



Higher National Unit Specification

General information

Unit title: Professional Knowledge in Policing (Scotland)
(SCQF level 8)

Unit code: HP66 35

Superclass: EC

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Unit purpose

This unit is intended for police officers who are seeking promotion beyond the rank of constable in the police service in Scotland. Learners will have some prior background in the criminal justice system in Scotland which they will have achieved through completion of their probationary period as a police officer. The unit will enable learners to apply current criminal legislation and procedure to situations relevant to the work of a police officer in Scotland and make recommendations for police action after having analysed the situation to determine the crime or offence committed.

The unit focuses on equipping police constables, aspiring to the rank of sergeant, with the knowledge and skills required for the application of criminal law and procedures to situations their officers are likely to encounter. It aims to ensure that, when promoted, they will be able to provide guidance to assist officers to effectively discharge their duties when dealing with persons who have broken the criminal law.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Analyse operational situations to determine the legal issues.
- 2 Justify an appropriate course of police action.

Credit points and level

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

Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

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Recommended entry to the unit

Learners should have some prior background in the criminal justice system in Scotland which they will have achieved through completion of their probationary period as a police officer. They should have a good working knowledge of Scottish criminal law and criminal procedure gained through experience of working as a police officer. Learners will normally be following a recognised training programme such as that developed by the Police Service of Scotland. They should be aiming towards a promoted police post within the police service.

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

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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.

Outcome 1

Analyse operational situations to determine the legal issues.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Principles of Scottish criminal law
- ◆ Essential elements of criminality
- ◆ Application of legal concepts and case law
- ◆ Evidential considerations

Outcome 2

Justify an appropriate course of police action.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Application of Police Service of Scotland guidelines and procedures
- ◆ Adherence to Scottish criminal procedure

Evidence requirements for this unit

The written evidence provided must relate to a particular policing scenario involving a crime or offence in which the learner has been directly involved or one they have knowledge of through discussion with colleagues. The crime or offence must relate to Scottish criminal law. The nature of the scenario should be sufficiently complex to require learners to demonstrate an appropriate level of understanding of the relevant course of action to be adopted in line with current Police Scotland procedures and guidelines.

The learner must provide evidence which draws on the knowledge and skills from both outcomes to show they can:

- ◆ describe a policing scenario in which a crime(s) and/or offence(s) has/have been committed
- ◆ identify any potential crime(s) and/or offences(s) relating to the scenario
- ◆ draw conclusions on the most relevant crime(s) and/or offence(s) and provide the rationale for such a conclusion, including the essential elements of criminality in accordance with the current law of Scotland
- ◆ apply relevant legal concepts and/or case law where appropriate and evidential considerations
- ◆ propose the subsequent course of police action making reference to Police Scotland procedures and guidelines, ensuring compliance with current criminal procedure

Conditions of assessment

Evidence is to be generated by the learners in their own time, in open-book conditions during the period of delivery of the unit.



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 intended for police officers who are seeking promotion beyond the rank of constable in the police service in Scotland. Learners will normally be following a recognised training programme such as that developed by the Police Service of Scotland.

The unit focuses on the application of criminal legislation to situations which managers in the police service will encounter. It aims to ensure that, when promoted beyond the rank of constable, police officers will be able to provide guidance to assist others to effectively discharge their duties when dealing with persons who have broken the criminal law. Attainment of the knowledge and skills contained within this unit will contribute to higher standards of police reports which will benefit the criminal justice system as a whole. Learners should have some prior background in the criminal justice system in Scotland which they will have achieved through completion of their probationary period.

The following notes give some additional information on each outcome. The actual delivery of the unit should relate to legislation, practice and examples that are current at the time.

Outcome 1

The main purpose of Outcome 1 is to understand and be able to apply Scottish criminal law, legal concepts (such as principles of criminal liability, causation, incomplete crimes, defences, intention, recklessness and strict liability); apply relevant case law (judicial precedents and decisions by the courts) and evidential considerations. The learner will be expected to understand the underlying principles of Scottish criminal law and evidential considerations such as sufficiency and admissibility. This will be essential for an officer promoted beyond the rank of constable within the Police Service of Scotland and will be tested on a daily basis. Throughout the unit, learners will be given opportunities to analyse various situations and apply principles of Scottish criminal law to them as appropriate.

Learners will become familiar with legal research techniques using an array of resources such as the Police Scotland database; legal textbooks; training materials; legislation and case reports which will be invaluable; especially once promoted as it will provide an improved understanding of the core knowledge necessary for the application of criminal legislation.

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Outcome 2

The main purpose of Outcome 2 is to understand and apply procedures and guidelines which govern police action, enabling you to make reasoned and justifiable recommendations commensurate with such. The learner will be expected to justify appropriate police action based on the principles of criminal procedure and police guidelines, eg Lord Advocate's Guidelines and Police Scotland memorandum and procedures. These guidelines and procedures ensure that police officers can effectively justify decisions they have made in an operational setting, and will be vital to the role of police officers promoted beyond the rank of constable.

Police officers within Police Scotland make important decisions on a daily basis and need to be able to justify their actions. The guidelines and procedures covered during Outcome 2 will provide the foundation for decisions in terms of police action and their justification. The scenarios provided by learners in the assessment will be operationally based situations in which they have had first-hand experience of, or knowledge of, and which sergeants would be expected to give advice and guidance to police constables on a regular basis.

National occupational standards

The national occupational standards which this unit reflects are as follows:

CFACSB9	Deliver customer service using service partnerships
SFJBE101	Assess the risk of serious harm to victims, survivors and witnesses
SFJFA103	Receive detained persons into custody
SFJ CD101	Supervise the response to critical incidents
SFJ CI105	Supervise investigations and investigators
SFJ HB6	Provide leadership in your area of responsibility
SFJ CB3	Conduct Intelligence driven briefings
SFJ CA1	Use law enforcement actions in a fair and justified way
SFJFA104	Authorise and manage police detention
SFJ CC5	Identify and manage operational threats and risk
SFJ DE7 (V&W2)	Undertake needs assessments of victims and witnesses
SFJ CC7	Prepare for, monitor and maintain, law enforcement operations

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

This unit is suitable for a blended learning approach with the accent on self-directed learning. Learner study will be conducted by distance learning with remote tutor advice and support.

If delivered as part of the group award, Diploma in Police Service Leadership and Management, it is recommended that it this unit be delivered alongside the complimentary unit, *Management: Developing Self-Management Skills*.

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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.

This unit lends itself to holistic assessment. The two outcomes and their associated knowledge and/or skills items in this unit are very closely linked and, if at all possible, the method of assessment should take both of them together.

A crucial aspect of the delivery of the unit is ensuring that learners are able to analyse a policing scenario involving a crime or offence, to apply appropriate legislation to decide what criminal offences have been committed and to determine what police action is required. This situation replicates those which officers promoted beyond the rank of constable face on a daily basis as part of their managerial duties. In addition, learners require a thorough working knowledge of guidelines, such as the Lord Advocate's Guidelines and Police Scotland memorandum and procedures to ensure that their recommendations for police action will meet all relevant requirements.

Assessment should test the ability of learners to apply current criminal legislation to situations typical of those encountered by police officers promoted beyond the rank of constable, and to make recommendations for action by police officers. Formative assessment may be a valuable way of helping learners to prepare for the final summative assessment. One way to provide this is through self-assessment tasks which could form part of a distance learning programme.

This unit will be delivered and supported via an online learning platform.

Learners will demonstrate competence by meeting all the evidence requirements covering knowledge and skills items from both outcomes.

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

All elements of the Core Skill of *Problem Solving* — Critical Thinking, Planning, Organising, Reviewing and Evaluating — are naturally developed as learners analyse situations to determine legal issues in accordance with current legislation in Scotland. Essential elements of criminality are identified and discussed in depth. Accessing a range of complex information, learners determine and explain the appropriate course of police action in accordance with relevant guidelines, current criminal procedures and strategic priorities. On-going analytical evaluation of issues and potential solutions will be integral to justification of solutions selected.

Although skills in written communication are not formally assessed, learners will develop their skills as they research, summarise and evaluate a range of complex information. They will present key information and ideas accurately, to occupational standards, using a formal structure and recognised format.

Learners will be familiar with the navigation of the Police Scotland legal research database during formative assessment tasks within the unit.

History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for learners

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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 is a 1 credit unit (8 SCQF credit points) at SCQF level 8 and is designed to enable you to develop the skills required to apply current criminal legislation and procedure to situations relevant to the work of a police officer in Scotland, and make and justify recommendations for police action.

The unit will contribute to your development as a manager within the Police Service of Scotland. If you have current management experience, it will help you to explore and reflect on a suitable approach to analysing a situation to determine the legal issues and to making recommendations for police actions. If you have not yet worked as a manager but hope to do so in the future, the unit will help you to prepare for your new role and to meet its challenges and demands.

The unit has two outcomes:

The first outcome focuses on analysing situations in which police officers are involved to determine the legal issues. It is intended to enable you to become familiar with accessing various legal research sources (eg the Police Scotland legal research database) so you can analyse a situation and determine which legislation applies to it and which offences have been committed.

During the second outcome, based on the analysis of the situation, you will be expected to make recommendations for police action which are consistent with current guidelines and with criminal procedure.

Throughout both outcomes, the emphasis is on how to help you deal with situations and incidents which you have either faced or have knowledge of as a police officer promoted beyond the rank of constable. You will be given support material to help you work on this unit on your own. This will include practice on accessing Police Scotland legal research database and applying criminal law and criminal procedures to various situations.

For successful completion of this unit you will be required to describe a policing scenario involving a crime or offence in which you have been directly involved or one you have knowledge of; identify the relevant crime or offence; provide rationale for such a conclusion; including the essential elements of criminality; the application of relevant legal concepts, supporting case law; and evidential considerations and propose a course of action making reference to Police Scotland procedures and guidelines.

You will achieve the unit if the evidence which you submit during the assessment is considered satisfactory in terms of the standard set in the evidence requirements of the unit.

You will produce evidence in your own time during the period of delivery of the unit.