



Higher National Unit Specification

General information

Unit title: Role and Skills of a Partner Worker (SCQF level 7)

Unit code: HW1A 34

Superclass: PS

Publication date: November 2017

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 02

Unit purpose

This unit has been developed to support the role of partner worker within an integrated domestic abuse perpetrator programme. The unit defines the role of the partner worker and the complexities of working within an integrated system. It is designed to set the context for the work of the partner worker, and enables the learner to apply their knowledge and skills to work effectively and safely with women whose partner is attending a group perpetrator programme.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Demonstrate an understanding of the role of the partner worker.
- 2 Identify the complex responses of a client referred to the partner service.
- 3 Describe collaborative working as part of an integrated response to domestic abuse.
- 4 Identify trauma-informed practice in relation to the partner worker role.

Credit points and level

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

Recommended entry to the unit

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

Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

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Learners should have good communication skills, both written and oral and be able to use ICT proficiently. We recommend these Core Skills to be at SCQF level 6.

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

Core Skills

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following Core Skills component:

Complete Core Skill	None
Core Skill component	Critical Thinking at SCQF level 5

There are also opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills which are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit specification.

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.

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

Demonstrate an understanding of the role of a partner worker.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ The role of the partner worker
- ◆ Working within the context of an integrated system
- ◆ The challenges associated with the role
- ◆ Building effective relationships

Outcome 2

Identify the complex responses of a client referred to the partner service.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Responses to domestic abuse
- ◆ Impact on the whole family
- ◆ Coping strategies and protective factors
- ◆ Effective responses

Outcome 3

Describe collaborative working as part of an integrated response to domestic abuse.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Service generated risk
- ◆ Joint decision making
- ◆ Coordinated information sharing and risk management
- ◆ External partnership working
- ◆ Techniques for effective collaboration

Higher National Unit Specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 4

Identify trauma-informed practice in relation to the partner worker role.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Trauma-informed practice
- ◆ Impact of trauma
- ◆ Self-care for partner workers
- ◆ Safety considerations

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:

Outcome 1

- ◆ describe the partner worker's role.
- ◆ describe where the partner worker role fits within an integrated system.
- ◆ identify the challenges associated with the remit.
- ◆ demonstrate the importance of building safe and effective relationships.

Outcome 2

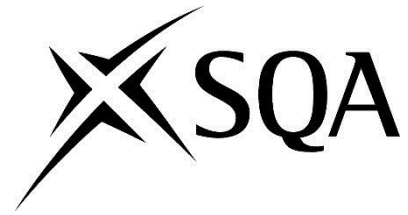
- ◆ identify the different ways that a client may respond to their experience of abuse.
- ◆ describe the impact of domestic abuse on all members of the family.
- ◆ identify a variety of coping strategies, resilience and protective factors.
- ◆ describe effective responses to clients within the system.

Outcome 3

- ◆ explain the impact of service generated risk within an integrated system.
- ◆ identify the challenges of joint decision making in an integrated system.
- ◆ describe how to apply coordinated information sharing and risk management in practice.
- ◆ explain the advantages of building effective external partnerships.
- ◆ name techniques for building an effective collaborative response.

Outcome 4

- ◆ explain how trauma-informed practice can be incorporated into the partner worker role.
- ◆ describe the manifestation of trauma on clients and partner workers.
- ◆ identify safety considerations for the partner worker role.
- ◆ describe a range of self-care techniques that partner workers can apply.
- ◆ identify techniques for keeping physically safe.



Higher National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Role and Skills of a Partner Worker (SCQF level 7)

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

The partner worker has a specialised role working with clients whose partner is attending a domestic abuse perpetrator programme. The role entails the provision of intensive support to clients throughout the life of the programme in collaboration with the men's and children's workers.

Partner workers require a wide-range of skills and knowledge to enable them to identify and address support needs and safety concerns of women whose partner or ex-partner is engaged in the programme. Partner workers sit within an integrated system and also engage with a range of external partners to offer the widest range of options for clients.

Key elements of the partner worker role include understanding the complex responses of those who have experienced domestic abuse and the impact of the abuse on them and the wider family. An important aspect of the role is to build a trusting relationship and to be able to engage in joint decision making with other key roles within the system, through effective information sharing and risk management. Safety is central to this role, both physical safety of the client from the perpetrator but also the impact of trauma and coping mechanisms on achieving long-term safety and wellbeing. This unit complements the Professional Development Award in Domestic Abuse Advocacy that is designed to provide a formal and nationally recognised qualification for domestic abuse advocates that covers each of these elements.

By undertaking this unit learners should gain an understanding of the partner worker role, what it entails, and the skills required.

This unit is suitable for those who are:

- ◆ currently working as a partner worker associated with a domestic abuse perpetrator programme.
- ◆ about to start work as a partner worker.
- ◆ a manager of a domestic abuse service with a caseload.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Role and Skills of a Partner Worker (SCQF level 7)

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

This unit is aligned to Professional Development Award in Domestic Abuse Advocacy. This particular unit sets out the unique aspects of the Partner Worker remit that sets it apart from the work of the Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate (IDAA). This would ideally be part of a holistic course that covers the role, skills and knowledge associated with the domestic abuse advocate and partner worker roles. The course would be delivered primarily in-room using a variety of training methods, and supported by comprehensive materials for learners. There is potential to offer a blended learning environment by offering some on-line learning opportunities.

Outcome 1

The emphasis of this outcome is to provide context for the role of partner worker within an integrated system. Learners would benefit from an overview of the perpetrator programme model and how each element interacts. Consideration should be given to how the Partner Worker role fits within the wider domestic abuse sector in Scotland, how the work dovetails and complements the work of other existing and established services, and also how it relates to a co-ordinated approach to addressing domestic abuse.

There would be an emphasis on building and preserving effective relationships within an empowerment model, including plenary discussion around building trust, setting expectations and creating appropriate boundaries in order to support clients to effect positive lasting change. Learners should have an opportunity to discuss how to address conflict within the relationship.

The different aspects of the role should be broken down in an interactive session, with emphasis placed on how these relate to their own practice, in particular the skills and knowledge required to fulfil each function required of the role and the dependence and impact on other elements of the system, such as men's and children's worker roles.

Outcome 2

It is recommended that learners are encouraged to consider the complex ways that a client will respond to their experience by exploring how domestic abuse develops over time and the associated coping strategies they will have developed. Ideally this would include an interactive session underpinned by the Power and Control model and linked to an awareness of the typologies of domestic abuse. It will be helpful to link to models that illustrate change processes such as Prochaska and DiClemente's Cycle of Change, and how this relates to women engaging with the Partner Worker's service. The impact of domestic abuse on children should be explored, with links to child protection and support services for children.

It is recommended that learners are given an opportunity to consider and compare the different circumstances around which a client has engaged with the support on offer, ie whether a client has left the relationship or continues to stay with the perpetrator. In particular, it would be valuable to have a practical session to evaluate the impact of this on the relationship between client and worker, and how the response of the worker can be tailored to ensure it is both safe and effective to the circumstances. This will include communication with the men's worker. An exercise around the implications of supporting a client through the healing process will also be of benefit, including effective responses.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Role and Skills of a Partner Worker (SCQF level 7)

Outcome 3

Emphasis should be placed on the unique working relationship the partner worker will have with the different parts of the perpetrator programme system. There should be a plenary discussion about joint decision making and planning within an integrated system, with a particular focus on service-generated risk and the potential impact of this on clients. Ideally learners will have an opportunity to participate in a practical exercise that draws out the benefits and challenges of information sharing and risk management with associated men's workers and children's workers and identifies a best practice approach.

Reference will also be made to the role of the partner worker within a multi-agency context as part of a co-ordinated approach to domestic abuse, in particular, the value of creating trusting and collaborative relationships with key external partners. This will include the importance of sharing the ethos of the system to a wider audience. Learners will have an opportunity to compare the difference between individual and institutional advocacy, and the impact of both on clients. In an interactive exercise, the benefits of partnership working should be explored, as well as the barriers that may hinder collaborative working, and how to overcome these — specifically the skills and techniques Partner Workers can apply to build effective working relationships, such as negotiation, motivational interviewing and active listening. This may take the form of a role-play. A discussion around the application of the critical components of David Mandel's Safe and Together model to the Partner Worker role would be a helpful way of linking the role to the wider response.

Outcome 4

The theory of trauma-informed practice should be explored, specifically what this means for both partner workers and the whole system. The impact of different forms of trauma on the client should be explored, including the manifestations and impact of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Type 2 trauma. Consideration should be given to how these responses will impact of the Partner Worker's relationship with clients, and how they can incorporate their understanding into support and safety planning. It would be helpful to refer to Judith Herman's 3-stage model in underpinning a best practice response, ideally using a practical exercise where learners can apply aspects of trauma recovery approaches to real-life examples.

The potential implications of working with women who have or are still experiencing domestic abuse should be explored in two ways. Firstly, within the context of providing a trauma-informed response the Partner Worker's own susceptibility to Vicarious Trauma (VT) should be identified. Ideally, this would include a practical exercise that explores the signs and symptoms of VT, as well as how it can be avoided and addressed. Emphasis should be placed on self-care techniques that can be applied to minimise the impact and to and to keep a healthy work-life balance. Secondly, the physical safety implications of the partner worker role should be identified and explored, with learners given an opportunity to reflect and consider these. Ideally learners will have an opportunity to discuss and compare lone working policies, home visit protocols, risk assessments, etc. and the importance of getting these right. This would include at a policy and practical level. It would be valuable to explore what they have in place already and what they could put into practice to improve the safety of their working practice.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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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.

Outcome 1

It is recommended that learners define the role and remit of the partner worker, with reference to the specific context of working in an integrated system and the impact of this. It would be useful to provide a descriptive account (of no more than 500 words) of the different aspects of the perpetrator programme system and how the role is placed within this. They would also answer short response questions on key aspects of the role including building effective relationships and setting out the key challenges of the role and how to address them.

Outcome 2

It is recommended that learners provide a reflective and evaluative account (of no more than 1,000 words) that sets out the complex ways that a client may respond to their experience of abuse, and that recognises the impact on the whole family, including their relationship with the perpetrator and implications for any children. Ideally learners would include a reflection from real-life examples to reflect best practice responses to clients who are displaying or engaging with a range of coping strategies. This would also include an evaluation of options and approaches for women who remain in the domestic abuse relationship and those who have separated or plan to separate, possibly using a variety of case studies.

Outcome 3

It is recommended that learners describe the potential impact of service generated risk and how it relates to their role. They would also answer short response questions to identify the advantages and risks of joint decision making with other colleagues, as well as the key aspects of a best practice approach for safe and effective information sharing and risk management. This could be done using a suitable case study. In the wider context, they should describe how the Partner Worker role fits within the multi-agency approach to domestic abuse and the advantages of creating good relationships with key external partners. Learners will answer short response answers on effective techniques for building their multi-agency capability and collaborate effectively.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Outcome 4

It is recommended that learners answer short response questions on trauma-informed practice and what this means to them in their work. In particular, learners should be able to provide a description of the different types of trauma that they may encounter in their work with clients, and explain how they will take this into account in their approach. They will answer short response questions on the physical and psychological safety considerations pertinent to their role, and explain a range of techniques and strategies that they can apply to minimise the detrimental effects of these. They will also list a range of practical and policy-level strategies for keeping physically safe at work.

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

This Unit has the Critical Thinking component of Problem Solving embedded in it. This means that when learners achieve the Unit, their Core Skills profile will also be updated to show they have achieved Critical Thinking at SCQF level 5.

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

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

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

Information and Communication Technology (ICT): could be developed through using information technology to participate in the course, submit assignments, and access e-learning modules.

History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Core Skills Component Critical Thinking at SCQF level 5 embedded.	24/11/2017

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General information for learners

Unit title: Role and Skills of a Partner Worker (SCQF level 7)

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 will be useful to you if you are:

- ◆ currently working as a partner worker associated with a domestic abuse perpetrator programme.
- ◆ about to start work as a partner worker.
- ◆ a manager of a domestic abuse service with a caseload.

This unit will help you to learn about the unique role of the partner worker within an integrated domestic abuse perpetrator programme. The unit defines the role of the partner worker and the complexities of working within an integrated system. It is designed to set the context for the work of the partner worker, and will enable you to apply your knowledge and skills to work effectively and safely with women whose partner is attending a group perpetrator programme.

There are four outcomes in this unit. The first outcome is about the role of the partner worker, the context for working within an integrated system and some of the potential challenges associated with the role. This outcome will also explore effective relationship building with clients throughout their engagement with the programme.

The second outcome will cover the complex responses of a client to domestic abuse, including coping strategies and resilience factors. You will explore effective responses. This outcome will also cover the impact of domestic on the whole family, including children.

The third outcome will explore service generated risk and the potential impact of that within the integrated system, linked to the need for joint decision-making. The benefits of coordinated information sharing and risk management will be covered, as well as applying techniques for effective collaboration with external partners.

The fourth outcome will cover trauma informed practice, and what this means to you in your role. This will include the impact of trauma on your clients as well partner workers (vicarious trauma) and how to implement good self-care.

On completion of the unit you will be able to:

- ◆ demonstrate an understanding of the role of the partner worker.
- ◆ identify the complex responses of a client referred to the partner service.
- ◆ describe collaborative working as part of an integrated response to domestic abuse.
- ◆ identify trauma-informed practice in relation to the partner worker role.

You will be assessed on these outcomes by submitting assignments that will include a number of written reflective accounts about your work practice (ranging from a maximum of 500–1,000 words) as well as answering short response questions.

This Unit has the Critical Thinking component of Problem Solving embedded in it. This means that when you achieve the Unit, your Core Skills profile will also be updated to show you have achieved Critical Thinking at SCQF level 5.