



National Unit Specification

General information

Unit title: Understanding Mental Health Issues (SCQF level 4)

Unit code: J1D1 44

Superclass: PH

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Version: 01

Unit purpose

This unit is a mandatory unit of the level 4 Mental Health and Wellbeing Course and is also available as a free-standing unit.

This unit is designed to help learners identify and understand what is meant by the term 'mental health and wellbeing' by identifying a range of mental health issues and behaviours associated with this, and how it is portrayed in the media. The unit also looks at legislation relevant to mental health. It identifies the role of the brain in relation to mental health and wellbeing.

Learners who study this unit will have their awareness of mental health and wellbeing raised and will have a clearer understanding of issues that can be associated with this.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Describe what is meant by the terms 'mental health' and 'wellbeing' for individuals and wider society.
- 2 Describe a range of mental health issues.
- 3 Identify the role of the brain in relation to mental health and wellbeing.

Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 4 (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 4)

National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

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Recommended entry to the unit

Entry to this unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by one or more of the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ National 3 English Course or relevant component units
- ◆ Literacy (National 3)

Relevant experience may also provide an appropriate basis for undertaking this unit.

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.

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

Describe what is meant by the terms 'mental health' and 'wellbeing' for individuals and wider society.

Performance criteria

- (a) Identify the needs and wants of individuals.
- (b) Identify terms in relation to mental health and wellbeing.
- (c) Identify how mental health and wellbeing is portrayed in the media.
- (d) Describe myths in relation to mental health issues.
- (e) Identify legislation and strategy in relation to mental health.

Outcome 2

Describe a range of mental health issues.

Performance criteria

- (a) Describe the continuum of mental health and wellbeing.
- (b) Identify common mental health issues.
- (c) Identify behaviours associated with mental health issues.

Outcome 3

Identify the role of the brain in relation to mental health and wellbeing.

Performance criteria

- (a) Identify the brain's response to stressful situations.
- (b) Identify the meaning of the term 'neurological pathway'.
- (c) Identify the role of the brain with respect to behaviour.
- (d) Identify causes of changes in the brain.
- (e) Identify how attachment influences mental health and wellbeing development.

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 generated by classwork, notes and research to meet all outcomes through a holistic approach.

Outcome 1

Learners must:

- ◆ identify **two** needs and **two** wants of individuals.
- ◆ identify **two** terms in relation to mental health and wellbeing, giving a basic definition of each.
- ◆ describe **one** myth and **one** fact in relation to mental health issues.
- ◆ identify **two** pieces of legislation or strategies relevant to mental health.

Outcome 2

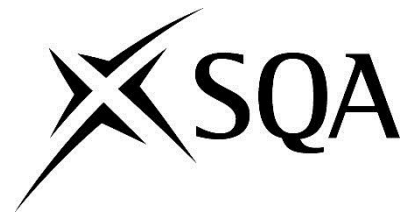
Learners must:

- ◆ include **one** example from **each** section of the mental health and wellbeing continuum in their description.
- ◆ identify **two** common mental health issues and the behaviours that the person may display.

Outcome 3

Learners must:

- ◆ identify **two** areas of the brain, and their function.
- ◆ identify **one** impact of the brain on behaviour in relation to mental illness.
- ◆ identify two causes of change in the brain — one internal and one external.
- ◆ identify **two** key features of attachment and how these could influence mental health and wellbeing development.



National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Understanding Mental Health Issues (SCQF level 4)

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

Outcome 1

There are many different myths about mental health concerns and they often contribute to the stigma that many people still face. It is so important that we challenge these myths so we can understand the real facts around a mental illness. Some myths that can be discussed include:

- ◆ Myth: Mental health concerns are very rare.
- ◆ Fact: Mental health concerns affect one in four people.

- ◆ Myth: People with mental illness are not able to work.
- ◆ Fact: We probably all work with someone experiencing a mental health concern.

- ◆ Myth: Young people just go through ups and downs as part of puberty, it's nothing.
- ◆ Fact: One in ten young people will experience a mental health concern.

- ◆ Myth: All mental health problems need to be referred to mental health services.
- ◆ Fact: Many mental health concerns can be treated through community based and/or complementary approaches.

- ◆ Myth: Medication is always a quick and effective treatment for mental health concerns.
- ◆ Fact: Medication is only one of a broad range of treatment options for mental health concerns.

Learners should identify how mental health is portrayed in the media. The way mental illness is portrayed and reported in the media is incredibly powerful in educating and influencing the public. It can also have a negative effect in reaffirming stigma and stereotyping associated with mental health.

The learner should identify both positive and negative terms that society uses to describe someone who has mental health issues, and to describe what is meant by mental health, wellbeing, physical health and mental illness.

Learners should identify and give a short explanation of current strategies and legislation in relation to mental health. Strategies and legislation that can be researched might include:

- ◆ Mental Health (Scotland) Act in 2015 amending the 2003 Act.
- ◆ Equality Act 2010
- ◆ Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007
- ◆ Mental Health Strategy 2017–2027

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Outcome 2

Learners should describe the mental health continuum, and show an understanding of:

- ◆ how someone can have a mental illness but have positive mental wellbeing.
- ◆ how someone with a mental illness can have poor mental wellbeing.
- ◆ how someone who has not been diagnosed with a mental illness can experience the same issues.

The mental health continuum:



The continuum shows that you can have:

- ◆ a diagnosed serious mental illness, but be mentally healthy.
- ◆ a diagnosed serious mental illness and be mentally unwell.
- ◆ not be diagnosed with a mental illness and be mentally healthy.
- ◆ not be diagnosed with a mental illness but be mentally unwell.

Learners should also understand that we can constantly move about the four quadrants.

Learners should identify a range of common mental health issues, in line with current research in Scotland, these could include:

- ◆ Anxiety including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- ◆ Depression
- ◆ Suicidal ideation

Learners should explore further the mental health issues and the behavioural problems associated with them, such as:

Depression: Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, loss of interest in daily activities. You don't care anymore about former hobbies, pastimes, social activities, or sex, appetite or weight changes, sleep changes, anger or irritability, loss of energy, self-loathing, reckless behaviour, concentration problems.

Anxiety: Some behavioural signs and symptoms of anxiety include: repetitive or compulsive behaviours, changes in personality, relationship problems, issues at the workplace and school, wanting to remain isolated, increased fear of situations or doing things.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Outcome 3

Learners are required to identify the functions of the brain, identifying the four main areas:

- ◆ the cerebrum which controls memory, personality and conscious thought
- ◆ the cerebellum which controls balance and co-ordination of movement
- ◆ the medulla which controls heart rate and breathing rate
- ◆ the hypothalamus which is the regulating centre for temperature and water balance

Learners should clearly define what neurological pathways are, and how they help a person function. Learners should also be able to identify which part of the brain is responsible for how we react and behave in certain situations and how the brain can adapt and respond to certain situations, for example the fight-or-flight response.

Learners should look at some key features of attachment, and identify the importance of attachment in early childhood, and how it can affect a person's mental health and wellbeing, if a person has limited attachment at childhood.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

It may be helpful to cover the content of this unit on an outcome by outcome basis, in the order presented in the unit. This would allow the learner to look at history and myths in relation to mental health and wellbeing, then gain an insight into current definitions related to mental health issues, and thereafter discuss the brain's function in relation to mental health and wellbeing. The person who is facilitating the delivery of this unit, should be knowledgeable about current mental health and wellbeing as they may need to be prepared to deal with any issues that may arise in relation to the learner's own mental health.

The content of the unit could be explored using classroom discussions, presentations, and the use of articles in the media, and contact with a visiting mental health practitioner to talk about mental health issues. The learners could take part in Scotland's Mental Health First Aid programme, which covers various topics within this unit. Websites such as NHS 24 would be useful for research purposes.

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.

Learners can build up a portfolio of evidence, covering all the performance criteria, within the unit, evidence can be generated in any form, including, presentations on mental health issues, research evidence, and pictures. Learners should use a variety of ways of gathering evidence for this unit.

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.

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

Opportunities for developing aspects of Core Skills should be incorporated where they arise naturally in the teaching and learning process. Teaching methods such as class discussion will develop communication skills. Learners may also have the opportunity to develop *ICT* and presentation skills through research and presentation. It may be possible to undertake group work as part of the research for this unit in which case learners could develop skills relating to *Working with Others*.

Consideration of their own 'digital footprint' may provide opportunity for development of employability and citizenship skills.

History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for learners

Unit title: Understanding Mental Health Issues (SCQF level 4)

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 designed to help you identify and understand what is meant by the term 'mental health and wellbeing', by identifying a range of mental health issues and behaviours associated with this, and how it is portrayed in the media.

The unit also looks at legislation in relation to mental health. It identifies the role of the brain in relation to mental health and wellbeing. You will gain an awareness of mental health and wellbeing and will have a clearer understanding of issues that can be associated with this. It prepares and supports you for further study at level 5 by providing underpinning knowledge for employment in this field. You will gather evidence throughout the unit and build up a portfolio of work that will be assessed.