



**NATIONAL CERTIFICATE MODULE: UNIT SPECIFICATION**

**STATEMENT OF STANDARDS**

**UNIT NUMBER:** 7351434

**UNIT TITLE:** USING LEARNING SKILLS 3

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

**OUTCOME**

1. IDENTIFY A PERSONAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

- (a) The definition of the term "learning objective" is clear and complete;
- (b) The outline of the personal learning objective is clear and complete;
- (c) The context, including purpose and background, within which the learning objective is to be achieved is defined clearly.

**RANGE STATEMENT**

Context: a current learning programme in a familiar situation.

**EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS**

Written and/or oral evidence satisfying PCs (a)-(c).

**OUTCOME**

2. PLAN A STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING A PERSONAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

- (a) The definition of the term "learning strategy" is accurate;
- (b) An outline plan for the learning strategy is clear and logical;
- (c) The stages proposed for ascertaining the availability of resources, obtaining resources and extracting relevant information are logical and realistic.
- (d) The overall timetable for achievement of the learning objective is realistic and flexible in that it allows sufficient time for any required alterations to the plan and for the presentation of information in final form.
- (d) A detailed step by step plan for the learning strategy is clear and logical.
- (e) The feasibility of the plan is reviewed and the plan is adjusted accordingly.

**RANGE STATEMENT**

The range for this outcome is fully covered by the performance criteria.

**EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS**

Written and/or oral evidence satisfying PCs (a)-(e).

**OUTCOME**

- 3. IMPLEMENT A STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING A PERSONAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

- (a) The implementation of the steps set out in the planned strategy is effective and appropriate.
- (b) Any modification of the planned strategy is justified.
- (c) The use of resources is in accordance with the original or modified strategy.
- (d) The adherence to the original or modified timetable is accurate;
- (e) Self-monitoring of performance in the implementation of the learning strategy is consistent and objective across all stages of implementation.
- (f) The learning strategy is implemented with commitment and confidence;
- (g) The form in which the achievement of the objective is recorded is clear, detailed, accurate, complete and appropriate to purpose.

**RANGE STATEMENT**

The range for this outcome is fully covered by the performance criteria.

**EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS**

Performance evidence and written and/or oral evidence satisfying PCs (a)-(g).

**OUTCOME**

4. EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING A PERSONAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

- (a) The criteria established to evaluate the strategy are defined clearly.
- (b) The assessment of the strategy is complete in terms of both positive and negative features.
- (c) The formulation of detailed recommendations for the improvement of the strategy is realistic and logical.
- (d) All transferable learning skills used in the strategy are identified correctly.
- (e) Possible new contexts for the use of recognised transferable skills are identified correctly.

**RANGE STATEMENT**

The range for this outcome is fully covered by the performance criteria.

**EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS**

Oral and/or written evidence satisfying PCs (a)-(e).

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**ASSESSMENT RECORDS**

In order to achieve this unit, candidates are required to present sufficient evidence that they have met all the performance criteria for each outcome within the range specified. Details of these requirements are given for each outcome. The assessment instruments used should follow the general guidance offered by the SQA assessment model and an integrative approach to assessment is encouraged. (See references at the end of support notes).

Accurate records should be made of assessment instruments used showing how evidence is generated for each outcome and giving marking schemes and/or checklists, etc. Records of candidates' achievements should be kept. These records will be available for external verification.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS**

In certain cases, modified outcomes and range statements can be proposed for certification. See references at end of Support Notes.

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**NATIONAL CERTIFICATE MODULE: UNIT SPECIFICATION****SUPPORT NOTES**

**UNIT NUMBER:** 7351434

**UNIT TITLE:** USING LEARNING SKILLS 3

**SUPPORT NOTES:** This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. None of the sections of the support notes is mandatory.

**NOTIONAL DESIGN LENGTH:** SQA allocates a notional design length to a unit on the basis of time estimated for achievement of the stated standards by a candidate whose starting point is as described in the access statement. The notional design length for this unit is 20 hours. The use of notional design length for programme design and timetabling is advisory only.

**PURPOSE** This module aims to develop and extend the skills which a candidate requires in order to become an independent and reflective learner. The candidate will explore learning strategies and processes and apply these to achieve complex learning objectives.

SQA publishes summaries of NC units for easy reference, publicity purposes, centre handbooks, etc. The summary statement for this unit is as follows:

This module will allow you to explore a number of learning strategies and processes and to apply these to achieve your own specified learning objectives which may relate to your present programme if study or may prepare you for future study at a higher level.

**CONTENT/CONTEXT** This module aims to improve and extend the candidate's skills as a self sufficient learner in order that he/she may operate independently in his/her present course of study or in the future in courses of study at a higher level. It offers opportunities for self-appraisal and reflection on the processes involved in achieving a range of learning objectives. As the module may be undertaken with this aim of preparing for higher education it is not necessary that the learning techniques and strategies practised relate immediately to the candidate's current programme of study.

Learning strategies and objectives vary with subject and with vocational area. Initially a variety of techniques might be explored and practised by the candidates, either individually or in groups. Such techniques might include:

brain storming  
note-taking in its widest sense (eg structured notes, spidergraphs, concept mapping etc)  
effective reading including speed reading techniques  
effective listening  
task shadowing and feedback  
observation and constructive questioning  
analysing statistical data  
location, use and evaluation of resources  
accessing a database  
programming a computer  
critical path analysis and flow charting  
examination technique  
essay writing  
report writing  
time management of learning  
presenting information - orally or otherwise

Where the module is being undertaken with the aim of preparing candidates for higher education tutors/trainers should emphasise those learning techniques which are likely to be of most benefit to candidates in this situation.

In Outcomes 2 and 3 the candidate can plan, implement and evaluate a learning strategy applicable either generally or to a particular vocational context. The candidate should monitor his/her performance by recording the positive aspects of the learning strategy and conversely recording and seeking solutions to any aspects of the plan which make learning difficult. It is important to emphasise that the log book should include those areas where implementation was unsuccessful or only partially successful so that the candidate may consider the reasons for this, with a view to designing improved learning strategies in the future.

In the personal interview for Outcome 4 the candidate should be able to assess the effectiveness of the learning strategy in this particular context, ie the degree to which the strategy has achieved its intended objective. Although the candidate will often be developing learning skills within a particular vocational context, the interview should also focus on the transferability of these skills and their applicability in other learning situations. There is no one "correct" learning strategy which applied to all situations. The candidate should adopt a logical approach and explore with a fair degree of insight the reasons why any part of the learning strategy proved unsuccessful or inefficient. On this basis the candidate will be able to continually refine and improve future learning strategies.

**APPROACHES TO GENERATING EVIDENCE** As with Using Learning Skills 1 and 2 the emphasis in this module should be on active learning and a candidate centred approach.

The outcomes in all modules are similar. But whereas in Using Learning Skills 1 and 2 the candidate was expected to identify a learning objective and to plan and implement a learning strategy with tutor/trainer support, in Using Learning Skills 3 the candidate is expected to function independently with the tutor/trainer acting as an advisor and facilitator only.

Where this module is undertaken with the aim of preparing candidates for higher education candidates may at the beginning of the module require direction and practice in learning techniques of which they have hitherto had little or no experience. The tutor/trainer should aim to develop the candidates' learning skills through practical experience, reflection and analysis. At the outset of the module the tutor/trainer and candidate should jointly agree on areas where development work may be required.

The learning objective itself should be of a complex nature and several learning techniques might be required for its achievement. In this module the candidate will also be expected to demonstrate a high level of sophistication in all elements of the learning strategy, as well as in handling complex resources.

The interview for Outcome 4 should be participative and open, so that the candidate's capabilities as an independent learner are reinforced and any deficiencies in the learning strategy are viewed not as errors but a means of improvement.

Where personal interviews are used as an instrument of assessment they may usefully be undertaken in group situation in order that candidates may share experiences and learn from one another.

**ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES** Centres may use the instruments of assessment which are considered by tutors/trainers to be most appropriate. Examples of instruments of assessment which could be used are as follows:

Corresponding to outcomes 1-4:

1. Restricted response.
2. Personal interview and planning sheets.
3. Log sheets/book.
4. Personal interview drawing on planning sheets and log book.

**PROGRESSION** This module is the third in a series of modules on Learning Skills. Modules 7351414 Using Learning Skills 1 and 7131424 Using Learning Skills 2 set less demanding targets for candidates.

**RECOGNITION** Many SQA NC units are recognised for entry/recruitment purposes. For up-to-date information see the SQA guide 'Recognised and Recommended Groupings'.



## REFERENCES

1. Guidelines for Module Writers.
2. SQA's National Standards for Assessment and Verification.
3. For a fuller discussion on assessment issues, please refer to SQA's Guide to Assessment.
4. Procedures for special needs statements are set out in SQA's guide 'Students with Special Needs'.

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