher National unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Supporting Improvement (SCQF level 10)

Outcome 4

Critically analyse the meanings and significance of leadership when scrutinising and improving services

Knowledge and/or Skills

♦   Theories of leadership
♦   Differences between management and leadership
♦   Current issues in leadership for improvement in own setting

Outcome 5

Critically evaluate and demonstrate the recording and reporting processes and skills essential to effective scrutiny and improvement

Knowledge and/or Skills

♦   Inputs, processes, outputs, and outcomes
♦   Procedural justice and right of reply in decision making
♦   Interpretation, synthesis and recording of data in service improvement
♦   Skills in follow-up

Higher National unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Supporting Improvement (SCQF level 10)

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:

♦ Critically evaluate at least two theories, models and tools for quality improvement
♦ Critically analyse the difference between quality assurance and quality control
♦ Critically reflect on how at least one model for improvement has been in own practice and its influence on outcomes
♦ Critically evaluate the role of improvement science in contributing to effective improvement and scrutiny activity
♦ Critically analyse at least two pieces of rights legislation or treaty law in relation to one practice area
♦ Critically reflect upon how care standards, both statutory and user/carer, have an impact on hearing the voice of service users and carers
♦ Critically analyse at least two professional codes of practice and reflect on their importance in supporting improvement in own area of practice
♦ Critically reflect on at least one theory of power and how it applies to scrutiny practice
♦ Critically evaluate the power balance in scrutiny and how it impacts on relationships and service improvement in one area of practice
♦ Critically evaluate the meanings and impact of trust and mistrust in one area of scrutiny practice
♦ Critically analyse at least two theories of leadership
♦ Critically analyse the difference between management and leadership
♦ Critically analyse at least one issue in leadership in own setting
♦ Critically evaluate the relationship between inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes in scrutiny practice
♦ Critically reflect on the concept of procedural justice and how it impacts on recording and reporting
♦ Demonstrate interpretation, synthesis and recording of data for service improvement
♦ Demonstrate skills required in effective follow up of reporting on scrutiny activity

Higher National unit support notes

Unit title: Supporting Improvement (SCQF level 10)

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 80 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this unit

This unit is suitable for learners from a range of professional backgrounds. It is designed to enable learners to understand what improvement is and how to support, encourage and persuade services to achieve effective collaboration. At the end of the unit learners should have a clear understanding about services capacity for improvement, what it is, what affects it and how to assess it. Using appropriate frameworks for scrutiny and responsive strategies will ensure learners make professional judgements that work to secure improvement in services and be able to report these judgements effectively.

Successful learners will have a critical understanding of the theoretical perspectives of scrutiny and quality models and their contribution to the improvement of outcomes for people using services. Learners will appreciate how they can work with others and enable people to contribute to improving services through a range of ways, including co-production. Critical understanding of relationships and leadership skills within scrutiny practice will enable learners to support improvement.

Outcome 1: this will allow the learner to looks at the range of theories and quality models available and should cover, for example, the European Framework for Quality Management (EFQM), Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF), Institute for Health Improvement, or any other framework applicable to their particular area of provision. Learners should be encouraged to critically reflect on questions such as 'Is greater safety an improvement?' The difference between Quality Assurance and Quality Control should also be explored.

An overview of improvement science was given in the 'Frameworks for Scrutiny Practice' unit in this Group Award. For this unit, the knowledge base of improvement science will be explored much more deeply. Some of the tools and methods discussed in the Improvement Science literature should be discussed and analysed in relation to their application in improving services.

Higher National unit support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supporting Improvement (SCQF level 10)

Outcome 2: this outcome takes a rights based approach and looks at values, care standards and codes of practice. Learners should be encouraged to think about what lies behind improvement and the different ways this can be secured. This should include methods available within their own field of practice as well as how codes of practice impact on inspectors' behaviour, particularly considering the SSSC and other relevant codes such as the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), General Teaching Council (GTC) and the Allied Health Professional codes. Exploration of possible issues of conflict within the codes, values and ethics for individual practice will determine the intangible but important aspects of improvement. Ethical dilemmas and personal outcomes could be considered through this lens. The SSSC code for employers of social services workforce should also be considered in relation to how this might contribute to improvement, given its distinctive nature. Professional values may be explored through the perspectives of rule based ethics and care ethics. Rule-based ethics arose after the Enlightenment when Western thought came to be dominated by the rational-scientific tradition and are embodied in the work of the philosopher Immanuel Kant. Some of the key concepts for Kant were the role of reason, the ability to make moral judgements based on general universal principles, and an impartial approach which views each person as an independent rational human being. Kant believed that people should be guided by a Categorical Imperative. The Categorical Imperative has been expressed colloquially as 'Do unto others what you would have done to yourself'. This means that Kant believed that people should be able to develop rules of order, or duties which allowed this categorical imperative to be promoted. The rational-legal tradition led to the codification of rules of conduct and right behaviour, which has continued today in the form of codes of practice, and proceduralised activity. The relevance of rule based ethics is important when looking at the development of scrutiny activity

The more recent development of care ethics has come from a feminist tradition. Gilligan (1982) claimed that she heard a distinctive moral voice among the women who were the subjects of her research. She called this voice 'the voice of care'. This voice emphasised the equal moral worth of all people, and said that informal and interpersonal relationships were a worthy area of debate in relation to morality. Care ethics reject impartiality, insist on the need to be sensitive to others, and emphasise the central place of concern and sentiment. Unlike Kantian ethics, which would insist that the same principles should hold for all people in the same situation with no exceptions, care ethics is averse to this and insists that judgements require sensitivity to the particular moral features of each situation. Professional values as embodied in codes of conduct/practice for relevant professions (eg social services, nursing, allied health professionals, teachers etc) are important to understand, as clashes in meanings of care, for example, can come from different understandings of care (eg care for v. care about).

It would also be important to reflect upon user/carer standards which are articulated by user groups and organisations such as People First, survivors' groups, whistleblowers, In Control, Howard League etc. Any differences in emphasis and content between 'establishment' ideas and user/carer ideas should be interrogated.

Outcome 3: this takes the basis of the scrutiny and improvement relationship and explores this further. Content should focus on the collective responsibility for scrutiny activity and empowerment and how co–production may play a part in the scrutiny process. The tensions between working in partnership and remaining impartial and taking action when necessary are important aspects to critically review. Exploring the differences within the relationships will touch on power again. The scrutiny relationship is one of unequal power.

Higher National unit support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supporting Improvement (SCQF level 10)

Models of power should be explored in research and literature. A good starting point might be French and Raven's (1959) 6 part typology of power.

♦ Legitimate – This comes from the belief that a person has the formal right to make demands, and to expect others to be compliant and obedient.
♦ Reward – This results from one person's ability to compensate another for compliance.
♦ Expert – This is based on a person's high levels of skill and knowledge.
♦ Referent – This is the result of a person's perceived attractiveness, worthiness and right to others' respect.
♦ Coercive – This comes from the belief that a person can punish others for noncompliance
♦ Informational – This results from a person's ability to control the information that others need to accomplish something.

Learners should be encouraged to examine the use and potential abuse of power and also their own approach to the use of power. In particular, exploration of trust and mistrust is important. (Prince and Puffit). Power models and theories will enable exploration of the positive use of power in effecting improvements within scrutiny relationships. The empowerment of stakeholders in the scrutiny relationship should be analysed and theories of involvement should be linked to this. The tension between voluntary and involuntary relationships should be explored by learners, as well as the tension between empowering service staff and/or providers v trust/mistrust and the difference between guidance and consultancy. The concepts of responsibility and accountability can be explored here, as well as how to make recommendations for improvement in a realistic way, taking account of resources/ability, and not setting people up to fail. An exploration of how to promote optimism and not fear should be undertaken, as well as how to use praise for strong performance in situations where people are working in challenging situations.

Outcome 4: this looks at how leadership impacts on improvement. The learner should also explore current issues in leadership effecting areas of services that they scrutinise and how these impact the potential for improvement. Theories of leadership and the differences between management and leadership should be explored. During this exploration, it is important to note that leadership studies have suffered from the 'great man' approach. When examining this area, tutors should be sensitive to this history and to the context of the inspector. The notion of leaders and followers could be explored. Leadership was traditionally regarded as an inherent skill and evidenced by personal characteristics or traits. However, it is now generally regarded as a learned and transferable skill. There are a variety of ways of looking at leadership. One of the many definitions is as follows: "Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal." Sometimes leadership was seen as something which is 'better' than management. However, contemporary theorists argue that both are needed. Kotter said that organisations need both leaders and managers. Specifically, he states that leadership is about coping with change, whereas management is about coping with complexity. For Kotter, the leadership process involves (a) developing a vision for the organisation; (b) aligning people with that vision through communication; and (c) motivating people to action through empowerment and through basic need fulfilment. In contrast, the management process involves (a) planning and budgeting, (b) organizing and staffing, and (c) controlling and problem solving. The management process reduces uncertainty and stabilises the organisation. The *Step in to Leadership* resource (SSSC) is particularly useful.

Higher National unit support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supporting Improvement (SCQF level 10)

Outcome 5: this looks at how recording and reporting systems and processes impact on improvement. Learners should be encouraged to understand the differences between inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes. Learners should also be able to make a plan to link any aims of inspection, scrutiny and improvement practice to an evaluation of the performance of the organisation. Inspection aims should be achieved through main questions that require evidence criteria, prescribing appropriate information collection methods to an evaluation of the performance of the organisation. This includes the ability to plan for a singleton, a joint and a team inspection or scrutiny activity. Content should include, for example:

♦   Outcome based approaches such as for example, My home Life, GIRFEC/Joint Improvement Team publications, talking points/outcome framework or other relevant models.
♦   An appreciation of the different levels of outcomes, for example service, government and personal outcomes will help explore what outcomes are.
♦   Principles of good recording and the uses of reports help explore how the report can facilitate co-production and empower everyone to drive forward improvement in services.

Learners should be encouraged to explore the fact that reports are for the public to help them to choose services, know about how well a local authority or other scrutinised agency is performing and to encourage a stakeholder drive for improvement. Disclosure, (grading), 'name and shame' and reputational loss should all be explored in this context. Hence the concept of co-production is important here and should be discussed.

One of the most important characteristics valued by those scrutinised is that the activity is fair and that the inspector is fair, open and transparent. 'Procedural justice' is a term referring to:

♦   The perceived fairness of procedures involved in decision-making

♦   The perceived treatment one receives from the decision-maker.

    In other words, it relates to how a person may perceive the interpersonal treatment they have received from an authority, regardless of whether the resulting outcome will be favourable or not. Research into the effects of procedural justice has consistently found that people and organisations are much more likely to obey the law and accept decisions made by authorities when they feel that the decision-making procedures are fair, respectful, and impartial They are also more likely to report wrongdoing to an authority that has treated them fairly (Murphy et al., 2009: p. 2).

Research implies that using *procedural justice* makes individuals more likely to comply with the decisions of regulators and other legal bodies (Murphy et al., 2009, Tyler, 2003) even where those decisions are unfavourable.

Principles of procedural justice include:

♦   That decision-making is based on discernible objective evidence
♦   That the actions of the regulators are understandable and clear
♦   That people are treated with dignity and fairness
♦   That people have the opportunity to state their point of view (Murphy et al., 2009).

Higher National unit support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supporting Improvement (SCQF level 10)

The principles outlined above should set the boundaries of the relationship being offered. The importance of clear and accurate inspection reports and other documentation cannot be over-emphasised as they can help demonstrate the transparency and fairness of the regulation processes and serve to clarify any misunderstandings. Emphasis on the principles, beliefs and values of the regulated sector, together with the fairness of procedural justice, gives firm boundaries to the relationships in the regulatory interaction. Therefore it is important that learners have the four skills to interpret and record their findings.

Indicators of risks and interrelationships between systems, processes and outcomes help an understanding of the necessity to consider the complexity of risk and how scrutiny can not only improve services but help to safeguard people, for example when systems are poor but outcomes are reported to be satisfactory. Systems theories and complexity theory can be useful perspective to use when analysing inter-relationships between processes and outcomes.

The knowledge and skills obtained from the outcomes of this unit will be developed in a range of ways. However specific theories of regulation, inspection and scrutiny frameworks and strategies will enable learners to develop their knowledge (for example those of J. Braithwaite, R. Baldwin and J. Black, N. Gunningham, G. Boyne, C. Hodges, K. Walshe S. Martin, H. Davis and J. Brady). Theories about leadership and management (for example D.McGregor, J Adair and J Harvey Jones as discussed in Witzel and Warner) and principles of organisational behaviours and cultures (such as J Wardhaugh and P Wilding) will enable learners to critically examine the skills of scrutiny practice and how it can not only help to safeguard people, but drive forward improvement. Risk factors will be considered using a theoretical base (for example M. Sparrow, L. Prince and R Puffit, as well as the consideration of risk within the scrutiny framework theory).

Centres should ensure that systems are in place to authenticate the assessments provided by learners. For example, they may use software which examines written work to ensure that it has not been plagiarised, or direct observation of practice can be used for verification purposes.

The Inspection of Health and Social Care Standards developed specifically for those working in health and social services are relevant to this unit. In particular:

SCDINSPC4   —   Manage challenges to inspection findings
SCDINSPC5   —   Manage personal caseload as an inspector
SCDINSPD3   —   Contribute to investigation of service failures
SCDINSPC2   —   Work with service providers to carry out self-assessment
SCDINSPE1   —   Promote compliance through use of regulatory framework
SCDINSPG1   —   Contribute to the improvement of services
SCDINSPF1   —   Engage with people who use services and their carers in inspection activities

Other related NOSs:

SCDHSC 0452 —   Lead practice that promotes the rights, responsibilities, equality and diversity of individuals
SCDHSC 0043 —   Take responsibility for the continuing professional development of Yourself and others.

Unit title: Supporting Improvement (SCQF level 10)

SCDHSC 0042 — Lead practice from health and safety in the work setting

References

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Crerar, L.D., 2007. The Crerar Review; The report of the independent review of regulation, audit, inspection and complaints handling of public services in Scotland. Scottish Government.

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Murphy, K., Tyler, T. R. & Curtis, A. 2009. Nurturing Regulatory Compliance: Is Procedural Justice Effective When People Question the Legitimacy of the Law? Regulation & Governance, 3, 1–26.

Scottish Social Services Council (2015) Step in Leadership. Accessed on 6th September 2016 at http://www.stepintoleadership.info/

Walshe, K., 2003 Regulating healthcare: A prescription for improvement? 1st Edition, Milton Keynes: Open University.

Walshe, K. 2008. Regulation and inspections of health services IN Davis, H., Martin, S., (Eds) Public Service Inspection in the UK Jessica Kingsley Publishers London

Higher National unit support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supporting Improvement (SCQF level 10)

Wardhaugh, J and Wilding, P. 1993. "Towards an Explanation of the Corruption of Care". Critical Social Policy, 37 (Summer 1993) p. 216–229.

Witzel, M. and Warner, M. (Eds) (2013) The Oxford Book of Management Theorists. Blackwell: Oxford.

Additional outcome-specific references

Outcome 1

Boyne, G., Entwistle, T. & Ashworth, R. 2010. Theories of public service improvement: An introduction. Public service improvement. Theories and evidence, eds. Rachel Ashworth, George A. Boyne, and Tom Entwistle, 1–14.

Deming, W. E. 2000. The new economics: for industry, government, education, 2nd ed, Cambridge, Mass.; London, MIT Press.

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Public Audit Forum 2002. The different roles of external audit, inspection and regulation: a guide for public service managers, London, public audit forum,

Power, M. 2003. Evaluating the Audit Explosion. Law & Policy, 25, 185-202.

Osborne, S. P., Radnor, Z., Kinder, T. & Vidal, I. 2015. The SERVICE Framework: A Public-service-dominant Approach to Sustainable Public Services. British Journal of Management, 26, 424–438.

Outcome 2

Braithwaite, V. 2015. Overcoming Oppression in Child Protection: Restorative Justice, Responsive Regulation and Political Courage. RegNet Research Paper.

Outcome 3

Brady, J. & Brady, A. 2016. Chapter 6: Improve. Regulation: Audit, Inspection, Standards and Risk – A Handbook for Street-level Regulators. Second ed. Cappoquin, Ireland: Precepts Books.

Hodges, C. 2016. Ethical Business Regulation: Understanding the Evidence [Online]. Better Regulation Delivery Office. Available: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/497539/16-113-ethical-business-regulation.pdf [Accessed 10/03/2016].

Higher National unit support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supporting Improvement (SCQF level 10)

Outcome 4

Coglianese, C. 2015. Listening and Learning: toward a framework of regulatory leadership. Interim Report Prepared for the Penn Program on Regulation's Best-in Class Regulatory Initiative. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania.

Haslam, S. A., Reicher, S. D. & Platow, M. J. 2012. The new psychology of leadership: Identity, influence and power, Psychology Press.

Outcome 5

Brady, J. & Brady, A. 2016. Chapter 5: Inspect. Regulation: Audit, Inspection, Standards and Risk — A Handbook for Street-level Regulators. Second ed. Cappoquin, Ireland: Precepts Books.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

This is one of the four units for the Group Award of PDA in Scrutiny and Improvement Practice (Social Services). It is recommended that this unit is delivered third.

It is envisaged that the Group Award, of which this unit is part, will be delivered to fixed cohorts of learners who will work in learning sets for the duration of the Group Award delivery. For this unit, the learning sets will have a number of face-to-face meetings supported by online discussion which will be facilitated by tutors/assessors. The learners will also complete self-directed study based on a workbook and this will be supported with one-to-one contact with tutors/assessors as necessary. The focus of the work will be on critical reflection relating to learning on the unit and how this is put into practice. There will also be an active engagement by learners on how they are meeting the NOS. Additional guidance on delivery and also on which parts of the NOS are most relevant to this unit can be found in the content and context notes for this unit.

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 learners.

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.

Higher National unit support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supporting Improvement (SCQF level 10)

For this unit, it is recommended that there are two assessments. The first assessment will be a direct observation by the tutor/ assessor, supported by a reflective professional discussion. This assessment will be integrated with the same inspection, registration, complaint or enforcement activity undertaken in the unit entitled '*The Craft of Scrutiny'.* The observation and reflective professional discussion will focus on Learning Outcomes 3 and 5 and should cover the following:

♦   How the learner critically evaluates the meanings and impact of trust and mistrust in the scrutiny activity
♦   How the learner evaluates the power balance and manages its impact on relationships and improvement in the scrutiny activity
♦   How the learner reflects on one theory of power and how this is applied to the scrutiny activity
♦   How the learner critically evaluates the relationship between inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes in the scrutiny activity
♦   How the learner critically reflects on the concept of procedural justice, and how it impacts on recording and reporting
♦   How the learner demonstrates interpretation, synthesis and recording of data for service improvement in their written report of the observed activity
♦   How the learner demonstrates effective skills in follow up of reporting on scrutiny activity

The assessment will be in the form of a report by the tutor/assessor on how the learner achieved the above evidence requirements.

The second assessment will be a written assignment which will address Learning outcomes 1, 2, and 4. The guidance for learners on completion of the essay should include the following:

♦   A critical analysis of at least two pieces of rights legislation or treaty law in relation to one practice area
♦   A critical reflection upon how care standards, both user/carer and statutory, have an impact on hearing the voice of service users and carers, using practice examples
♦   A critical analysis of at least two professional codes of practice and reflection on their importance in supporting improvement in own area of practice
♦   A critical evaluation of the role of improvement science in contributing to effective scrutiny activity
♦   A critical evaluation of at least two theories, models and tools for quality improvement
♦   A critical analysis of the difference between quality assurance and quality control
♦   A critical reflection on how at least one model of quality improvement has been implemented in own practice and its influence on outcomes
♦   A critical analysis of at least two theories of leadership
♦   A critical analysis of the difference between management and leadership
♦   A critical analysis at least one issue in leadership, using practice examples

The essay should be 2,000 words long.

Higher National unit support notes (cont)

Unit title: Supporting Improvement (SCQF level 10)

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**.

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

Assessment of this unit will assume the development of Core Skills necessary in the performance of work tasks at this level. For example, the assessment is likely to include the use of appropriate information technology. Taking part in the activities of the learning set will lead to the demonstration of skills required to undertake presentations, written, oral and online, which will include the use of complex information.

Learners will have the opportunity to further develop the following Core Skills:

Communication: Written communications will be developed through learners producing written work in a variety of formats; oral communication will be developed through discussion, debate and evidence of engagement with other professionals and key people.

Working with Others: This will be developed as learners will be required to work collaboratively with colleagues from their own learning set and with others in the exploration of subject matter, and also in the preparation and research for their assessments.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT): Learners will develop their ICT skills through research and the presentation of the essays and through online discussions.

Problem Solving: Learners will have the opportunity to develop problem solving skills through the presentation of their written and oral assignments, peer review, and relating their findings to their own area of practice.

History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date

General information for learners

Unit title: Supporting Improvement (SCQF level 10)

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.

This unit focusses on improvement. You will be given the opportunity to demonstrate your understanding of, and ability to, apply a number of key strategies and factors which are instrumental to securing improvement. The difference between quality assurance and quality control will be examined. Other factors in this unit will be the role of power, rights, relationships and leadership as they apply to improving outcomes for people using services. There is an expectation that learners will evaluate improvement models and apply them to your scrutiny practice.

This is the third unit in the four units that make up the Group Award of PDA in Scrutiny and Improvement Practice (Social Services). It is envisaged that the Group Award, of which this unit is part, will be delivered to fixed cohorts of learners who will work in learning sets for the duration of the Group Award delivery. For this unit, your learning set will have a number of face-to-face meetings supported by online discussion which will be facilitated by tutors. You will also complete self-directed study based on a workbook and this will be supported with one-to-one contact with tutors as necessary. The focus of the work will be on critical reflection relating to learning on the unit and how this is put into practice. You will also critically analyse and apply relevant research as it contributes to developments in this area.

You will be assessed by means of a direct observation and an essay. The direct observation will be carried out by your assessor.

Successful completion of the unit will enable you to develop a critical understanding of supporting improvement through scrutiny activity. You should further enhance some of your Core Skills in Communication, *Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Working with Other*s and *Problem Solving*. The unit is based on the Inspection of Health and Social Care Standards and forms part of the Group Award entitled PDA in Scrutiny and Improvement Practice (Social Services), which is accepted by the Scottish Social Services Council as evidence for registration of Authorised Officers in the Care Inspectorate.