



National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Volunteering Investigative Project (SCQF level 3)

Unit code: FR28 09

Superclass: PM

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Summary

The purpose of this Unit is to develop candidates' personal skills by providing them with the opportunity to undertake an investigation into a familiar aspect of volunteering. Candidates will develop a project plan for completion of the investigation and review and present the investigation findings relating this to their personal development.

The Unit is suitable for a range of candidates. These could be school and college candidates, people wishing to develop and improve their employability skills in preparation for seeking work, or people seeking to improve other skills and learn through volunteering. School and college candidates undertaking this Unit are likely to be undertaking some type of volunteering as part of their overall learning experience. It is envisaged that candidates successfully completing this Unit will be able to progress to further study or volunteering work.

This is a mandatory Unit within the Award in Volunteering Skills (SCQF level 3) but can also be taken as a free-standing Unit.

This Unit should prepare candidates for progression to further study or volunteering work.

Outcomes

- 1 Investigate a familiar aspect of volunteering of particular interest to the candidate.
- 2 Participate in a review of the investigation project.
- 3 Explain the outcomes of the investigation project.

National Unit specification: general information (cont)

Unit title: Volunteering Investigative Project

Recommended entry

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained the following, or equivalent:

Preparing to Volunteer (SCQF level 3)
Volunteering Experience (SCQF level 3)

Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 3: (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 3*)

**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.*

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

Unit title: Volunteering Investigative Project

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

Investigate a familiar aspect of volunteering of particular interest to the candidate.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Select an aspect of volunteering on which to focus an investigation.
- (b) Provide a justification for the choice of investigation topic.
- (c) Develop the investigation project following a given process.
- (d) Undertake the investigation according to the given process.

Outcome 2

Participate in a review of the investigation project.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Participate in an investigation project review meeting.
- (b) Identify areas for improvement.

Outcome 3

Explain the outcomes of the investigation project.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Report on the findings of the investigation.
- (b) Describe own self development through the investigation project.

National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Volunteering Investigative Project

Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Written and/or oral recorded evidence is required to demonstrate that the candidates have achieved all of the Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

The evidence will be generated by the candidate under open-book conditions, with directive support from the tutor at appropriate points throughout the Unit and should include:

Outcome 1

- ◆ Selection of one investigation topic from a given list of 3–5 familiar options.
- ◆ A simple description of the investigation topic and why it has been chosen.
- ◆ Identification of a minimum of one possible self development benefit.
- ◆ A record showing that the project plan was carried out according to the given process.

Outcome 2

- ◆ Participation in an interim review meeting, describing how the project was carried out, and identifying at least one area for improvement of the investigative project.

Outcome 3

Findings of investigation should be presented clearly and should include:

- ◆ Outline of the volunteering aspect investigated.
- ◆ Description of investigation findings.
- ◆ Description of how the project was carried out incorporating feedback from review meeting.
- ◆ Description of one area of personal progress made during the project. Where no personal progression has been made an explanation should be given.

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 suitable for candidates who have participated in a volunteering role and have some understanding of what volunteering entails. This Unit should prepare candidates for progression to further study or volunteering work.

In this Unit candidates are required to investigate a familiar aspect of volunteering and develop a project in order to develop their own skills/knowledge.

The Unit will give individuals the opportunity to gain a national qualification which recognises their contribution to volunteering and the learning they gain as a result of being involved in activities additional to their formal learning. The Unit will link naturally to the development of essential skills, employability skills, transferable skills, active citizenship and the development of the skills and attributes of the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence (to enable candidates to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors).

Outcome 1

The range of possibilities for investigation projects within VIOs is extensive. It is important that the tutor is able to focus candidate choice on a simple investigation topic that nonetheless ensures the investigation undertaken will lead to adequate information being made available in order to present findings.

Examples of project topics could include such areas as:

- ◆ Fundraising activity carried out by VIOs
- ◆ Organising news articles for local papers
- ◆ Planning collection of goods for fundraising sales/raffles
- ◆ Career Development
- ◆ Individual VIO needs
- ◆ Increasing VIO awareness

This list is not exhaustive.

Outcome 2

Candidates should participate in dialogue with the assessor to discuss the investigation project and should be encouraged to identify strengths and weakness in how the investigation project was carried out. Candidates should be able to respond positively to feedback and act on any points discussed to enhance findings.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Volunteering Investigative Project

Outcome 3

This Outcome pulls together the completed project and allows the candidate to reflect on the Outcome 2 discussion and incorporate this review into the overall investigation findings. At this stage they will reflect on their own personal development.

Guidance on learning and teaching approaches for this Unit

Directive support from the tutor should be adopted for the candidate to complete this Unit.

This could be complemented by activities such as:

- ◆ small group discussions
- ◆ tutor led discussions
- ◆ project planning activities
- ◆ input from guest speakers such as existing volunteers, representatives from VIOs and or visits to VIOs
- ◆ use of internet
- ◆ peer/assessor reviews of investigation project.

This Unit should provide candidates with an opportunity to develop the following skills for life, learning and work:

- ◆ Self awareness and improvement — by identifying own personal progression
- ◆ Citizenship — by developing understanding of the work of VIOs
- ◆ Confidence — through undertaking the investigation and contributing to a meeting
- ◆ Self Management — by following objectives of investigation project
- ◆ Critical thinking — by identifying strengths and weaknesses of investigation project
- ◆ Independent thinking — through developing the investigation project
- ◆ Appreciation of values and beliefs — through reflecting on the work of VIOs
- ◆ Informed decision making — by responding positively to feedback
- ◆ Reviewing and Evaluating — through presentation of findings and self development

It should be noted that volunteering has a cultural context and for students/learners of other nationalities, there may be no similar context of volunteering or it may have very different connotations which may prove to be a barrier to inclusion. Where this is the case, learning and teaching approaches should address these issues to ensure understanding prior to assessment tasks being undertaken.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Guidance on approaches to assessment for this Unit

A holistic approach to assessment across Outcomes is recommended. Written and/or oral evidence may be produced in a variety of formats to produce a folio of evidence. This could include for example:

- ◆ Candidate written records
- ◆ Recording of interviews
- ◆ E-mails
- ◆ Blogs
- ◆ Observation checklists
- ◆ Professional witness testimonies
- ◆ Production/completion of appropriate documentation
- ◆ Electronic presentations
- ◆ Electronic journals
- ◆ Logbooks
- ◆ Diaries
- ◆ Videos
- ◆ Photographs

It is expected the tutor would give directive support and provide candidates with a checklist for their folio of evidence.

For Outcome 1 Candidates will be expected to choose an area they have an interest in as a result of working in a VIO. Three to five ideas should be given to the candidate to choose from. The area of interest selected for investigation should be one which will help candidates to develop their own personal skills and understanding of the volunteering sector. Then in agreement with the assessor the final option for investigation should be chosen giving in simple terms a valid reason for the choice. A simple and clear project should be developed according to a given process and the investigation should then be undertaken.

In relation to Outcome 2 candidates will take account of feedback and evidence this by incorporating it in the final presentation of findings in Outcome 3. The review meeting and identification of areas for improvement will also be evidenced in an action plan/ diary/ video/ observation checklists or any other appropriate way. Tutors could use an observation checklist to record the meeting.

In relation to Outcome 3 the investigation findings could be presented in the form of a diary, to do lists, portfolios, e-portfolios, videos, scrapbook, presentation or reports. Appropriate observation checklists and folio checklist should be included.

Time should be allowed for any necessary re-assessment of aspects of the investigation which do not comply with the Evidence Requirements.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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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 Communication 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)*.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

In this Unit candidates will apply their understanding of Volunteering and VIOs to the investigation of a specific aspect of volunteering in which they have developed a particular interest.

Candidates will:

- ◆ choose a suitable topic for investigation from a given list
- ◆ describe the reasons for their choice of investigation topic
- ◆ carry out the investigation according to a given process
- ◆ keep a simple record of the investigation process
- ◆ participate in a review meeting
- ◆ communicate their findings
- ◆ describe their own development.

This means that as candidates are doing this Unit will have opportunities to develop aspects of the Core Skills of *Communication* and *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 3.

In addition whilst completing this Unit candidates may develop aspects of the following Core Skills where specific learning and teaching approaches are adopted:

Working with Others: through participation in discussion and group work.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT): through use of internet for research and investigation of the project topic.

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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