

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT English: Group Discussion (Higher)

NUMBER DF5W 12

SUMMARY

The Unit English: Group Discussion focuses on talking and listening skills. Candidates will talk about issues, interests, ideas and texts in group discussion. A range of skills will be developed and high levels of ability will be required as candidates talk for transactional, analytical, expressive and critical purposes and interact within a group.

This Unit is free-standing, and is additional to the component Units of the Higher Course in English.

The content of the Unit comprises:

- the skills and concepts required for individual talk, discussion and listening; skills will be deployed in talking about issues, interests, ideas and texts
- the skills and concepts required for reading and researching topics and texts
- the skills and concepts required for writing notes, plans and evaluations
- knowledge of a range of relevant linguistic concepts.

OUTCOME

Participate in group discussion.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained one of the following:

- The Group Discussion Unit at Intermediate 2
- Standard Grade English at Credit level
- Intermediate 2 English or its component Units
- Any other relevant qualification.

Administrative Information

Superclass: KB

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

CREDIT VALUE

0.5 Credit at Higher (3 SCQF points at SCQF level 6*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

CORE SKILLS

This Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete core skills for the Unit	None
Core Skills components for the Unit	Oral Communication H

Information on the automatic certification of any core skills in this Unit is published in *Automatic Certification of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, publication code BA0906).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT English: Group Discussion (Higher)

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 the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME

Participate in group discussion.

Performance criteria

Content of Contributions

Contributions show consistent orientation to purpose by including relevant and significant content, supported by detail/evidence.

Expression

Contributions are consistently audible and clear and show skill in adapting verbal and non-verbal techniques as appropriate to purpose and audience.

Response to Other Points of View

Contributions attempt to shape the interaction by taking account of what others say and promote good group relations.

Note: According to purpose, content is likely to be comment, ideas, responses, opinion, information, argument.

According to the nature of the discussion, response to others may include analysing, summarising, using, expanding, supporting, challenging, refuting their contributions; and promoting group relations may include acknowledging others' status (eg as chair), encouraging contributions, involving other group members, speaking readily but not excessively.

Evidence requirements

The candidate's participation must be unassisted and take place under supervision in the presenting centre within a group which has no fewer than four members.

The nature of the discussion must be such that all the criteria can be met, including those relating to response to others and promoting group relations.

The candidate must meet all the performance criteria in one discussion.

Some form of evidence (for example, checklist, recording) should be retained. A brief note of the context and sources of information should accompany the form of evidence.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT English: Group Discussion (Higher)

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 20 hours.

While all language purposes may be covered in this Unit, there will be particular focus on purposes related to discussion of information, ideas and opinions within a group.

The candidate will compose, delivery, contribute to, watch, listen, analyse discuss and evaluate a selection from such texts as:

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|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• individual speeches and presentations• broadcast communications (news, documentary, debate, advertisement)• group discussions• those which form the focus of literary and language study in other Units. |
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The candidate will engage in a variety of language activities such as:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• planning and constructing oral communications for specified purposes and audiences• rehearsing and delivering oral communications for specified purposes and audiences• making an analytical oral presentation about a text or an aspect of a text or topic• contributing constructively and purposefully to group discussion of topics or texts• watching and/or listening to a range of oral presentations, debates, speeches, interviews and group discussions• analysing a range of oral presentations (for example, debates, speeches, interviews, group discussions, broadcasts). |
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Outcome

Participate in group discussion.

The candidate will be assessed in group discussion.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

The summary table gives an indication of content and context. There will be a need to set time aside to create the context and content which will provide the resources for candidates' ideas.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

In order to develop skills in group discussion, candidates will need:

- an understanding of what makes for a good contribution
- an understanding of how to go about improving their skills
- an opportunity to reflect on and evaluate their progress
- feedback from the teacher/lecturer and other candidates.

Discussion is a collaborative activity in which the participants typically share a common intention to resolve an issue or to consider a topic from their several stances and attempt to arrive at a consensus or conclusion. It is not a competitive activity nor is it mere random or desultory conversation. The discussion will have an agreed agenda or task set for or by the participants.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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The participation required is not simply a passive activity; it requires active contribution with a view to influencing the eventual outcome of the discussion by various means, such as initiating ideas and supporting or challenging the contributions of others.

The discussion must take place within the context of a group of no fewer than four members. The presence of at least three other members of a peer group operating at a level of performance approximately equivalent to that of the candidate and aware of the specific demands of the criteria is intended to guarantee that the talk skills requirements will be searching.

The discussion may be in Scots.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

As assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching process, the candidate should be encouraged to undertake a number of activities for formative purposes.

It should also be made clear that success in this outcome does not depend wholly on the candidate's knowledge: the Unit is concerned with oral skills.

SPECIAL NEEDS

This unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering special alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, September 2003).