

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Using Computers: An Introduction (Intermediate 1)

NUMBER D2KP 10

COURSE

SUMMARY

This unit is designed to introduce the candidate to the basic skills and knowledge required to use computer systems. It will also introduce the candidate to the use of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) in various environments.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Operate hardware components commonly used in computer systems.
- 2 Use a word processor.
- 3 Effectively use a range of software.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

No formal entry requirements.

CREDIT VALUE

0.5 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).

Administrative Information

Superclass: AY

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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 the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1

Operate hardware components commonly used in computer systems.

Performance criteria

- a) Follow the computer system manufacturers recommended start-up procedure.
- b) Follow the computer system manufacturers recommended shutdown procedure.
- c) Be familiar with the operation of a mouse or other pointing device.
- d) Be familiar with the operation of a keyboard.
- e) Be familiar with the operation of a printer.
- f) Be familiar with the use of electronic computing media.
- g) Follow safe working practices.

Evidence requirements

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

OUTCOME 2

Use a word processor.

Performance criteria

- a) Launch a word processing application.
- b) Create a new word processing document.
- c) Edit a word processing document.
- d) Use a spell checker.
- e) Add a graphical component to a word processing document.
- f) Save a word processing document.
- g) Print a word processing document.

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

Effectively use a range of software.

Performance criteria

- a) Check that the computer system is ready for use.
- b) Install software.
- c) De-Install software.
- d) Follow procedures to run the program.
- e) Effectively use the program.
- f) Exit from the program.

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.

Outcome 2

Performance evidence to meet the performance criteria. A folio could be maintained by the candidate.

Outcome 3

Performance evidence to meet the performance criteria.

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 20 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

Correspondent to Learning Outcomes 1-3

- 1 The candidate should be introduced to the practical aspects of operating a computer system. The candidate should become familiar with start-up and shutdown procedures, the use of a keyboard, a mouse or other pointing device, a printer and the use of various electronic computing media, e.g. CD ROM; floppy disk; Internet; Intranet. The use of manufacturers tutorial materials is strongly recommended.
- 2 The candidate should become familiar with word processing procedures including; creating, editing, saving, and printing a document. At an early stage a keyboard tutorial program could be used to develop the candidate's keyboard familiarity. However, the emphasis should be placed on developing the candidate's practical knowledge of a range of procedures rather than specialising in a single process such as text entry.
- 3 The critical aspect of learning outcome 3 is the candidate ability to effectively use a range of software within their working environment. The main aim should therefore be to provide the candidate with a basic knowledge and experience of application software.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

The learning approach for this unit will be candidate-centred throughout with only brief teaching exposition by the tutor. Knowledge of health and safety issues relating to the use of equipment, such as correct posture, should be encouraged.

Candidates should gain sufficient practical experience to allow them to use a variety of computer systems. This could be achieved by allowing the candidate the opportunity to use more than one computer system within the unit. The use of technical jargon for its own sake should be avoided. Candidates need only acquire sufficient technical vocabulary to allow them to follow instructions.

Close liaison within a course team should ensure that appropriate programs are used by an individual candidate.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Outcome 1

A checklist could be used to record the achievement of individual performance criteria.

For outcome 1, the following checklist is provided as an example:

Checklist

The candidate:

- 1 Follows system manufacturers recommended start-up procedure (a).
- 2 Follows system manufacturers recommended shutdown procedure (b).
- 3 Is familiar with the operation of a mouse or other pointing device including (c)
 - Select/Click an item.
 - Double click an item.
 - Drag an item.
 - Highlight a selection of text.
 - Gain further information about an item (e.g. right or control click).
- 4 Is familiar with the operation of a keyboard including (d).
 - Cursor movement
 - Use of the shift key
 - Use of the space bar
 - Use of the return or enter key
 - Use of the delete (or equivalent) key
 - Input of alphanumeric data including upper and lower case letters.
- 5 Is familiar with the operation of a printer including (e)
 - Selecting a printer.
 - Printing a document in portrait view.
 - Printing a document in landscape view.
 - Printing a selection of pages from a document.
 - Setting the number of copies to be printed.
 - Loading a printer with paper.
 - Loading a printer with ribbon, ink or toner.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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6 Is familiar with the use of media including (f).

- Inserting removable media.
- Removing removable media.
- Formatting removable media.
- Copying files to removable media.
- Copying files from removable media.
- Care of media.

7 Follows safe working practices at all times (g).

Outcome 2

A checklist could be used to record the achievement of individual performance criteria. In addition, each candidate could maintain a portfolio showing each stage of achievement in PCs (c) to (g).

Checklist

The candidate:

1 Launches a word processing application by (a).

- Launching the application.
- Opening an existing associated file.

2 Creates a new word processing document including (b).

- Creating a new empty document.
- Opening a document template.

3 Edits a word processing document including (c).

- Inserting text.
- Removing text.
- Repositioning a selection of text.
- Changing the typeface.
- Changing the text alignment.
- Changing the text style.

4 Uses a spell checker facility (d).

5 Adds a graphical component to a word processing document (e).

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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6 Saves a word processing document including (f).

- Naming a document when saving it for the first time.
- Saving a document in a particular directory.
- Saving a document to removable media.
- Using “Save As” to create a copy of a document.

7 Prints a word processing document (g)

Outcome 3

A checklist could be used to record the achievement of individual performance criteria.

Satisfactory achievement of the outcome could be demonstrated by the candidate achieving all necessary items in the checklist (marked N) for all the programs used, and all desirable items in the checklist (marked D) for at least one of the programs used.

Checklist

The candidate:

- | | | |
|----|--|----------|
| 1) | Checks that the computer system is ready for use (a). | N |
| 2) | Installs software using manufacturers recommended installation procedures. (b) | D |
| 3) | De-installs software using manufacturer recommended installation procedures. (c) | D |
| 4) | Follows manufacturers recommended instructions to run the program: (d) | N |
| 5) | Effectively uses the program including: (e) | |
| | • Navigating | N |
| | • Filing | N |
| | • Editing | N |
| | • Formatting | N |
| | • Printing | |

The critical aspect of this outcome is the candidate’s effective use of a range of application software, where the aim is to provide the candidate with a basic knowledge and experience of application software. Effective use will however vary from application to application. For example, effective use of a multimedia educational title will vary from effective use of a learning aid such as a predictive word processor.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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However, applications have common features:

- **Navigating**, which includes moving from one part of the program to another. For example, when using a word processor this would include moving within and between documents.

Similarly:

- When using an educational multimedia program it would include moving between different parts of the program.
 - When using a learning aid such as a predictive word processor it would include moving between windows used by the package and a linked word processor.
 - When using a web browser it would include using hypertext links to move between pages.
- **Filing**, which includes saving and opening files. For example, when using a word processor this would include saving and opening word processing documents.

Similarly:

- When using an educational multimedia program it would include saving and opening levels and other customised settings.
 - When using a learning aid such as a predictive word processor it would include saving and opening customised settings.
 - When using a web browser this would include saving pages, graphics and other resources, and opening them for off-line use.
- **Editing**, which includes changing an environment. For example, when using a word processor this would include altering text.

Similarly:

- When using an educational multimedia program it would include altering the difficulty level.
 - When using a learning aid such as a predictive word processor it would include altering the program settings for individual users.
 - When using a web browser this would include creating and editing bookmarks/favourites.
- **Formatting**, which includes printing any time. For example, when using a word processor this would include changing the typeface.

Similarly:

- When using an educational multimedia program it would include altering the characteristics of individual activities.
- When using a learning aid such as a predictive word processor it would include altering the display characteristics.
- When using a web browser it would include altering search criteria.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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- **Printing**, which includes printing any item. For example, when using a word processor this would include printing a document.

Similarly:

- When using an educational multimedia program it would include printing scores and screen elements.
- When using a learning aid such as a predictive word processor it would include printing completed work.
- When using a web browser it would include printing web pages.

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).