National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Developing Skills for Employment (SCQF level 4)

CODE F5G4 10

SUMMARY

The Unit is designed to enable candidates to enhance employability skills by providing them with the opportunity to assess their qualities and abilities and present these effectively to an employer with the help and guidance of a lecturer/teacher. This Unit is suitable for candidates who have little or no previous employment experience and are at an early stage in the development of the skills required to present themselves effectively to an employer. Candidates will learn about the qualities and abilities required in employment generally and in specific vocational areas. This knowledge should enable candidates to match themselves to appropriate employment opportunities and vocational areas. The ability of candidates to present themselves to employers will be enhanced through the writing of job application letters, completing job application forms, and participating in mock employment interviews.

OUTCOMES

1 Produce a Curriculum Vitae.
2 Match personal qualities and abilities to employment opportunities.
3 Participate in the job application process for a specified job role.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Intermediate 1 (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 4*).

SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.

National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

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CORE SKILLS

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit Specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

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

Produce a Curriculum Vitae.

Performance Criteria

(a) Conduct a self-assessment that clearly identifies own personal qualities and abilities.
(b) Produce a Curriculum Vitae that incorporates own personal details, qualities and abilities.

OUTCOME 2

Match personal qualities and abilities to employment opportunities.

Performance Criteria

(a) Identify generic employment abilities and qualities.
(b) Match the employment abilities and qualities required in advertised jobs to own personal qualities and abilities.
(c) Match personal qualities and abilities to appropriate vocational opportunities.

OUTCOME 3

Participate in the job application process for a specified job role.

Performance Criteria

(a) Write a letter of application in response to an advertised job.
(b) Complete a job application form related to a specific job role.
(c) Prepare for an interview related to a specific job role.
(d) Respond appropriately to questions asked at an interview for a specific job role.
(e) Ask the interviewer appropriate questions during an interview for a specific job role.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria. Evidence is to be produced throughout the Unit under open-book conditions and with the support and guidance of the lecturer/teacher. Written and oral evidence can be submitted in an electronic format.

Outcome 1: Produce a Curriculum Vitae

♦ candidates are to produce a record of the review of their personal qualities and abilities in which they identify their strengths and areas for improvement. This should be in relation to a minimum of five of the following:
— positive attitude to others
— verbal and non-verbal communication skills
— listening skills
— good timekeeping
— ability to plan and prepare
— ability to work with others
— problem solving skills
♦ candidates are to record their personal details, qualities, abilities and experience in an appropriate Curriculum Vitae template to a standard that is suitable for submission to an employer and free from spelling mistakes.

Outcome 2: Match qualities and skills to vocational opportunities

Candidates are to produce written and /or oral evidence that demonstrates that they have successfully:

♦ identified five of the generic employment abilities and qualities required by employers
♦ matched the employment abilities and qualities required in an advertised job to their own personal qualities and abilities
♦ identified three vocational opportunities that require their personal qualities and abilities

Outcome 3: Participate in the job application process for a specified job role

Written evidence is required to demonstrate that the candidates can produce a letter of application and a completed job application form to a standard that is suitable for submission to an employer.

An assessor record is required to verify that the candidates are able to respond appropriately to a minimum of four and maximum of six interview questions that they have had the opportunity to prepare for and are able to ask a minimum of two appropriate questions to the interviewer at the end of the interview. The interview will take place at an appropriate point during the Unit, be held in a private situation, last no more than ten minutes and there will be one interviewer who will be the teacher/lecturer.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this Unit provides sample assessment materials and illustrates the standard to be applied and the breadth of coverage required. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the Assessment Support Pack to ensure a comparable standard.

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

This Unit is a mandatory Unit within the National Certificate in Business (SCQF level 4) but can also be taken as a free-standing Unit.

It is an introductory Unit suitable for candidates who have had little or no previous employment experience and are at an early stage in the development of the qualities and abilities required to present themselves effectively to an employer.

The underlying aim of the Unit is to enable candidates to enhance their employability by providing them with the opportunity to assess their qualities and abilities and present these effectively to an employer with the help and guidance of a lecturer/teacher.

Candidates begin by assessing their qualities and abilities and then presenting these formally in a Curriculum Vitae. Candidates will then learn about the qualities and abilities required in employment generally and in specific vocational areas. This knowledge will enable candidates to match themselves to appropriate vocational areas and employment opportunities. The ability of candidates to present themselves to employers will be enhanced through the writing of job application letters, completing job application forms, and participating in mock employment interviews.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

This Unit has been designed to allow candidates to gain practical experience of planning and preparing for employment. A workshop approach with suitable teacher/lecture support would be an appropriate learning environment. Access to the Internet would be beneficial and would allow the candidates the opportunity of researching careers, recruitment, and personal development websites.

Throughout the delivery of the Unit, candidates should be encouraged to take a positive attitude to themselves and to the development of the skills and attitudes that they currently have. The Unit can be an important step in building confidence among candidates.

Outcome 1

With lecturer/teacher support candidates are to draw up an initial assessment of their qualities and abilities in which they identify their strengths and areas for improvement. This support can take the form of providing suitable objective checklists, 'abilities you have' inventories, and prompt lists. Two inventories could be produced. One could be based on the abilities mix that the candidate has at present and one could incorporate the abilities mix that the candidate could have at the end of a programme of study. This approach could help the candidate to see the benefits to be gained from their course of study.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Having completed their self-assessment candidates are to produce a Curriculum Vitae containing appropriate personal information drawn from the initial self-assessment. Lecturers/teachers should provide the candidates with a Curriculum Vitae (CV) template and assist them to complete the CV to a standard that would be acceptable to an employer. A career development website could be used for this purpose as it provides a facility for CV creation, storage and printing. Again candidate could compile a CV based on present qualities and on the qualities and abilities that they will have on successful completion of a programme of study. This approach will provide candidates with a CV that could be used for finding employment at the end of a programme of study.

Outcome 2

A careers match facility on a career development website is a good vehicle for enabling candidates to match their personal qualities and abilities to appropriate vocational areas. Once these vocational areas have been identified, candidates should be encouraged to collect job advertisements related to these areas. To reinforce the relevance of the Unit to the candidate the job advertisements should be for jobs that are in the local area and ones which the candidate will be qualified for at the end of their current programme of study. Once the advertisements have been collected the lecturer/teacher should help the candidates to identify the generic employment qualities and abilities required by employers and the specific abilities required for each of the advertised jobs. Candidates could use this information and the information contained in their initial self-assessments to match themselves against the demands of each job. It would be preferable if candidates were able to demonstrate that they either currently have the qualities and abilities required to do each job or will have the qualities to do each job when they have complete their programme of study. This approach will help to build the confidence of the candidates.

Outcome 3

The activities in Outcome 3 should follow on from the activities in Outcome 2 with the candidates being given the opportunity to complete the job application process based on at least one of the job advertisements that they identified in Outcome 2.

Lecturers/teachers should provide candidates with template letters of application to enable them to write a letter of application in reply to at least one of the jobs that they identified in Outcome 2. A career development website is a useful resource for candidates when writing letters of application. Candidates should be given a simple job application form to complete. This application form, along with the job advertisement should be used to as the basis for the employment interview.

One aim of the Unit is to build candidate confidence so that they can present themselves effectively at a job interview. To prepare candidates for the job interview the lecturer/teacher should illustrate interview techniques through the use of appropriate DVD's, websites and role play. The lecturer/teacher should also provide the candidates with the opening questions that they will be asked at the assessment interview. The candidates should write answers to these questions and practice answering the questions during role-play activities with other class members. Lecturers/teachers should coach the candidates during this time to improve their interview skills. The lecturer/teacher should also provide the candidates with a few follow-up questions that could be asked in response to their answers to opening questions. Again these questions should be taken from the assessment interview and answers should be practiced to improve the ability of candidates to respond confidently to these questions.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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OPPORTUNITIES FOR CORE SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Candidates will be producing written and/or oral evidence during the assessment of this Unit. Candidates will also be participating in an interview during Outcome 3. This provides ideal opportunities for candidates to develop aspects of the Core Skills of *Communication and Working with Others* at SCQF level 4.

Should candidates choose to produce their Curriculum Vitae and completed Job Application Form using a computer, there will be opportunities to develop aspects of the Core Skill of *Information Technology* at SCQF level 4. There will be further opportunities to develop this Core Skill should candidates choose to search for job advertisements using the Internet.

While participating in the interview process, candidates will be required to respond to a number of questions. This provides ideal opportunities for candidates to develop aspects of the Core Skill of *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 4.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

The following approaches to assessment are suggested:

Outcome 1 — Practical exercises
Outcome 2 — Practical exercises
Outcome 3 — Practical exercises (including role play)

Time should be allowed for any necessary re-assessment.

Opportunities for the use of 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 communications technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or e-checklists. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Further advice is available in *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education (AA1641, March 2003), SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools (BD2625, June 2005)*.

CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES AND/OR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (**www.sqa.org.uk**).