



Higher National Unit Specification

General information

Unit title: Pharmacotherapeutics and the Human Body 2
(SCQF level 7)

Unit code: J3J8 34

Superclass: PE

Publication date: November 2019

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 03, August 2025

Unit purpose

This unit is designed to enable learners to develop knowledge and understanding in relation to the human body, common diseases and the actions and uses of medicines. The unit will focus on the cardiovascular and respiratory body systems. The unit is primarily for staff working within the pharmacy sector, however it may also be suitable for learners with an interest in pharmacotherapeutics and the human body.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of biological, biochemical and/or physiological principles related to named body systems and associated clinical conditions.
- 2 Identify the medicines used to treat common clinical conditions of named body systems.

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

Entry is at the discretion of the centre, however it is recommended that learners should have knowledge of biology, chemistry and english at SCQF level 5. It is also recommended that learners should have completed the *Pharmacological Principles: An Introduction* unit.

Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

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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.

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

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of biological, biochemical and/or physiological principles related to named body systems and associated clinical conditions.

Knowledge and/or skills

- Biological, biochemical and/or physiological principles related to the cardiovascular and respiratory systems
- Symptoms of common clinical conditions

Outcome 2

Identify the medicines used to treat common clinical conditions of named body systems.

Knowledge and/or skills

- Commonly used medicines used to treat common clinical conditions
- Mode of action and dosage of commonly used medicines
- Side effects or problems associated with commonly used medicines

Higher National Unit Specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Evidence requirements for this unit

Written and/or oral recorded evidence for outcomes 1 and 2 should be assessed using a holistic closed-book assessment under supervised conditions. It is recommended that the assessment be completed within 60 minutes. Learners can only have access to the *British National Formulary* when sitting the assessment.

The holistic assessment will cover either the cardiovascular or respiratory body system and must include a minimum of two clinical conditions relevant to the chosen body system. The alternative (re-sit) assessment must cover a different body system or different clinical conditions.

Outcome 1

A learner's response will be judged satisfactory where the evidence shows that the learner can:

- describe biological, biochemical and/or physiological principles related to the cardiovascular or respiratory system
- state the symptoms of common clinical conditions

Outcome 2

A learner's response will be judged satisfactory where the evidence shows that the learner can:

- identify commonly used medicines used to treat common clinical conditions
- identify the mode of action and dosage of commonly used medicines
- identify side effects or problems associated with commonly used medicines



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 as part of the framework for the PDA in Pharmacy Services at SCQF level 7 but may also be taken as a free-standing unit. It is designed to enable learners to develop knowledge and understanding in relation to the human body, common diseases and the actions and uses of medicines.

Outcomes 1 and 2

Cardiovascular system

Biological, biochemical and/or physiological principles related to the cardiovascular system:

- Conduction system of the heart
- Cardiac cycle; systole, diastole, pressure changes
- Structure of haemoglobin

- Blood clotting mechanism; prothrombin, thrombin, thromboplastin, fibrinogen, fibrin, platelets, Vitamin K, clotting factors

Common clinical conditions related to the cardiovascular system:

- Hypertension
- Arrhythmia
- CVD and angina
- Clotting disorders

Commonly used medicines related to the cardiovascular system:

- Positive inotropic drugs
- Diuretics
- Beta-blockers
- Drugs affecting the renin-angiotensin system
- Nitrates
- Sympathomimetics
- Lipid regulating drugs
- Anticoagulants, antiplatelets, fibrinolytics
- Ferrous salts

Respiratory system

Biological, biochemical and/or physiological principles related to the respiratory system:

- Cell specialism within the respiratory system; ciliated cells, goblet cells
- Response to allergens; IgE, mast cells and histamine production
- Mechanism of breathing

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Common clinical conditions related to the respiratory system:

- Cough
- Asthma
- COPD
- Allergies

Commonly used medicines related to the respiratory system:

- Demulcents
- Expectorants
- Cough suppressants; anti-tussives and sedative antihistamines
- Bronchodilators
- Corticosteroids
- Cromoglycate and related therapy
- Leukotrine receptor antagonists
- Topical nasal decongestants
- Oral decongestants
- Oral antihistamines
- Intranasal corticosteroids

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

A pharmacist or pharmacy technician must take overall responsibility for the delivery and assessment of the unit. A pharmacist, pharmacy technician, pharmacologist or scientist may be involved in the delivery, assessment and verification of the unit.

Where a team teaching approach is used, the unit must be planned with input from a pharmacist or pharmacy technician to ensure that the unit content is placed within a pharmacy context.

The learning and teaching of this unit is most effective when concepts, principles and theories are set in a pharmacy context and linked to work-based applications.

Learning and teaching approaches should include active learning practices such as case studies, group work, practical exercises, discussion and role-play as well as lectures and worksheets. Approaches should be designed to encourage learners to draw on workplace experiences, undertake problem-solving exercises, use a wide range of up-to-date reference sources and should incorporate opportunities for self-reflection and formative assessment/assessment for learning.

This unit is suitable for delivery via distance learning.

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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.

Outcomes 1 and 2 could be assessed by a single holistic closed-book assessment with an appropriate cut-off score. Assessment should be carried out in supervised conditions, and it is recommended that the assessment be completed within 60 minutes. Learners can only have access to the *British National Formulary* when sitting the assessment. Where a cut-off score is used, the pass mark should be applied on a holistic basis, ie it is not necessary for learners to achieve a pass mark for each individual evidence requirement.

A case study approach is recommended. The case study should cover either the cardiovascular or respiratory body system and must include a minimum of two clinical conditions relevant to the chosen body system.

This unit is suitable for online assessment, conducted in the workplace.

An exemplar instrument of assessment with marking guidelines has been produced to indicate the national standard of achievement at SCQF level 7.

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 the use of 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

The delivery and assessment of this unit will provide learners with the opportunity to develop the Core Skill of *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 5.

Problem Solving — Critical Thinking at SCQF level 5

Learners may be required to use the *British National Formulary* when analysing a case study.

History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Re-assessment requirements revised	25/02/2025
03	Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit updated	25/8/2025

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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 at SCQF level 7, which you are likely to be studying as part of the PDA in Pharmacy Services at SCQF level 7. The unit has been designed to develop your knowledge and understanding in relation to the human body, common diseases and the actions and uses of medicines. The unit will focus on the cardiovascular and respiratory body systems.

On completion of the unit you should be able to:

- 1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of biological, biochemical and/or physiological principles related to named body systems and associated clinical conditions.
- 2 Identify the medicines used to treat common clinical conditions of named body systems.

Outcomes 1 and 2

In outcomes 1 and 2 you will learn about the biological, biochemical and/or physiological principles related to the cardiovascular and respiratory body systems. You will also cover common clinical conditions and commonly used medicines related to the cardiovascular and respiratory body systems.

Assessment

For outcomes 1 and 2 you will take a closed-book, end of unit assessment.

Core Skills

Although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills in the unit, you will have opportunities to develop the Core Skill of *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 5.