

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Practice Experience in a Support for Learning Setting: The Support for Learning Assistant (Intermediate 2)

NUMBER D2KL 11

COURSE

SUMMARY

Acquiring and demonstrating competencies associated with the role of support for learning assistant.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Develop appropriate relationships with learners with support for learning needs in an educational setting.
- 2 Work as a member of a team with teachers and others who have a responsibility within support for learning.
- 3 Undertake a negotiated piece of work with a learner (or learners) in a support for learning setting.
- 4 Contribute to the maintenance of an environment for effective education.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Access is at the discretion of the centre, however previous experience of working in a support for learning capacity would be beneficial.

Administrative Information

Superclass: GD

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CREDIT VALUE

1 Credit.

CORE SKILLS

Information on the automatic certification of any core skills in this unit is published in *Automatic Certification of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 1999).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Practice Experience in a Support for Learning Setting: The Support for Learning Assistant (Intermediate 2)

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 1

Develop appropriate relationships with learners with support for learning needs in an educational setting.

Performance criteria

- a) The interaction with the learner(s) is consistent with their educational needs.
- b) The interaction with the learner(s) takes account of the cultural influence of the learner's background.
- c) The support for the learner is consistent with his/her membership of a peer group.
- d) The maintenance of confidentiality with respect to the learner is consistent with establishment policy and statutory requirements and with the role of support for learning assistant.

Evidence requirements

Please refer to *Evidence requirements for the unit* at the end of the Statement of Standards.

OUTCOME 2

Work as a member of a team with teachers and others who have a responsibility within support for learning.

Performance criteria

- a) The participation with teachers and others involved in support for learning is appropriate in terms of the role of the Support for Learning Assistant.
- b) The response to a request/instruction to undertake duties/tasks from members of the teaching staff is promptly and willingly actioned in accordance with agreed priorities.
- c) The intervention in situations where another member of staff is experiencing difficulty is appropriate in terms of the role of the Support for Learning Assistant.
- d) The appraisal of situations where assistance from others is required is valid and such assistance is promptly sought.

Evidence requirements

Please refer to *Evidence requirements for the unit* at the end of the Statement of Standards.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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OUTCOME 3

Undertake a negotiated piece of work with a learner (or learners) in a support for learning setting.

Performance criteria

- a) The consultation with teaching staff with regard to the planned activity is appropriate in terms of the role of the Support for Learning Assistant.
- b) The evaluation of the agreed activity is valid in terms of the learner's development.
- c) Recording of the activity completed is accurate, appropriate and complete.

Evidence requirements

Please refer to *Evidence requirements for the unit* at the end of the Statement of Standards.

OUTCOME 4

Contribute to the maintenance of an environment for effective education.

Performance criteria

- a) The contribution to the maintenance of the health, safety and security of the educational establishment and the well being of the learners is consistent with establishment policy and the role of the Support for Learning Assistant.
- b) The performance in activities and tasks is consistent with establishment policy in health promotion and with the role of the Support for Learning Assistant.
- c) Personal presentation and behaviour are consistent with general working norms and guidelines for an educational setting.
- d) The response to disruptive/abusive behaviour is appropriate in terms of establishment policy.
- e) The response to emergency situations/alarm activation is prompt and correct in terms of the establishment procedures and is in accordance with health and safety regulations.

Evidence requirements

Please refer to *Evidence requirements for the unit* at the end of the Statement of Standards.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE UNIT

Outcome 1

Performance evidence to meet the performance criteria across the range.

Evidence of actual performance to show candidate can establish and develop relationships with learners.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 2

Evidence of actual performance to show candidate can maintain effective working relationships with teachers and others.

Outcome 3

Evidence of actual performance to show that the candidate can meet the performance criteria in a support for learning setting.

Outcome 4

Evidence of actual performance to show that the candidate can meet the performance criteria in an educational setting.

National Unit Specification: support notes

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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 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

Outcome 1

Candidates could demonstrate through their knowledge, qualities and interpersonal skills, that they are able to develop and maintain effective relationships with learners with support for learning needs. The relationship would be informed by:

- a) an awareness of the concept of support for learning;
- b) an awareness of conditions which may lead to learning disabilities;
- c) an awareness of the personal qualities required in an effective Support for Learning Assistant, for instance warmth, empathy, genuineness, reliability etc.;
- d) an awareness of the elements of an effective relationship, for instance, mutual respect, shared participation and shared goals;
- e) an awareness of learners' cultural backgrounds;
- f) an awareness that the learner(s) should feel himself/herself to be a full member of the class and the school; or other educational setting;
- g) an awareness of establishment policy with regard to confidentiality.

Outcome 2

Candidates should demonstrate that they are able to work as members of a staff team. They should show an awareness of the roles of other members of the team and participate willingly to achieve shared goals.

Candidates should show initiative in situations where a member of the staff team is experiencing difficulties and act appropriately to support that member.

Candidate could demonstrate that they are able to appraise situations where further assistance may be required and to request such assistance promptly.

Outcome 3

The piece of work conducted by the candidate could be a task (or tasks) that is within his/her contractual obligations. Although candidates would be asked to submit a short report, this would satisfy the requirements of the unit and need not necessarily be a routine administrative procedure in the school. The selection of the task(s) could be negotiated with teaching staff and should have their approval. It is not possible to be prescriptive about the nature of the task because of the diverse ways in which Support for Learning Assistants are used to support learners' learning needs. In general, the piece of work should be one that is conducted over several days.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Outcome 4

Candidates should demonstrate an awareness of relevant authority and/or establishment guidelines for health and safety including emergency procedures. They should demonstrate the ability to work within relevant approaches/policies on classroom management, and on responses to disruptive or abusive behaviour.

Candidates should demonstrate an awareness of relevant authority and/or establishment guidelines on safe practice in moving and handling. If the individual's role requires moving and handling of learners then the candidate should be aware that training may be required and that they should seek further information from their employer if in doubt about this.

Candidate's personal presentation and behaviour should be consistent with agency/establishment general norms for example, certain types of clothing and jewellery may prove a health and safety risk in particular circumstances. Also, the candidate's personal hygiene and presentation should be considered if they are required to support intimate tasks. Long fingernails, strong smelling perfumes may discomfort the learner whom they support.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

The underpinning knowledge for this unit is largely contained in the unit *Assisting with Support for Learning: the Role of the Support for Learning Assistant*. This practice unit mirrors the content of the theory unit and permits the translation of the knowledge gained and the skills and qualities developed to be displayed in the workplace. Taken together they promote the idea of the thinking practitioner.

It would be expected that in their place of work or during a period of work-placement, candidates would be presented with opportunities to demonstrate competence across all the learning outcomes of this module. Assessment of competence could be conducted by a member of the teaching staff and would rely on naturalistic observation and/or other evidence gathering methods; for instance, asking questions of the candidate, gathering information from other members of staff and examining entries in the candidate's reflective log. In situations where the opportunity to meet certain performance criteria does not arise, the use of role-play may be permissible to generate evidence of competence.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

It would be expected that in their workplace or during a period of work placement, candidates would be presented with opportunities to demonstrate competence across all the learning outcomes of this unit. Assessment of competence could be conducted by a member of the (workplace) establishment teaching staff and would rely on naturalistic observation and/or other evidence gathering methods; for instance, asking questions of the candidate, gathering information from other members of staff and examining entries in the candidate's reflective log. In situations where the opportunity to meet certain performance criteria does not arise, the use of role-play may be permissible to generate evidence of competence. Centres offering this unit should undertake some training and support for those who are assessing the candidate in the workplace. Workplace staff who are requested to verify the candidate's claims of competence will require to have background information on the purpose of the unit and clear guidance on their role in the assessment process.

It should not be the case that assessment in the workplace takes excessive time, but rather it should be seen as part of the normal process of supervising staff and giving supportive feedback on performance.

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 and Certification Arrangements for Candidates with Special Needs/Candidates whose First Language is not English* (SQA, 1998).