



National Unit specification

General information

Unit title: Safe Practice and Wellbeing in Social Services
(SCQF level 6)

Unit code: HD6W 46

Superclass: PL

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Unit purpose

This Unit has been developed for learners who wish to pursue a career in social services, and is a mandatory Unit of the National Progression Award Social Services and Healthcare. It may also be undertaken as a stand-alone Unit.

The Unit is suitable for learners who have not previously studied aspects of social service or had practical experience in this sector, as well as those who have already gained some experience.

The purpose of this Unit is to give learners an introduction to health and safety in adult social services. Learners will investigate the risks associated with working in the sector and the health and safety responsibilities of employers and employees.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Investigate the risks associated with working in the social services sector.
- 2 Explain health and safety responsibilities in social services.
- 3 Explain the risk assessment process.

Credit points and level

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

National Unit specification: General information (cont)

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Recommended entry to the Unit

Entry is at the discretion of the centre. This Unit is suitable for learners who have not previously studied aspects of social services or had practical experience in this sector, as well as those who have already gained some experience. Learners may benefit from previous relevant learning such as National 5 or an equivalent level.

It is recognised that a range of formal and informal prior learning may be relevant, such as:

- ◆ opportunities to carry out research and develop a useful background knowledge base.
- ◆ opportunities to think about the needs of self and others.
- ◆ skills in review, analysis and evaluation.

This Unit is suitable for learners who wish to enter employment in social services settings. It is also suitable for learners undertaking a placement or volunteering in a social services setting.

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 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 is a mandatory Unit of the NPA Social Services and Healthcare.

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

Investigate the risks associated with working in the social services sector.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify the main risks to personal safety in the social services sector.
- (b) Explain the steps you can take to keep yourself physically safe in a social services setting.
- (c) Identify the main risks to safety of people who use services in the social services sector.
- (d) Explain the steps you can take to ensure safety of people who use services.
- (e) Identify the main risks to environmental safety in the social services sector.

Outcome 2

Explain health and safety responsibilities in social services.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Explain how the Duty of Care in social services contributes to safe practice.
- (b) Explain how the SSSC Codes of Practice contribute to safe practice in social services.
- (c) Identify the health and safety responsibilities of employees in social services.
- (d) Identify the health and safety responsibilities of employers in social services.

Outcome 3

Explain the risk assessment process.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Explain the purpose of risk assessment.
- (b) Outline the steps in the risk assessment process.

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.

Written and/or oral evidence is required for all Outcomes and will be gathered in open-book conditions at appropriate points throughout the Unit. Evidence can be generated using a range of techniques. An assessor observation report must be used to support performance evidence.

Outcome 1

An appropriate method of assessment for Outcome 1 may be gathering evidence in a learner folio.

Learners will be given a brief for their investigation informing them evidence must cover:

- ◆ **Two** risks to personal safety
- ◆ **Two** steps you can take to keep yourself physically safe in a social services setting
- ◆ **Two** risks to the safety of people who use services
- ◆ **Two** steps you can take to ensure the safety of people who use services
- ◆ **Two** risks to environmental safety

Outcome 2

An appropriate method of assessment for Outcome 2 may be the use of structured questions.

To achieve Outcome 2 learners must provide evidence to show that they can:

- ◆ explain **two** ways in which the Duty of Care in social services contributes to safe practice.
- ◆ explain **two** ways in which the SSSC Codes of Practice contribute to safe practice.
- ◆ identify **three** health and safety responsibilities of employees in the social services sector.
- ◆ identify **four** health and safety responsibilities of employers in the social services sector.

Outcome 3

An appropriate method of assessment for Outcome 3 may be the use of structured questions.

To achieve Outcome 3 learners must provide evidence which shows that they can:

- ◆ explain the purpose of risk assessment.
- ◆ identify **five** steps in the risk assessment process.



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 is a mandatory Unit of the NPA Social Services and Healthcare, but can also be taken as a free-standing Unit.

The Unit is suitable for learners who have not previously studied aspects of social services or had employment experience in this sector.

The purpose of this Unit is to give learners an introduction to health and safety in the social services sector. Learners will investigate the risks associated with working in the sector and the health and safety responsibilities of employers and employees.

Outcome 1

These Outcomes are intended to provide an introduction to health and safety risks faced by workers and users of service in the Social Services Sector.

The risks to personal safety include:

- ◆ aggression
- ◆ stress
- ◆ behaviour which poses a risk

The steps to ensure personal safety include:

- ◆ suitable clothing and footwear
- ◆ personal and professional boundaries
- ◆ adherence to policies and procedures
- ◆ being careful what is posted on social networks
- ◆ promotion of positive behaviours

The risks to environmental safety include:

- ◆ fire
- ◆ security
- ◆ waste disposal
- ◆ equipment failure

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Outcome 2

The Duty of Care helps ensure that workers in social services are working safely.

All workers and volunteers in social services owe a duty of care to service users, colleagues, employers, self and the public interest. This means:

- ◆ keeping knowledge and skills up to date
- ◆ providing a service of the highest quality
- ◆ ensuring the service is provided safely
- ◆ keeping accurate and up to date records
- ◆ protecting confidential information unless the wider duty of care or the public interest might justify disclosure

Teachers/lecturers should ensure that learners are informed that the Health and Safety at Work Act is the main piece of legislation covering health and safety in the workplace. Both employers and employees have responsibilities in relation to health and safety.

The SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers set out standards that workers and employers must meet to provide high quality and safe care by ensuring that no action or omission on their part harms the wellbeing of people who use services.

The responsibilities of employees in relation to health and safety include:

- ◆ co-operating with the employer, attending relevant training and following the company's health and safety policies
- ◆ taking care of own health and safety, and the safety of others
- ◆ reporting any injuries
- ◆ telling your employer if anything happens that might affect your ability to do the job

The responsibilities of employers in relation to health and safety include:

- ◆ making the workplace safe
- ◆ preventing risks to health
- ◆ ensuring machinery is safe to use and safe working practices are set up and followed
- ◆ ensuring materials are handled, stored and used safely
- ◆ telling employees about any potential hazards from the work they do, and give information, instructions, training and supervision as needed
- ◆ providing protective clothing or equipment free of charge if risks can't be removed or adequately controlled by any other means
- ◆ ensuring that the right warning signs are provided

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Outcome 3

The health and safety of employees and users of service is ensured by risk assessment. Learners should cover risk assessments and how these are carried out using current health and safety guidelines. They should know the difference between a hazard and a risk.

The five steps in a risk assessment are:

- ◆ identify the hazards
- ◆ decide who might be harmed and how
- ◆ evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
- ◆ record your findings and implement them
- ◆ review your assessment and update if necessary

All activities undertaken by and with users of service should be assessed for risk and users of service should be involved in the process and have their rights and opinions valued and respected. Risk assessment should empower the individual to make choices and have more control over their own lives.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

The Unit should be taught and assessed in the order presented. A variety of approaches to delivery could be used, including:

- ◆ case studies (verbal, written or audio visual)
- ◆ group or individual project work
- ◆ visual, power point, or other types of presentation
- ◆ practical activities with scenarios contextualised to social services settings
- ◆ group work and discussions
- ◆ visiting speakers

Outcome 1

Learners should be given a brief from the teacher/lecturer to facilitate their research to ensure they gather the correct information required. The information should be gathered from a variety of sources including:

- ◆ websites
- ◆ health promotion leaflets
- ◆ newspaper and magazine articles
- ◆ interviews with social services workers
- ◆ visiting speakers

It may be beneficial for learners to work in groups and share information although the final investigation must be the learner's own work. Learners should discuss and agree with the teacher/lecturer a suitable format for presenting the information.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Outcome 2

Teachers/lecturers should ensure that learners understand that the health and safety responsibilities of employers and employees in the social services sector are the same as in any other occupational area.

Outcome 3

As part of learning and teaching, a range of scenarios could be devised demonstrating the hazards and risks associated with working in the social services sector. The scenarios could be presented to learners in the form of case studies, written descriptions, multimedia presentations, illustrations, role play scenarios. Delivery of this Outcome should be based on practical scenarios wherever possible.

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.

Assessments must be carried out under supervision. Assessment methods should reflect delivery methods and could include:

- ◆ **Case studies** (electronic, verbal, written or audio visual, or online) with associated questioning of different types to draw out evidence of knowledge and understanding.
- ◆ **Group or individual projects** which may be presented on paper or electronically and are based on exploratory or investigative work. Where group projects are undertaken, individual learner's evidence will be tracked and recorded by assessors.
- ◆ **Use of online resources/case studies, blogs.**
- ◆ **Posters or leaflets** which may be presented on paper or electronically and have been designed by individuals or groups which illustrate aspects of relevant learning.
- ◆ **Presentations** prepared and delivered by individuals or groups of learners. Evidence may be generated using a range of techniques such as: e-portfolio, presentation notes, posters, power points, blogs. Performance evidence will be based on observation of each individual's contribution, and in the case of group work, their ability to work co-operatively. An assessor observation record must be used to support the performance evidence.
- ◆ **Practical activities, electronic practice simulation** with scenarios contextualised to social service settings.

Please note that it is not expected or anticipated that all the above methods be used, and this is not an exhaustive list. Other approaches to assessment may also be used.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Outcome 1

An appropriate method of assessment for this Outcome may be gathering evidence within a learner folio and must include all Evidence Requirements specified. The folio could be presented in a variety of formats eg a presentation, display, poster or leaflet. Learners should be encouraged to identify ways in which their folio or presentation of information reflects and promotes equality and diversity. This could include the use of signs, symbols, pictures, etc. The risks to personal, people who use services, and environmental safety are provided within the Evidence Requirements.

The folio should be discussed by the learner and the teacher/lecturer at an appropriate point to authenticate that it is the learner's own work. A record of this discussion must be retained.

Outcome 2

The evidence will be produced in supervised conditions by the learner, on their own, at an appropriate point during the Unit. Evidence could be gathered in response to a series of structured questions, which could include multiple-choice.

Outcome 3

The evidence will be produced in supervised conditions by the learner, on their own, at an appropriate point during the Unit. Evidence could be gathered in response to a series of structured questions, which could include multiple-choice.

The assessment methods discussed for all Outcomes are for guidance purposes, as other methods may prove better suited to learners and the circumstances of assessment. Integration of assessment across the Outcomes and Performance Criteria may be used where this is considered appropriate and to enable holistic assessment.

The issues associated with plagiarism should be discussed with learners. Some written work might be undertaken outside the centre but clear conditions will always be in place to ensure authenticity of evidence. Retention of preparatory or draft work, and any tracking records or e-mail exchanges between learners and teachers/lecturers can help support quality assurance and the internal and external verification processes.

There should be no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Delivery and assessment will be open to the use of alternative methods to facilitate the inclusion of all learners, and support them towards achievement of this Unit. The nature of learners' needs should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative assessment instruments. Examples could include extensions to the time line for assessments, and use of supportive technology.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Resources

Several relevant web based resources have been identified that may be useful for learners. These can be found on the SQA NPA Social Services and Healthcare web page.

Further resources and information for teachers, lecturers and learners can be accessed via SQA's Ushare site which provides links to open learning resources, including NQ Care.
<http://ushare.education/Ushare/Home>

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 and other essential skills

In this Unit learners will be involved in an investigation. There may be opportunities for learners to work with others which would enable them to develop effective communication and interpersonal skills.

Skill Development

The skills that learners will be expected to develop through this Unit are consistent with the Four Capacities outlined in the Curriculum for Excellence, which are to enable each young person to be: a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor. Specific skills associated with this Unit are listed below and should be built into the learning opportunities where possible.

- 1 Verbal, and written communication
- 2 Information and Communication Technology
- 3 Citizenship
- 4 Employability
- 5 Analysis and evaluation
- 6 Application of learning to practical situations

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for learners

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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 is a mandatory part of the National Progression Award Social Services and Healthcare. The Unit is suitable for you even if you have not previously studied aspects of social service or had practical experience in this sector and it could lead you towards employment in social services, or further study.

The purpose of this Unit is to give an introduction to health and safety in adult social services. You will investigate the risks associated with working in the sector and the health and safety responsibilities of employers and employees.

There are three learning Outcomes for this Unit

- 1 Investigate the risks associated with working in the social services sector.
- 2 Explain health and safety responsibilities in social services.
- 3 Explain the risk assessment process.

The assessments for this Unit may involve the gathering of evidence within a portfolio, presentations, practical activities and written and/or oral questions. The submission of these assessment materials will help improve your learning, inter-personal and communication skills.

The skills that you will develop through this Unit are consistent with the Four Capacities outlined in the Curriculum for Excellence, which are to enable each individual to be: a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor.