



National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Working with Communities: Volunteering (SCQF level 5)

Unit code: H1MF 11

Superclass: PM

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Summary

This Unit is designed to introduce candidates to the role of volunteering in the community. Candidates will also have an opportunity to reflect on why people volunteer and how volunteering can benefit them as individuals, the organisations they work for and the wider community.

This Unit is designed for people who are already part of or wish to become involved in volunteering initiatives at community level.

Outcomes

- 1 Describe roles that volunteers can fulfil in community work settings.
- 2 Consider why people volunteer and the benefits of volunteering.

Recommended entry

Entry is at the discretion of the centre but a good standard of communication skills would be desirable. It would also be beneficial for candidates to have some experience of working with, or knowledge of, community initiatives involved in volunteering.

Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 5: (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5*)

**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.*

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

Describe roles that volunteers can fulfil in community work settings.

Performance Criteria

- (a) List a range of community work settings where volunteers are commonly used and describe what their roles might be in each one.
- (b) Identify one major barrier that might prevent people from coming forward to volunteer in the community and how to overcome this.
- (c) Outline the range of skills and qualities that volunteers can bring to a community work setting.
- (d) Identify reasons why some applicants may not be suitable for the volunteer roles they apply for.

Outcome 2

Consider why people volunteer and the benefits of volunteering.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify reasons why people volunteer.
- (b) Outline benefits that individuals can gain from volunteering.
- (c) Describe benefits that volunteering can bring to community organisations and the wider community.

National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Outcome 1

Candidates should:

- ◆ Identify a minimum of two separate community based settings where volunteers might be deployed and outline the types of roles that might be undertaken for each
- ◆ Describe one major barrier to volunteering and how to overcome it
- ◆ List at least three relevant skills and three useful qualities that volunteers can bring to a community setting
- ◆ Identify reasons why a prospective volunteer may be an unsuitable applicant for a specific role

Outcome 2

Candidates should:

- ◆ Outline a minimum of two reasons why a person may volunteer and the benefits to them personally
- ◆ Describe a minimum of two benefits to organisations and two benefits to the wider community, which can be gained from volunteering

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

Outcome 1

Volunteer roles

The role of volunteers in community settings can range from providing practical hands-on support for environmental projects such as those of The Prince's Trust, offering skills/services as a driver for community transport, providing 1:1 mentoring and counselling services for people with addictions or support to small groups involved in adult learning. Candidates should be able to describe typical volunteer roles in agency led community projects such as those associated with schools and citizen advice bureaux and roles of volunteers in community initiated and led projects such as church based or other non government organisation community based initiatives.

Barriers to participation

Equally important will be the ability of the candidate to reflect on why some people do not come forward to volunteer. Factors to consider could include lack of information and awareness of volunteer opportunities, lack of confidence, lack of belief in their ability to make a difference, lack of recognition of the benefits to them. Candidates will need to demonstrate ways of addressing these issues by exploring factors such as the importance of good advertising, good communication, good guidance and information and making use of local networks.

Skills/qualities

Candidates will also need to consider additional skills and qualities volunteers can bring to an organisation. such as: life experience, social skills, networking skills, additional practical skills, patience, a positive outlook, enthusiasm, commitment, reliability, energy, willingness to work unpaid, flexibility.

Unsuitable applicants

Candidates should be aware of current legislation in relation to the appointment of volunteers who work with young people and vulnerable adults and demonstrate knowledge of aspects of the vetting process. There may be occasions where the prospective volunteers' skills and experience do not match the role they have applied for and it may be that they can be offered advice and information on other roles that are more suited to them. For example, prospective volunteers for an after school club may not be aware of the vetting requirements necessary in relation to the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme administered by Disclosure Scotland.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Outcome 2

Reasons for volunteering

Candidates should reflect on the wide range of reasons why people of all ages volunteer: desire to help local community and make a difference; pass on skills, eg football coaching, offer skills and services, eg driving, or they may have personal reasons, eg getting out of a rut or spare time to use up.

Benefits of volunteering for individuals

Candidates should consider what individuals gain from the experience: social and health benefits, personal and career development, fulfilment through caring for others, getting into a routine, prospect of access to paid employment, possibility of training and development, renewed confidence and self-esteem, personal goal setting, access to new social networks, greater knowledge, information and understanding about what is going on locally.

Benefits of volunteering for organisations

Candidates should be able to reflect on why some organisations recruit volunteers: increases capacity of the organisation at no extra cost, reduces ratios in group work 1:1, part of the ethos of the organisation, adds a new dimension, new skills, adds value to the workforce, demonstrates commitment and provides access to a readily available pool of trained people to recruit from if a paid post becomes available.

Benefits of volunteering for wider community

Candidates should make the link between the acquisition of skills by volunteers and the impact this has not just on an organisation but on increasing the capacity of the wider community. They should consider in this context factors such as: social interaction, social cohesion, caring attitudes, skills development, increased success, greater mobility, an inclusive approach to community members and added value.

Guidance on learning and teaching approaches for this Unit

A balance between tutor presentation and a candidate centred approach should be adopted throughout this Unit. This could be complemented by activities such as:

- ◆ group discussions
- ◆ input from guest speakers such as existing volunteers or people who organise volunteers
- ◆ self directed learning will also be required as candidates will be required independently to obtain information from a range of external sources
- ◆ case studies
- ◆ use of internet and professional journals

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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The following reference sources may be helpful:

- ◆ Volunteer Centre Network Scotland www.volunteerscotland.org.uk
- ◆ Central Registration Body Scotland www.crbs.org.uk
- ◆ www.disclosurescotland.co.uk
- ◆ Volunteer Development Scotland www.vds.org.uk
- ◆ Community Service Volunteers www.csv.org.uk/Scotland
- ◆ www.sportscotland.org.uk/volunteering
- ◆ www.infoscotland.com/pvgscheme

Guidance on approaches to assessment for this Unit

The evidence should be gathered in open-book conditions at appropriate points throughout the Unit with candidates having access to relevant learning and teaching materials.

Evidence is required of the candidate's ability to describe the reasons why people volunteer and the benefits of volunteering both for individuals who offer their services as volunteers and also the contribution of this unpaid service to community organisations and to the wider community. The candidate would also need to describe why some volunteers are not suitable for specific roles.

For Outcome 1, an appropriate instrument of assessment would be a series of restricted response questions of approximately 50 to 100 words each or candidates could be given a case study.

For Outcome 2 an appropriate instrument of assessment would be an extended response of no more than 500 words.

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 be expected to work with others to obtain information relating to volunteer networks and also to access websites to gather information. The former will enhance both communication and interpersonal skills while the latter will provide an opportunity to develop *Information and Communication Technology* and basic research skills. The issue of identifying unsuitable volunteers will help develop problem solving and analytical skills.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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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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