



National Unit specification

General information

Unit title: Social Media Literacy (SCQF level 6)

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Superclass: CB

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Unit purpose

This Unit is designed for non-specialists who want to acquire knowledge and skills in using and understanding social media.

The Unit explores the value of social media in contemporary society and also examines the implications of its widespread use for individuals, businesses and society. It provides a broad theoretical basis to the subject, including evolution from the earliest forms. The unique characteristics of each type of social media (ranging from blogs to virtual worlds) are also covered.

Learners will have the opportunity to work on a social production in collaboration with others so that they gain practical experience in constructing knowledge.

A particular aim of this Unit, in addition to enhancing learners' digital skills, is to prepare learners for 'digital citizenship' so that they can fully participate in democratic and civil activities, access digital public services, and take advantage of the digital economy. Learners will be able to knowledgeably engage in public debates about the issues raised by social media.

On completion of this Unit, learners will possess advanced skills in using social media and appreciate the opportunities and threats posed by it. They will have established a social media presence and be able to use social media for personal, communal and commercial purposes.

National Unit specification: General information (cont)

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Outcomes

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

- 1 Explain the value of social media to individuals, groups, businesses and nations.
- 2 Explain the implications of social media for individuals, businesses and society.
- 3 Use social media for personal, communal and commercial purposes.

Credit points and level

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

Recommended entry to the Unit

Entry is at the discretion of the centre. It is recommended that the learner has achieved *Social Media Literacy* at SCQF level 5 or equivalent.

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 Skill components in this Unit. For details refer to the Support Notes for this Unit specification.

Context for delivery

If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

This Unit may be offered stand-alone or as part of the National Progression Award in *Digital Passport* at SCQF level 6. If offered as part of this Group Award, there may be opportunities to combine and integrate teaching and learning across Units. There may also be opportunities to combine Evidence Requirements and integrate assessments.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this Unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable assessment. 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

Explain the value of social media to individuals, groups, businesses and nations.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Explain the evolution of social media.
- (b) Describe contemporary developments in social media.
- (c) Explain the unique characteristics of different types of social media.
- (d) Explain the concepts of social presence, social capital, social production and social intelligence.
- (e) Explain the benefits of social media to individuals, groups, businesses and societies.
- (f) Explain the business models of social media providers.

Outcome 2

Explain the implications of social media for individuals, businesses and society.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Explain the rights and responsibilities of individuals when using social media.
- (b) Explain the legal and ethical factors constraining the use of social media in business.
- (c) Explain the potential dangers of social media to individuals and businesses.
- (d) Explain the societal issues raised by social media.

Outcome 3

Use social media for personal, communal and commercial purposes.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Refine an appropriate social media presence.
- (b) Participate in a complex social production in collaboration with others.
- (c) Use a personal learning network for a complex learning Outcome.
- (d) Collaborate with others to promote an enterprise using social media.
- (e) Use of social media is safe, responsible and ethical, and demonstrates mindfulness.
- (f) Customise social media to reflect personal preferences, including advanced privacy and security settings.

National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Assessors should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, and understanding of their learners to determine the most appropriate ways to generate evidence and the conditions and contexts in which they are used.

Evidence is required to demonstrate that learners have achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria. Sampling may be used in certain circumstances (see below) where the sample is sufficiently random and robust to clearly infer competence in the complete domain.

The evidence for this Unit may be written or oral or a combination of these. Evidence may be captured, stored and presented in a range of media (including audio and video) and formats (analogue and digital). Particular consideration should be given to digital formats and the use of multimedia.

A **holistic** approach to evidence generation is required. This will involve candidates undertaking an **investigation** relating to a contemporary issue surrounding social media.

The investigation must be a **social production** involving collaboration with other learners (Outcome 3, Performance Criterion (b)) and involve **new learning** (Outcome 3, Performance Criterion (c)). The results of the investigation must be presented using social media. The production must be written and presented appropriately to enhance the candidate's social presence (Outcome 3, Performance Criterion (a)).

The contribution of each candidate to the production must be clear, but it is not a requirement that each candidate satisfies every Performance Criterion. The **overall production must satisfy every Performance Criterion** (see below) and every candidate must make a worthwhile and significant contribution to the production.

In addition to explaining a contemporary issue with social media, the investigation must also satisfy the Performance Criteria relating to evolution (1a), concepts (1b), benefits (1c), business models (1d), rights and responsibilities (2a), legal and ethical factors (2b), dangers (2c) and societal issues (2d). These may be explained **in the context of the investigation** (and not exhaustively). For example, if the issue was privacy versus security, then the evolution of social media (1a) would be explained **as it relates to this issue**.

The completed production will be assessed against all of the Performance Criteria in the Outcomes of this Unit. Separate evidence of the use of a personal learning network (Outcome 3, Performance Criterion (c)) is **not** necessary since the production itself will be considered evidence of this. The Performance Criterion relating to promoting an enterprise (Outcome 3, Performance Criterion (d)) may be satisfied by the candidate promoting the completed production through social media.

The evidence for this Unit will comprise a social production and a completed checklist.

It is likely that authentication may be necessary when some of the production is done outside of a controlled environment. The *Guide to Assessment* provides advice on methods of authentication.

The *Guidelines on Approaches to Assessment* (see the Support Notes section of this specification) provide specific examples of instruments of assessment.



National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Social Media Literacy (SCQF level 6)

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 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

The general context for this Unit is to consider social media as a communication and information platform, no different, in essence, from previous communication or information systems. As such, it is part of a long evolutionary process that commenced with writing, included the printing press, books, newspapers, TV and e-mail, and currently includes instant messaging, social networks, blogs, wikis and virtual worlds. However, its ubiquity, interactivity, immediacy, ease of use, reach, richness and scale are unique, and make social media an important 21st Century cultural phenomenon.

Social media is widely used in contemporary society but not widely understood. Its use has been largely self-taught, through trial and error, resulting in, sometimes, chaotic or unsafe practices. This Unit will provide a theoretical basis to social media and foster good practice in its use.

Throughout this Unit it is vital to present the implications of social media in a balanced way. At the time of writing, there is inadequate research evidence to make firm conclusions about the positive or negative effects of social media on individuals, communities or societies. For example, the political impact of social media is disputed and it would be inappropriate to present its political impact as unequivocally good (or malign).

Outcome 1 and Outcome 2 present the pros and cons of social media. Outcome 3 provides an opportunity to practice the use of social media and develop a social presence. Outcome 3 also covers how to use social media safely, responsibly and ethically.

At this level, learners are presumed to have previous experience of social media. It is presumed that learners have already established a social presence. The basics of establishing that presence are not covered, nor the fundamentals of using common social media services (such as social networks and blogs). While a social presence is presumed, that presence may be problematic and a particular aim of this Unit is to cultivate a positive, but authentic, social presence.

A distinguishing feature of this Unit is the breadth of social media services that the learner should experience. While familiarity with the most common services is presumed, it is likely that most learners will have little experience of less well known social media tools such as virtual worlds.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Outcome 1: This Outcome covers the personal, community, commercial and societal uses of social media. It is likely that learners will have previous exposure to the use of social media but may have limited knowledge of the background to, and theory of, social media. Their previous use of social media may be informal and self-taught and related to their family and friends, so the wider applications of social media may not be known.

The historical development of social media is introduced as part of this Outcome (Performance Criterion (a)). This should be presented in an evolutionary context, spanning non-digital and digital media. However, the huge surge in social media use prompted by recent technological developments should be emphasised. This is linked to contemporary developments in social media (Performance Criterion (b)). It is important that the developments are technologically, socially and politically feasible. At the time of writing, there are a number of developments in this area such as the 'socialisation' of traditionally stand-alone apps (such as music apps that are having social features added, eg collaborative playlists); big data appears to be an inevitable development that will capitalise on the 'data exhaust' produced by social media.

The different types of social media should be known and their unique features understood (Performance Criterion (c)). While most learners will be familiar with the most common forms of social media (such as social networks and blogs), some will be less familiar with other forms (such as wikis) and many will be unfamiliar with complex 3D social environments (such as virtual worlds). The unique features of each must be explained so that learners appreciate that they are all not different forms of the same thing. So, for example, the unique (3D) social environment and immersion offered by virtual worlds, such as Second Life™, should be explained.

Performance Criterion (d) provides some theoretical underpinning to the use of social media (Outcome 3). At this level, it is expected that learners have a sophisticated understanding of the stated concepts (social presence, social capital, social production and social intelligence).

The benefits of social media (Performance Criterion (e)) must be explained in the context of the advantages it provides to individuals (such as instant communication with friends), groups (such as group pages on social networks), businesses (such as new forms of customer relationship), and societies (such as improved civil engagement by disadvantaged groups).

Many learners may be unfamiliar with the business models used by social media companies (Performance Criterion (f)), and may be confused by the huge market value (capitalisation) but (relatively) low profitability of many social media enterprises. The present and future value of data may have to be explained, together with current and future ways of monetising the information harvested by social media services. Alternative business models (to those currently employed) could be explored (such as users being paid for their personal data), as could 'open' social media services (instead of the proprietary services currently available).

Outcome 2: This Outcome relates to the implications of social media for individuals, businesses and society. It is, effectively, the potential disadvantages of social media and is a counter-balance to Outcome 1 (which covers the advantages of social media).

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Social Media Literacy (SCQF level 6)

Learners are required to know their personal rights and responsibilities (Performance Criterion (a)) and the constraints on businesses in their use of social media (Performance Criterion (b)). On a personal basis, learners should know the laws that protect and inhibit their use of social media. For example, at the time of writing, there are laws that protect individuals from sectarian abuse on social media and laws that inhibit individuals from sharing music or other protected media. The constraints on businesses include ethical considerations, which may inhibit companies from behaving in ways that are legal but unethical. For example, at the time of writing, it is legal for social media enterprises to sell-on user data to third parties (this will depend on the terms of service) when this could be construed as unethical behaviour. Performance Criterion (b) provides scope for a far-reaching discussion on the ethical standards that could be expected from social media enterprises.

Performance Criteria (a) and (b) are linked to Performance Criterion (c), which relates to the actual or potential dangers faced by individuals or businesses. Dangers facing individuals include privacy, cyber-bullying, sexual harassment, identity theft and fraud. Dangers facing businesses include PR issues and the transparency of customer feedback. Some of the dangers to individuals are counter-intuitive. For example, in spite of its sophisticated communication features, some studies have shown that the use of social media can lead to social isolation. The particular dangers posed by 'temporary social media' (such as SnapChat™) should be discussed.

Social media presents societal challenges (Performance Criterion (d)). There is an on-going tension between state security and personal privacy, and between the commercial uses of social media and personal privacy. Many governments are currently wrestling with the challenge of using social media to improve political engagement and reduce social isolation among specific demographics. Also at national level, there are issues around wealth sharing, eg some social media enterprises are beginning to harvest huge profits, with little benefit to the local economy.

Outcome 3: This Outcome relates to the use of social media for personal, communal and commercial purposes.

At this level, learners are required to refine their social media presence (Performance Criterion (a)). They will do this by ensuring that their contributions meet certain criteria (relating to quality, maturity and politeness among others). While learners cannot undo past behaviour, they can commence the process of beginning to establish a positive presence. It is important that learners appreciate what contributes towards a positive (or negative) social presence and apply that knowledge to their on-going social media activities. Any activity that harms, or potentially harms, their social presence would violate this criterion.

The knowledge acquired in Outcomes 1 and 2 should now be applied to a social production (Performance Criterion (b)). The production must be done in a group (of two or more learners). For example, a small group of learners could assemble a wiki on a specific subject. The production can be in a range of forms including text (such as a wiki), sound (such as a collaborative music production), video or a mixture of these. Whatever form it takes, the production must be non-trivial. So, for example, the creation of a collaborative music playlist (using a service such as Spotify™) would not be sufficiently complex. Similarly, the act of creating a discussion page on a social media platform (such as a social network) would not

be adequate, but a well-designed, properly procured, discussion page, containing high quality debate, and properly administered, would be appropriate.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Social Media Literacy (SCQF level 6)

Learners must use social media for a learning objective (Performance Criterion (c)). The learning objective must be complex. It would not be appropriate for learners to pose simple questions on social media sites. Appropriate learning objectives would include: acquiring a new practical skill (eg using social media to learn to play guitar — mastery is not expected); or gaining a new insight into a contemporary issue (beyond how it is reported in mainstream media). There is an opportunity to link this Performance Criterion with the previous one (relating to a social production) since the complex learning could be acquired *via* the social production.

Learners must use social media to promote an enterprise (Performance Criterion (d)). This relates to the ways in which businesses can take advantage of social media to promote their products and services. Many enterprises have recently established (or are currently in the process of establishing) a social media presence (such as Google Plus™ Communities or Facebook™ Pages). Learners should be exposed to the various ways that social media can be used to promote businesses.

Learners' use of social media must be safe, responsible and ethical (Performance Criterion (e)). Young learners, in particular, may need help with their use of social media, being occasionally guilty of over-sharing and engaging in potentially dangerous practices (such as sharing information with strangers). Mature learners may need to be encouraged to be less cautious about social media and learn to share more. Learners should be made aware of the distinction between safe use, responsible use and ethical use of social media. This Performance Criterion also relates to 'mindful' use of social media. Learners are expected to exhibit 'attention literacy' in their use of social media, consciously choosing when to, and when not to, use social media. Chaotic or disruptive use of social media would violate this Performance Criterion.

Controlling their use of social media (see above) is linked to the customisation of social media applications (Performance Criterion (f)). Most social media applications permit users to customise their notifications, ranging from constant real-time notifications to manual on-demand notifications. The notification setting is one of many that learners should become familiar with. The others include privacy settings and security settings. Some social media services (such as Facebook™) have sophisticated privacy and security settings that can be difficult for learners to understand. At this level, learners should know what these settings are and be able to fine-tune the settings to match specific requirements.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

A practical hands-on approach to learning should be adopted to engage learners and exemplify key concepts. However, all practical activities should be underpinned with appropriate knowledge before learners commence these activities.

It is recommended that learners gain hands-on experience of as many types of social media as possible. Where there are institutional based restrictions on access to social media, learners should be encouraged to gain experience of social media out with their formal learning environment while, at all times, adhering to appropriate safety and etiquette guidelines.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Social Media Literacy (SCQF level 6)

The actual distribution of time between Outcomes is at the discretion of the centre. However, one possible approach is to distribute the available time as follows:

- ◆ Outcome 1: 15 hours
- ◆ Outcome 2: 10 hours
- ◆ Outcome 3: 15 hours

Throughout this Unit, learner activities should relate to their personal preferences in order to engage and stimulate their interests. For example learners should use, and teaching be exemplified using, social media relating to: business activities which they are already engaged in or which present themselves in the context of their learning environment, eg a school or college charity fund raising event; issues relating to their political interests; the questions and issues that surround the impact of social media and personal privacy.

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 assessment for this Unit must involve an investigation into a contemporary issue relating to social media. This could take the form of a **project** requiring the candidate to investigate a specific issue. For example, candidates could investigate the tension between personal privacy and national security.

The candidate would work with one or more other candidates to carry out the investigation.

The results of the investigation must take the form of a **social production** such as a blog or a wiki. In the case of a blog, the candidates would research the topic, recording their activities on the blog. Each candidate would contribute posts to the blog. Using the above example, a candidate might post a message about a specific piece of legislation that seeks to protect online privacy; another post might relate to a story about a privacy breach.

The 'social production', in this example, would be the completed blog, which would comprise a large number of posts, contributed by all candidates over an extended period of time, that collectively satisfy the defined Performance Criteria (see Evidence Requirements for this Unit).

Another example of a social production is a wiki. Candidates could collaboratively construct a wiki on a specific topic (perhaps linked to another subject that they are studying), sharing the research and each contributing to the final version.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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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.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Social Media Literacy (SCQF Level 6)

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

This Unit provides opportunities to deliver some of the following Core Skills:

- ◆ *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* (SCQF level 6)
- ◆ *Communication* (SCQF level 6)
- ◆ *Working with Others* (SCQF level 6)

Several of the Core Skills in *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* can be addressed in this Unit. There are opportunities to select and start software, enter and edit data, locate and extract information, evaluate information, present information in an appropriate mode, and keep data secure.

Several of the Core Skills in *Communication* can be addressed in this Unit. There are opportunities to identify and summarise important ideas, key points and supporting detail in a complex piece of non-fiction writing; choose a format for the piece of writing; choose layout, structure, vocabulary and graphics; gather and select relevant information or ideas and present them with supporting detail in a logical and effective order; emphasise the main points; vary sentence structure, paragraphing and vocabulary; use spelling, grammar and punctuation consistently and accurately; vary language for effect; use a writing style that takes account of purpose and readership.

Some of the Core Skills in *Working with Others* can be addressed in this Unit. There are opportunities to organise a role to contribute effectively to the co-operative activity; negotiate working methods; promote co-operative working; modify behaviour to meet the needs of others; be motivated to progress to a common goal; seek and consider feedback on contribution.

In addition to Core Skills, this Unit provides opportunities to develop citizenship skills.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for learners

Unit title: Social Media Literacy (SCQF level 6)

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.

This Unit aims to develop a detailed understanding of the theory of social media and sophisticated skills in its use. It is presumed that you have previous knowledge and experience of social media. This Unit aims to deepen your knowledge and develop advanced skills in using and customising social media services. A particular aim of this Unit is to improve your social media presence.

A wide range of social media will be experienced, ranging from social networks (such as Facebook™ and Google Plus™) to virtual worlds (such as Second Life™). The unique features of each will be explained.

The Unit provides opportunities to discuss the personal, commercial and societal implications of social media. These include the current developments in social media such as big data, the applications of which pose significant questions for contemporary societies.

The Unit covers a wide range of knowledge and skills including:

- ◆ the evolution of social media
- ◆ current trends in social media
- ◆ types of social media such as social networks, blogs, wikis, virtual worlds and games
- ◆ social media concepts
- ◆ the business models of social media enterprises
- ◆ the benefits of social media to individuals, communities, businesses and societies
- ◆ the implications of social media for individuals, businesses and societies
- ◆ social media and ethics

The Unit involves a 'social production' that involves you, in collaboration with others, in producing new knowledge using social media. This will take the form of an investigation into a social media development. Your findings will be presented using social media, such as a blog or a wiki.

The key goal of this Unit is to develop advanced digital citizenship skills to enable you to fully participate in contemporary society.