

Unit title: Health Sector: Working Safely (National 4)

Unit code: F599 74

Superclass: PL

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Unit purpose

This unit has been designed as a mandatory unit of the National 4 Health Sector Course, but can also be taken as a free-standing unit. It is suitable for learners who have no previous experience of the health sector.

In this unit learners will carry out a risk assessment. Learners will identify possible hazards and risks, including risks in relation to infection, in a setting within the health sector. Learners will identify measures to minimise or eliminate these. This unit will allow learners to develop an awareness of their own responsibilities in maintaining a safe working environment.

Learners will participate in a practical activity which will help develop knowledge and understanding of infection control measures.

The health sector includes the National Health Service (NHS) (primary and secondary care), independent healthcare, complementary therapies, the life sciences and retail pharmaceutical industries and the community and voluntary sector.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Carry out a basic risk assessment to a given brief.
- 2 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the spread of infection and associated control measures in a health sector environment.

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Credit points and level

0.5 National unit credit at SCQF level 4: (3 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 4)

Recommended entry to the unit

Entry to this unit is at the discretion of the centre.

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

Carry out a basic risk assessment to a given brief.

Performance criteria

- (a) Identify the main hazards present in a given setting within a health sector provision.
- (b) Identify the associated risks in the given setting.
- (c) Identify a way to minimise each associated risk in the given setting.

Outcome 2

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the spread of infection and associated control measures in a health sector environment.

Performance criteria

- (a) Describe how infection can spread in a health sector environment.
- (b) Describe the personal responsibility of the individual in relation to preventing infection.
- (c) Identify a range of infection control measures in a health sector environment.
- (d) Demonstrate how the spread of infection can be prevented in a specified practical activity.

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.

Outcome 1 — Written/Oral evidence

Evidence for Outcome 1 will be gathered in open-book conditions at appropriate points in the unit. Learners will be provided with a brief specifying a setting in a provision within which the risk assessment will be carried out. The specified setting must be one which has known potential hazards associated with infection.

Learners are required to:

- ◆ identify **three** hazards, **one** of which must be in relation to infection, in a specified setting within a provision
- ◆ identify **one** risk associated with each hazard
- ◆ identify **one** way to minimise **each** identified risk

The provision will be selected from the range below:

- ◆ National Health Service — primary care
- ◆ National Health Service — secondary care
- ◆ independent healthcare
- ◆ complementary therapies
- ◆ life sciences industry
- ◆ retail pharmaceutical industry
- ◆ community and voluntary sector

The hazards in relation to infection will be selected from:

- ◆ contamination of surfaces and equipment
- ◆ clinical waste
- ◆ exposure to needles
- ◆ blood and body fluid spillages
- ◆ exposure to an infected person

The evidence for Outcome 1 must be presented in the form of a completed risk assessment. The risk assessment will be carried out in a real or simulated setting under supervision at an appropriate point in the unit. Guidance on appropriate settings are provided in the support notes.

Learners must organise and present findings in an appropriate format. A template for the risk assessment will be provided.

National unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 2 — Written/Oral and performance evidence

Written and/or oral evidence is required for Outcome 2 performance criteria (a), (b) and (c) and will be gathered under open-book, supervised conditions.

For performance criteria (a), (b) and (c), learners are required to:

- ◆ describe **three** ways in which infection can spread in a health sector environment
- ◆ describe the personal responsibility of the individual in relation to preventing infection
- ◆ identify **one** measure to control infection for **each** way in which infection can spread

Further guidance on ways in which infection can spread and infection control measures are provided in the support notes.

Performance evidence is required for performance criterion (d). Learners are required to:

- ◆ demonstrate how the spread of infection can be prevented in a specified practical activity

An assessor observation checklist must be used to support the performance evidence for performance criterion (d). Observation should be based on a practical activity.

Further guidance on appropriate practical activities can be found in the support notes.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) provided for this unit illustrates the standard that should be applied. It contains a learner brief, a risk assessment template, a series of structured questions and an assessor observation checklist. If a centre wishes to design its own assessments for this unit, they should be of 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

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 20 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this unit

This unit has been designed as a mandatory unit of the National 4 Health Sector Course, but can also be taken as a free-standing unit. It is suitable for learners who have no previous experience of the health sector.

In this unit learners will carry out a risk assessment. Learners will identify possible hazards and risks, including risks in relation to infection, in a setting within the health sector. Learners will identify measures to minimise or eliminate these. This unit will allow learners to develop an awareness of their own responsibilities in maintaining a safe working environment.

Learners will participate in a practical activity which will help develop knowledge and understanding of infection control measures.

The health sector includes the National Health Service (NHS) (primary and secondary care), independent healthcare, complementary therapies, the life sciences and retail pharmaceutical industries and the community and voluntary sector.

Outcome 1

Learners will learn about risk assessments and why and how these are carried out. Learners should be made aware of the difference between a hazard and a risk:

- ◆ a hazard is something with the potential to cause harm
- ◆ a risk is the likelihood of harm from a hazard

A common hazard in the health sector is the spread of infection. For infections to occur the person must be at risk of infection. The very young, the very old and those whose immune systems are weakened through illness or the effects of drugs and certain treatments are particularly vulnerable to infection.

The nature of the work carried out in the health sector, often involving invasive procedures, leaves staff and patients exposed to the risk of infection. Settings where staff and patients could be exposed to the risk of infection include: dental surgeries, accident and emergency units, hospital wards, operating theatres and treatment rooms. Equipment used in these settings needs to be manufactured and packaged in clean rooms, ie rooms that are scrupulously clean and free from contamination.

National unit support notes (cont)

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Learners will learn how to carry out a basic risk assessment in a health setting. The risk assessment could be in relation to:

- ◆ access for people with disabilities
- ◆ lone working
- ◆ work station
- ◆ infection control

Learners will be given a brief specifying the type of provision, and the area within that provision, in which the risk assessment will be carried out. Learners should use this information to identify potential hazards and risks including those in relation to the spread of infection. The range of hazards in relation to infection and types of provision is specified in the evidence requirements for Outcome 1.

Outcome 2

Learners should be aware of the various ways that infection can be spread in a health sector environment. Infection by pathogenic microorganisms can cause a wide range of diseases. Infection control measures are designed to protect patients, visitors and workers in the health sector.

Ways in which infection can spread include:

- ◆ cross contamination (hands/clothes/equipment)
- ◆ droplet spread
- ◆ biomedical devices
- ◆ contamination of the environment

Infection control measures include:

- ◆ cleaning and disinfection of the environment
- ◆ cleanliness, decontamination and sterilisation of equipment
- ◆ hand hygiene
- ◆ management of spillages
- ◆ isolation of a patient in a single room
- ◆ management of sharps (needles, scalpels, etc)

Learners should be made aware of the personal responsibility of all workers in the health sector to comply with infection control measures which are designed to protect patients, staff and others in a health sector environment.

National unit support notes (cont)

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Examples of relevant practical activities which could be in a real or simulated environment could include:

- ◆ hand decontamination — six step hand washing technique
- ◆ decontamination of surfaces
- ◆ decontamination of equipment
- ◆ Putting on, removing and disposing of an item of Personal Protective Equipment — gloves, apron, gown, goggles, visor, mask
- ◆ dealing with a spillage of blood or body fluids

Centres must adhere to the relevant health and safety legislation when carrying out the practical activity. There are opportunities in this outcome to build up an understanding of the workplace ethos and the behaviours and practices in relation to infection control required of employees in the health sector.

Employability Skills

In this unit learners will generate evidence for the following employability skills:

- ◆ understanding of roles and responsibilities in the workplace
- ◆ awareness of health and safety
- ◆ awareness of infection control procedures
- ◆ awareness of organisational standards for quality

Although not directly assessed in this unit, there are opportunities to develop the following employability skills:

- ◆ positive attitude to learning and the workplace
- ◆ self-respect and respect and consideration for others
- ◆ willingness to listen to others and respond constructively to feedback
- ◆ awareness of equality and diversity
- ◆ willingness to contribute to team work
- ◆ awareness of the importance of maintaining confidentiality
- ◆ reflecting on own abilities
- ◆ ability to follow instructions
- ◆ awareness of organisational standards for appearance and behaviour
- ◆ understanding of care values

These skills can be practised in real or simulated workplace environments and individual or group classroom activities.

National unit support notes (cont)

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Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

Outcome 1

As part of learning and teaching, a range of scenarios could be devised demonstrating hazards and risks within various types of provision in the health sector. Scenarios could focus on settings within the health sector such as dental surgeries, accident and emergency units, hospital wards, operating theatres and treatment rooms. The scenarios could be presented to learners in the form of written descriptions, multimedia presentations, illustrations, computer simulations, real work environments and classroom mock ups. It is essential that learners experience health and safety as an interactive process and delivery should be based on practical scenarios wherever possible.

Learners could work in groups to identify hazards, and the associated risks, then decide how these risks could be minimised or prevented. This could be a useful way to prepare learners for assessment.

Outcome 2

The main approach to teaching and learning in this outcome should be experiential. This involves learning through practical experiences and activities. Teacher/lecturer exposition will be required to establish key points of knowledge and understanding.

Workplace visits could provide an ideal opportunity to observe infection control measures being carried out in practice. An ultra violet light box could be used in the teaching of hand washing techniques.

The activities should be undertaken in a real or simulated work environment. The teacher/lecturer should provide a demonstration on the safe and correct method prior to learners undertaking any practical activities. Delivery of this unit could incorporate a variety of teaching and learning methods including:

- ◆ teacher/lecturer presentations and demonstrations
- ◆ group work and discussions
- ◆ handouts
- ◆ visiting speakers
- ◆ workplace visits
- ◆ practical activities
- ◆ individual and group research
- ◆ internet searches

National unit support notes (cont)

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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.

The evidence requirements are fully expressed in the mandatory section of this unit specification.

Outcome 1

Learners will be supplied with a brief. The brief will specify the type of provision, and the area within that provision, within which the risk assessment will be carried out. The specified setting **must** include hazards associated with infection. Learners are required to:

- ◆ identify **three** hazards, **one** of which must be in relation to infection, in a setting within a provision
- ◆ identify **one** risk associated with each hazard
- ◆ identify **one** way to minimise **each** identified risk

Learners should be supplied with an appropriate template to record the risk assessment. The risk assessment will be carried out in a real or simulated setting under supervision at an appropriate point in the unit.

Outcome 2

It would be appropriate for Outcome 2 performance criteria (a), (b) and (c) to be assessed before performance criterion (d). The evidence for performance criteria (a), (b) and (c), will be generated under open-book, supervised conditions. Evidence could be gathered in response to a series of structured questions within a time limit of one hour. Learners are required to:

- ◆ describe **three** ways in which infection can spread in a health sector environment
- ◆ describe the personal responsibility of the individual in relation to preventing infection
- ◆ identify **one** measure to control infection for **each** way in which infection can spread

National unit support notes (cont)

Unit title: Health Sector: Working Safely (National 4)

For Outcome 2 performance criterion (d), learners should be given the opportunity to practise the skills before being assessed. An observation checklist should be used when gathering evidence. Performance evidence for this assessment should be generated by participation in a practical activity under supervision either in a real or simulated health sector environment. Assessor observation checklists of performance evidence must be retained.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) provided for this unit illustrates the standard that should be applied. It contains a learner brief, a risk assessment template, a series of structured questions and an assessor observation checklist. If a centre wishes to design its own assessments for this unit, they should be of a comparable standard.

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

In this unit learners will be involved in carrying out a risk assessment. This may allow them to develop the three component activities of *Problem Solving* — Critical Thinking, Planning and Organising and Reviewing and Evaluating, when preparing, planning, carrying out and reviewing the risk assessment. If the learner uses a computer while undertaking any part of this unit, they will have the opportunity to develop *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* skills.

General information for learners

Unit title: Health Sector: Working Safely (National 4)

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.

In this unit you will carry out a risk assessment. You will identify possible hazards and risks, including risks in relation to infection, in a setting within the health sector. You will identify measures to minimise or eliminate these. This unit will allow you to develop an awareness of your own responsibilities in maintaining a safe working environment.

You will participate in a practical activity which will help develop knowledge and understanding of infection control measures.

The health sector includes the National Health Service (NHS) (primary and secondary care), independent healthcare, complementary therapies, the life sciences and retail pharmaceutical industries and the community and voluntary sector.

You will have opportunities to develop the three components of *Problem Solving* — Critical Thinking, Planning and Organising and Reviewing and Evaluating, when preparing, planning, carrying out and reviewing the risk assessment. If you use a computer while undertaking any part of this unit, you will have the opportunity to develop *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* skills.

Administrative information

Published: February 2017 (version 03)

Superclass: PL

History of changes to National unit specification

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
03	Units moved into a new template and re-coded to align with corresponding course 2 code. No change to unit content.	QM	February 2017

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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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