

Unit title: Financial Services: Employability Skills
(National 5)

Unit code: DM80 75

Superclass: HB

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Unit purpose

This unit is a mandatory unit of the National 5 Skills for Work Financial Services Course. The unit is intended to help learners to develop skills and attitudes which are valued by employers. Through practical experiences such as participating in selection interviews, learners will develop and review these skills, taking account of feedback from others. There will be opportunities for learners to record their progress and plan for improvement. The unit is intended to be integrated with the three remaining Units in the Financial Services Course which will provide many practical contexts for the development of employability skills and attitudes for the Financial Services sector.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Use available opportunities to develop employability skills in the financial services sector.
- 2 Demonstrate self-presentation skills in relation to employability in the financial services sector.
- 3 Review and evaluate own progress to enhance employability in the financial services sector.

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Credit points and level

1 National unit credit at SCQF level 5: (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5)

Recommended entry to the unit

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, learners would normally be expected to have attained the following, or equivalent:

- ◆ National 4 English

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 Course, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Course to which it contributes.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. 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.

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

Use available opportunities to develop employability skills in the financial services sector.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Using an initial self-assessment, identify current strengths and development needs in relation to specified employability skills.
- (b) Maintain a log recording interaction and behaviour in a range of development opportunities.
- (c) Regularly monitor and record progress, learning gained and modifications to future behaviour in response to own review of the log and feedback from others.

Outcome 2

Demonstrate self-presentation skills in relation to employability in the financial services sector.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Make detailed preparations for a simulated selection interview.
- (b) Participate with commitment in a simulated selection interview.
- (c) Formulate suitable responses to prepared selection interview questions.

Outcome 3

Review and evaluate own progress to enhance employability in the financial services sector.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Evaluate own performance in a simulated selection interview, taking into account feedback from others.
- (b) Identify areas for performance improvement in future selection interviews.
- (c) Complete a second self-assessment of employability skills in the light of progress.
- (d) Taking account of the revised self-assessment, feedback from others and a review of the log, describe skills development and learning gained, and identify areas for further development.

National unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Evidence Requirements for this unit

Evidence is required to demonstrate that learners have achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

This unit requires written and/or oral evidence, some of which will be ongoing throughout the unit. It also requires performance evidence to show that all Outcomes and Performance Criteria have been achieved.

Written and/or oral evidence should consist of a folio containing:

- ◆ a completed initial self-assessment of employability skills
- ◆ a list identifying existing strengths and development needs
- ◆ a maintained log with records of development opportunities and behaviour displayed. The log should record the following details for a minimum of three development needs across a range of practical activities/experiences in a work related context:
 - a record of the date of the activity, event or experience being recorded
 - a brief record of what occurred, own behaviour and its effectiveness in the situation
 - a record of feedback received from others, eg comments, praise, advice, criticism
 - a record of progress or learning gained from the experience
 - a record of how future behaviour/performance may be modified in similar situations
- ◆ a record of simulated selection interview preparation including:
 - background information about the organisation and the job
 - details of own skills, qualities and achievements
 - a description of appropriate dress/appearance which meets organisational or industry standards
 - a list of questions to ask at interview
 - answers to prepared interview questions
 - a summary of appropriate behaviours, attitudes and interpersonal skills

National unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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- ◆ an evaluation of own performance in a simulated selection interview which could take the form of a checklist assessing, eg appearance/conduct/attitude/behaviour and in response to feedback from others; this should be signed by the assessor for authentication purposes
- ◆ a list identifying areas for performance improvement in future interviews
- ◆ a second self-assessment of employability skills based on progress made
- ◆ a description of progress made, learning gained from experience and areas for further development which is consistent with the log, the final self-assessment and in response to feedback from others

Performance evidence will consist of: participation in a simulated selection interview lasting no more than 10 minutes.

The Assessment Support Pack for this unit exemplifies the national standard and contains self-assessment employability checklists, a log sheet template, an interview checklist and a learner unit record which assessors should use to record each learner's progress. Centres who wish to devise their own assessment records should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard.

National unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

It is expected that learners will develop broad, generic skills through this unit. Employability is a key aspect of Skills for Work and is present throughout the unit. In addition, there are a number of other skills that learners will be expected to improve on and develop as they undertake this unit, these can be drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These must be built into the unit where there are appropriate opportunities.

1 Literacy

- 1.1 Reading
- 1.2 Writing
- 1.3 Listening and talking

3 Health and Wellbeing

- 3.1 Personal learning
- 3.2 Emotional wellbeing
- 3.4 Physical for, and making, choices and changes
- 3.5 Relationships

4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship

- 4.1 Employability

5 Thinking Skills

- 5.1 Remembering
- 5.2 Understanding
- 5.3 Applying
- 5.4 Analysing and evaluating

Amplification of these is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills should be at the same SCQF level as the unit and be consistent with the SCQF level descriptor. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work is given in the *National unit Support Notes*.

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

Practical, vocational contexts should be used as far as possible in this unit to allow learners to learn the importance of and take responsibility for developing employability skills and attitudes. In the financial services sector, employers value the following skills:

- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Interpersonal skills
- ◆ Team-working skills
- ◆ Flexible approach to problem solving
- ◆ Positive attitude to learning
- ◆ Time-keeping
- ◆ Personal presentation
- ◆ Self-evaluation skills
- ◆ Responding positively to advice
- ◆ Confidence to set goals
- ◆ Time management
- ◆ Independent working
- ◆ Positive attitude to change

This list could act as a basis for developing skills in the context of practical activities. Preparing for and participating in job selection interviews provide contexts for developing interpersonal skills, communication skills, appropriate personal conduct and positive attitudes, along with an ability to use the conventions of an interview to the individual's advantage.

Where the unit is taken as part of the National 5 Financial Services Skills for Work Course, useful contexts for developing and recording progress with employability skills could be exploited.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

The focus of this unit is on experiential learning and often the teacher/lecturer will take the role of facilitator with learners taking responsibility for undertaking tasks. In order to reflect development of skills and allow sufficient time for evidence gathering, it would be appropriate if the unit were to be undertaken over a period of time. Where the unit is taken as part of the National 5 Financial Services Course, it is recommended that the unit spans the whole Course, giving learners the opportunity to draw on a range of experiences across the Course as well as the time to develop and improve their skills.

National unit Support Notes

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It may be appropriate to start with individuals considering their own ideas on employability skills. Teachers/lecturers should draw on material from employer surveys, etc which identify and highlight the importance of range of recognised employability skills. A specified list should then be discussed with learners who will then use this throughout the work of the unit. However, it is expected that the initial self-assessment of current skills will be completed early on in the unit. It is unlikely that individuals will improve on all the necessary skills in the allotted time-scale but they should be encouraged to remain positive throughout to boost confidence. Practical exercises will be necessary for the individual to gain understanding of the necessary skills as mentioned above and these may take the form of, eg brainstorming/mind mapping, group discussion, questionnaires, case studies, role plays, commercial video recordings, paired and team exercises, interviews, visiting speakers and facilitator exposition. Learning activities should be designed to develop employability skills, eg the use of role plays should help individuals decide on appropriate use of skills and behaviour in a variety of situations or workplace visits could be organised with learners taking an active role in making preparations for the visit.

Individuals should be encouraged to find the information they require for this unit, eg by using relevant websites or text to identify interview techniques. The teacher/lecturer will often act as facilitator, providing advice and support to learners. Throughout the unit, there should be ample opportunity for individuals to do things for themselves, make choices and decisions, interact with others and try out new activities and roles in a safe climate.

Individuals should use everyday contacts to observe the use of employability skills in the workforce, eg at work, in retail stores, supermarkets, transport, etc in order to identify good and poor practice.

In this unit, learners will analyse aspects of their performance and behaviour; they will review and evaluate their performance, attitudes and behaviour taking account of a number of factors and feedback from others; they will draw conclusions and develop actions points for improvement. These are good opportunities for developing the general skills of critical thinking and reviewing and evaluating in the Core Skill of Problem Solving.

Participating in simulated interviews presents good opportunities for developing the general skill of oral communication in the Core Skill of Communication where learners are required to produce and respond to oral communication.

National unit Support Notes

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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.

In this unit learners will maintain a log with records of development opportunities and behaviour displayed throughout the unit. The log should record the following details for a minimum of three development needs across a range of practical activities/experiences in a work related context:

- ◆ a record of the date of the activity, event or experience being recorded
- ◆ a brief record of what occurred, own behaviour and its effectiveness in the situation
- ◆ a record of feedback received from others, eg comments, praise, advice, criticism
- ◆ a record of progress or learning gained from the experience
- ◆ a record of how future behaviour/performance may be modified in similar situations

It is anticipated that in addition to gathering evidence in the log for at least three practical activities/experiences in a work related context, further opportunities for log entries will occur naturally, eg good opportunities for gathering evidence may present themselves whilst undertaking workplace experience or a workplace visit. Other suitable opportunities may be through use of role plays and simulations either in this unit or, where the unit is taken as part of the National 5 Financial Services Course, in integrated activities with other Units in the Course.

It is the individual's responsibility to complete the log whenever opportunities present themselves and much of this recording may not therefore occur at a pre-set time.

Video recorded evidence of performance, eg in the simulated selection interview, would be beneficial as it would afford the individual a better opportunity to effectively self-assess and offers more flexibility for peer assessment.

The assessor should record achievement at regular intervals on a learner record sheet. Details of the items required for the folio are included in Evidence Requirements.

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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 Skills

This unit will enable learners to develop the Core Skills of Communication and Working with Others. The Core Skills will be developed along with employability skills deemed desirable by the financial services sector. Self-evaluation, interpersonal skills and presentation (of self and information) are consistent themes throughout the unit delivery. The ability to communicate effectively is reflected in the simulated interview which each learner is required to undertake.

The opportunity should be taken throughout delivery of this unit, to emphasise that the relevant Core Skills indicated above, and the employability skills developed, are life skills which can be applied in a wide range of situations in everyday life and in employment.

General information for learners

Unit title: Financial Services: Employability Skills (National 5)

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 is aimed at learners who want to develop skills and attitudes which are valued by employers. Through practical experiences such as participating in selection interviews, you will develop and review these skills, taking account of feedback from others. There will be opportunities for you to record your progress and plan for improvement by maintaining a log with records of your development opportunities and behaviours which are displayed throughout this unit.

You will develop the Core Skills of Communication and Working with Others, along with employability skills deemed desirable by the financial services sector. Self-evaluation, interpersonal skills and presentation (of self and information) are consistent themes throughout the unit. You will also develop life skills which can be applied in a wide range of situations in everyday life and in employment.

Administrative information

Published: September 2016 (version 04)

Superclass: HB

History of changes to National unit Specification

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
04	Units moved into a new template and re-coded to align with corresponding Course 2 code. No change to unit content.	QPM	September 2016

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Note: readers are advised to check SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk to ensure they are using the most up-to-date version of the unit Specification.

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