

National Unit Specification

General information

Unit title: Sports Development: Meeting the Needs of the Community
(SCQF level 6)

Unit code: JL26 46

Superclass: MA

Publication date: July 2026

Source: Qualifications Scotland

Version: 01

Unit purpose

The purpose of this unit is to provide learners with a comprehensive knowledge of the concepts of sport and physical activity development and how sport and physical activity development can be utilised to address specific community requirements. This unit recognises that the term 'sports development' is a distinct area of study which includes sport and physical activity.

This unit is one of the mandatory units of the National Progression Award (NPA) in Sports Development, though it may also be delivered as a free-standing unit.

Throughout the unit, learners will identify existing sport and physical activity opportunities within two communities and develop a working knowledge of available facilities, resources, and provision structures. Learners will research the specific needs and preferences of one community and use these findings to inform the

creation of a sports or physical activity development project. This involves a detailed examination of the resources, enablers, and planning required to deliver an effective intervention.

This unit is suitable for a wide range of learners, for example:

- Learners with an interest in sport and physical activity.
- S5 and S6 learners who may have achieved national qualifications in Physical Education.
- Progression candidates (that is, Skills for Work, candidates who may have achieved other relevant NPA, Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 5, or comparable awards).
- Adults returning to education.

On completion of the unit learners may wish to consider further study within the fields of sports coaching and development or community education.

Outcomes

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

1. Explain the concept of sport and physical activity development.
2. Describe current provision for sport and physical activity available in two communities.
3. Investigate the needs and preferences of one community's sport and physical activity provision.
4. Produce a sports or physical activity development project, based on the needs and preferences of one community.

Credit points and level

2 National Unit credits at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 6: (12 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6).

Recommended entry to the unit

Entry for this unit would be at the discretion of the centre however learners would benefit from an interest in sport and may be keen to embark on a career in sports development. It is recommended that learners undertaking this unit possess communications skills to a level equivalent to at least SCQF level 5 and have attained one of the following, or equivalent:

- Sports Development: An Introduction at SCQF level 5
- NPA Sports Coaching SCQF level 5
- National Certificate (NC) Sport and Physical Activity SCQF level 5
- National 5 Physical Education
- Any sporting activities or sports coaching units at SCQF level 5
- Participate regularly in sport and physical activity, experience participating in and leading in physical education, physical activity, sport, and/or volunteering to support the development of sport or physical activity sessions.

This unit is suitable for those who have no previous qualifications or experience or learners who wish to develop their knowledge and skills in the field of sport and physical activity development.

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:

[Qualifications Scotland Assessment Arrangements](#)

National Unit Specification: Statement of standards

Unit title: Meeting the Needs of the Community (SCQF level 6)

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 Qualifications Scotland.

Outcome 1

Explain the concept of sport and physical activity development.

Performance criteria

- (a) Explain the concept of sport and physical activity development.
- (b) Describe aims and outcomes in relation to sport and physical activity development projects.
- (c) Describe the role of enablers in sport and physical activity development.
- (d) Describe sports development theory.
- (e) Explain sustainability in relation to sport and physical activity development.

Outcome 2

Describe current provision for sport and physical activity available in two communities.

Performance criteria

- (a) Describe two different communities.
- (b) Describe opportunities available within two different identified communities.
- (c) Describe facilities available within two different identified communities.
- (d) Describe key enablers within two different identified communities.
- (e) Describe resources available within two different identified communities.

Outcome 3

Investigate the needs and preferences of one community's sport and physical activity provision.

Performance criteria

- (a) Identify research methods that can be used to determine the sport and physical activity needs and preferences of one community.
- (b) Investigate the sport and physical activity needs and preferences of one community.
- (c) Analyse research data of the community investigated in PC (b).
- (d) Identify the needs and preferences of the community based on the data collected.

Outcome 4

Produce a sports or physical activity development project, based on the needs and preferences of one community.

Performance criteria

- (a) Produce a sports or physical activity development project plan to meet the needs of a targeted group.
- (b) Describe enablers who would support the sports or physical activity development project.
- (c) Describe the resources required to undertake the sports or physical activity development project.
- (d) Describe the sources of funding to undertake the sports or physical activity development project.
- (e) Describe compliance and sustainability considerations for the sports or physical activity development project.

Evidence requirements for this unit

Evidence is required to demonstrate that learners have achieved all outcomes and performance criteria.

Whilst the evidence requirements set out what the learner must do to meet the criteria of the unit it is recognised that evidence should be commensurate with the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) at level 6.

Outcome 1: Explain the concept of sport and physical activity development.

This outcome must be assessed in open-book conditions using written and or oral evidence.

For successful completion of this outcome learners must:

- (a) Explain the concept of sport and physical activity. The explanation must include a contemporary definition of sport and physical activity development, explaining the possible drivers, and the importance of sport and physical activity development in the community.
- (b) Describe a minimum of three aims and a minimum of three outcomes relating to sport and physical activity development within a community.
- (c) Describe a minimum of two different enablers from each of the 4Ps (Partners, People, Programme, Places) within sport and physical activity development projects.
- (d) Describe the sports development theory including meeting the community need and the four stages of the sports continuum.
- (e) Explain a minimum of two reasons for the importance of sustainability in sport and physical activity development.

Outcome 2: Describe current provision for sport and physical activity available in two communities.

This outcome must be assessed in open-book conditions using written and or oral evidence.

Learners must select two communities from different environments (see guidance for examples).

For successful completion of the unit the learner must:

- (a) Describe a minimum of two different communities.
- (b) Describe a minimum of two opportunities available within the two communities identified in PC (a).
- (c) Describe facilities available within the two communities identified in PC (a).
- (d) Describe a minimum of two enablers for each of the 4Ps (People, Places, Partners, Programmes) within the two communities identified based on their research.
- (e) Describe resources available within the two communities identified based on their research.

Outcome 3: Investigate the needs and preferences of one community's sport and physical activity provision.

This outcome must be assessed in open-book conditions using written and or oral evidence.

For successful completion of this outcome the learner must:

- (a) Identify two primary research methods and two secondary research sources that can be used to determine the needs and preferences of one community.
- (b) Investigate the needs and preferences of the identified community in PC (a) using a minimum of one primary research method and one secondary research method.
- (c) Analyse the data from both primary and secondary research methods utilised in PC (b).

- (d) Identify a minimum of two needs and two preferences of the identified community that will inform subsequent development projects.

Outcome 4: Produce a sports or physical activity development project, based on the needs and preferences of one community.

This outcome must be assessed in open-book conditions using written and or oral evidence.

Learners must utilise the research data and conclusions identified in outcome 3 to inform this outcome.

For successful completion of this outcome the learner must produce a project plan which:

- (a) Describes the proposed sports or physical activity development project, including a minimum of one aim and one objective for the project, and detailed timescales for the project. The description must also identify the targeted community.
- (b) Describes a minimum of one enabler from three of the 4Ps (Partners, Programmes, People, Places) and the role within the sports or physical activity development project.
- (c) Describes a minimum of four resources required for the sports or physical activity development project which must include any financial requirements.
- (d) Describes a minimum of two possible sources of funding available to support the sports or physical activity development project.
- (e) Describes compliance and sustainability considerations related to their sports or physical activity development project.

National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Meeting the Needs of the Community (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 80 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this unit

Sport and physical activity development is constantly evolving as targets from national, local, and governing body strategies are met. The Scottish Government's overarching strategy 'Sport for Life' underpins all sport and physical activity development and creates a framework for all agencies. The unit aims to align with the current practice within sport and physical activity and provide learners with the skills and experiences that reflect the nature of the sector.

The unit introduces learners to the key concepts, and practical applications of sport and physical activity development within a community context. It is designed to broaden knowledge of how sport and physical activity provision is structured, delivered, and evaluated across local and national communities, with reference to local/national priorities.

The content of the unit focuses on the exploration of sport and physical activity development as both a theoretical and practical discipline. Learners will examine core models and concepts such as the sports development continuum, meeting community need, and the role of enablers, including partners, people, places, and programmes. These concepts and frameworks provide the foundation for understanding how opportunities are created, sustained, and adapted to increase participation and address inequalities in access to sport and physical activity.

Within this context, learners will investigate the range of sport and physical activity opportunities available within selected communities. This includes analysing facilities, clubs, programmes, and delivery organisations, alongside the supporting resources and infrastructure required to sustain provision.

A key focus of the unit is the development of research skills and the application of these within a vocational context. Learners will explore a range of primary and secondary research methods used within sport and physical activity development, including surveys, interviews, and the use of existing datasets and reports. They will generate, collate, and analyse data relating to community needs and preferences, developing the ability to interpret findings and identify trends, gaps in provision, and barriers to participation.

The unit culminates in learners applying the knowledge and understanding they have developed to the creation of a sports or physical activity development project. This project-based approach reflects real-world practice within the sector and requires learners to integrate theoretical frameworks with practical planning. Learners will be expected to justify the need for the project based on research evidence, and outline key elements such as resources, partnerships, funding considerations, and sustainability.

At SCQF level 6, there is an expectation that learners will engage with the content in a more detailed and independent manner. The unit therefore emphasises the ability to explain concepts clearly, apply knowledge to familiar contexts, undertake and interpret research, and produce structured and informed responses. The overall learning experience is designed to reflect current practice within sport and physical activity development, supporting progression into further study, training, or employment within the sport, leisure, and community sectors. The unit provides the underpinning knowledge and skills to enable suitable progression onto SCQF level 7 study.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

This unit can be delivered as part of the National Progression Award: Sports Development, although it may be delivered as a stand-alone unit for learners who have experience of sport related industries and who wish to develop their knowledge of sports development theory, research skills including methods and data collection and the creation and presentation of a project.

Learners will be expected to demonstrate commitment, responsibility, and personal initiative throughout the unit. While some whole-class delivery may be used to introduce knowledge and skills particularly in outcome 1, a more independent and learner-centred approach is encouraged as the unit progresses. Opportunities for group work exist within outcomes 2, 3 and 4 however learners must evidence their role within this and meet the performance criteria as an individual.

This unit is designed to enable learners to enhance their knowledge of the development of sport and physical activity. The details of the assessment process should be issued at the start of the unit to provide context to the learner and support their journey through the unit.

The outcomes have been designed to allow sequential progression through the unit however; centres should consider a holistic approach to assessment where appropriate. Learners are also anticipated to operate with a level of independence particularly regarding outcomes 2, 3 and 4 which involve research, analysis and creation of project ideas. Assessors should be providing guidance and support for learners via scheduling, monitoring and quality assurance of work.

Outcome 1

This outcome should be used to develop the learner's underpinning knowledge and understanding of sports development including theory, contemporary definitions, concepts, enablers, aims, drivers, outcomes, and sustainability. Learners will examine a range of concepts regarding sport and physical activity development and look at the broad definition of this. It would be suggested that using sportscotland 'Sport for Life' (or subsequent update) is utilised as the defining resource for the delivery of content, however other United Kingdom (UK) Home Nation strategies may

provide additional context and content for delivery. Similarly, sportscotland's 'Meeting Community Need' (or subsequent updated model) and the sports development continuum and corresponding projects that sit within these frameworks can be utilised to provide context to the teaching of aims, outcomes, and the role of enablers. Furthermore, the Scottish Government 'Physical Activity for Health' framework (or subsequent update) is utilised as a resource to appropriately identify and define the diverse role of enablers including the 4Ps (Partners, People, Places, Programmes). The outcome should also explore the concept of sustainability and its impact on sport and physical activity development.

Teaching within this outcome should promote active learner engagement and participation. This may include the use of guest speakers and active field trips to support interaction and engagement with a variety of sport and physical activity development projects.

Outcome 2

This outcome should be used to develop the learner's awareness of sport and physical activity within two different communities. In the first instance learners should be encouraged to reflect on what they consider to be their own community as this can have several interpretations. This could include description of their geographical community, for example town, region, demographic community such as age, or environment, for example school/work/club (this list is meant to provide context and is not exhaustive).

Learners should actively research these two communities and identify opportunities that currently exist for sport or physical activity, facilities available, key enablers involved, and other resources available. By focussing first on the community learners are most familiar with, the skills developed can then be applied to a community they are perhaps unfamiliar with.

Like outcome 1, teaching within this outcome should promote active learner engagement and participation. This may include the use of guest speakers and active field trips to support interaction and engagement with a variety of sport or physical activity development projects. Learners should also be encouraged to reflect

on a few communities to develop a broader awareness of the wider landscape for sport and physical activity development.

However, learners should also be encouraged to undertake secondary research on communities by accessing club/community websites, community sports hubs, My Sport via sportscotland, local Sports Councils, Active Schools, Scottish Governing Bodies (SGB's), Leadership, Equality and Active Participation (LEAP) Sports, Scottish Disability Sport and local development plans (this list is not exhaustive) to supplement their review of their community.

Outcome 3

In this outcome learners will be expected to undertake research on the needs of one community. Learners should be introduced to different research methods including primary and secondary research and different techniques within both primary research techniques could include surveys/questionnaires, focus groups, and interviews, that could be targeted at both enablers and potentially participants. Secondary research could include accessing databases including the Scottish Household Survey results, reports from Active Schools/Active Campus, or research from Scottish Governing bodies however this list is not exhaustive, and learners should be encouraged to access a range of secondary sources.

Learners should also be able to reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of methods and techniques and recognise which would be most appropriate for the needs of their community. This could include through practical experimentation of different methods and techniques within the class environment prior to undertaking research.

It is also anticipated that learners cover components of Data Protection and understand the importance of storing data appropriately and thereafter utilising the data as identified prior to creating any primary research methods. Data Protection legislation content should be current and in line with UK Government guidelines.

If learners choose aligned communities, it would be appropriate to collaborate in the creation of the primary research tools. However, it would be anticipated that groups no larger than four would be involved and learners would need to identify their role in

the creation of the tool. For example, if a group were interviewing a Sports Development Officer it would be appropriate to share the creation of questions to be utilised and whilst collating the data share in the questioning of the interviewee. Similarly, a learner's role may be to record the responses and transcribe responses thereafter.

It may also be appropriate for learner groups to share primary research findings with other groups where there is alignment in the community chosen. However, learners would still be required to access secondary research from out with the class group.

Learners need to be able to utilise data appropriately and draw valid conclusions from the data produced including from both primary and secondary sources. In the instance of primary research, it is appropriate for learners to use software packages to collate the data and assist in the analysis of the data. However, learners must interpret the data themselves and draw their own conclusions based on the evidence provided.

Outcome 4

Outcome 4 should build on at least one of the community research conclusions developed by the individual within outcome 3. There should be close alignment between the project and the needs of the community, however the learner should have some creative freedom to create an innovative sports or physical activity development project. Learners should be encouraged to explore innovative solutions and projects used in other communities as examples of what could be conducted and reflect on how this could be adapted to meet the needs of their community.

Although project proposals must be completed individually, opportunities exist to work in groups on similar themes identified so long as there is alignment in the community identified. Learners should be encouraged to collaborate on project themes or concepts to help shape their projects and it is appropriate to work on larger aligned projects. For example, if a community need is identified around creating recreational sports opportunities, individual proposals could focus on areas such as different sports, facilities, volunteer development, or equipment provision, while still linking to the overall project aim. Where this approach is used, centres

must ensure that each project provides enough scope for every group member to meet the required evidence criteria.

Centres who are delivering the unit as part of NPA Sports Development may consider the opportunity to make the outcome 4 projects into a live project to provide holistic opportunities for learners to undertake enabler roles as part of the Undertaking Sports Development Roles unit. This may facilitate opportunities for multiple learners to become involved in a range of projects and experience a range of roles whilst supporting community need.

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.

Outcome 1

It is anticipated that this outcome is assessed via a written report including extended response questions. The report should include reference to specific examples of projects and learners should try to use an appropriate referencing style.

It may be appropriate to undertake oral questioning by the assessor to demonstrate the knowledge and understanding of the work produced by the learner and to ensure its authenticity.

Outcome 2

Learners can select one community which could be their own learning setting, and one from out with. The assessment for this outcome should be in the form of a research type report which clearly evidences the identified communities, opportunities within the communities, facilities available, resources, and key

enablers. Learners should be encouraged to be creative in the presentation of the report including the development of infographics. Additional software may be utilised to support the development of the infographic however learners would be expected to retain and evidence the research collated and any prompts used to support its creation.

Outcome 3

It is anticipated that outcome 3 is a portfolio of naturally occurring evidence of the learner undertaking the creation and application of the research methods and authenticating their role in this. For example, evidence of survey creation through hyperlinks to the survey which includes sample questions and details of how data would be used and stored would be appropriate. Thereafter collation of responses and the creation of an infographic with the key findings would provide an example of appropriate evidence of primary research. Similarly, a recording of an enabler interview which clearly identifies the learner asking questions and recording responses and thereafter identifying key findings would be appropriate evidence. These are just two examples of what could be undertaken and assessors should support learners to be creative in their approaches.

For evidence of secondary research learners could reference a document and highlight key findings and how they relate to the community they have identified. In this instance the learners may upload a research document which is annotated with comments from the learner that relate to their identified community.

Learner should produce evidence of the key conclusions from the research (both primary and secondary) they have utilised about the needs and preferences of their community. Learners should be encouraged to be creative about the medium utilised to present these conclusions but could include a written report, infographic, or short annotated video.

Outcome 4

Outcome 4 should be based on the needs of the community identified following research analysis in outcome 3. This outcome would lend itself to an individual student project proposal document which includes all evidence requirements.

However, the mode or medium of presentation should be at the discretion of the learner and could include a written proposal, for example report, poster/infographic, or via a presentation format, for example PowerPoint presentation, or video presentation. Learners should be encouraged to be creative with their approach. Evidence of an oral presentation (either copy of presentation or recording) should be retained by the centre.

Whilst project proposals must be completed individually, project ideas can form part of a larger 'group' project. For example, a community need identified could be the creation of recreational sports opportunities which may facilitate individual project proposals on areas such as different sports, facilities, volunteering, or equipment development which are aligned to a broader project proposal. If this approach is taken centres should ensure that projects are appropriate to enable all group members to meet the evidence requirements.

Learners are not required to implement the project proposal as part of the assessment.

Authentication of evidence:

All written work should contain a declaration of validity that the content is the learners own work unless cited otherwise. Submissions should be signed off and dated by the learner. Digital submissions should be encouraged through centres' learning management system (LMS) platforms using anti plagiarism software.

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 Qualifications Scotland's qualifications is available at [Qualifications Scotland e-Assessment](#).

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

There are opportunities to develop Core Skills naturally within this unit as follows:

- **Communication** can be developed through the production of written reports within outcomes 1, 2, and 3 and the formal presentation of project proposals for outcome 4.
- **Information and Communication Technology (ICT)** can be developed using a variety of software applications throughout the unit including for research and analysis of data within outcomes 2 and 3. Learners will also access and create information within outcomes 2 and 3.
- **Problem Solving** can be developed through the analysis of community provision gaps, data analysis of community needs within outcomes 2 and 3, and the creation of sustainable, compliant sport or physical activity development projects within outcome 4.
- **Numeracy** can be developed through the use of numerical data and graphical information within outcomes 2, 3 research and analysis.
- **Working with Others** can be developed through collaboration with community stakeholders, organisations, and or peers during the research within outcomes 2 and 3 and project creation component of the course within outcome 4.

This unit gives the learner opportunities to develop essential skills throughout the project such as employability and citizenship.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Credit transfer can be given where there is broad equivalence between the subject related content of the unit (or combination of units). This unit qualifies for credit transfer where a learner has completed the old unit as detailed in the table below. This may contribute to achievement of a group award, please refer to the relevant group award specification. Learners who are given credit transfer between the previous unit and new/revised unit must still satisfy all other conditions of Qualifications Scotland group award design principles, including the mandatory units and the correct number of credits at the correct SCQF level.

Old unit	New unit	Transfer detail
F7JM 12: Sports: Investigate Activity Development Opportunities in an Organisation	Sports Development: Meeting the Needs of the Community	Direct transfer

History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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Unit template: February 2025

General information for learners

Unit title: Sports Development: Meeting the Needs of the Community
(SCQF level 6)

This information 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 introduces you to the role that sport and physical activity development play in supporting and improving communities. You will learn how sport can be used to meet the needs of different groups of people and how opportunities are planned, delivered, and developed within a community.

As part of the unit, you will choose two communities to focus on and explore what sport and physical activity opportunities already exist, including the facilities, organisations, and resources that support participation in those communities. You will then carry out your own research to find out what people in one of these communities need and want, using methods such as surveys, interviews, or existing data. You will develop skills in collecting and analysing information so that you can identify gaps in current provision and understand the needs and preferences of the community regarding participation in sport or physical activity.

Using what you have learned, you will plan and design your own sports or physical activity development project that responds to the needs of the community. This will involve thinking about who your project is for, what resources are required, how it will be delivered, and how it could be funded and sustained.

Throughout the unit, you will build important Core and essential skills such as Communication, Problem Solving, Working with Others, and independent working. You will be assessed through coursework rather than exams, including reports, research evidence, and a final project proposal.

This unit is suitable if you are interested in sport, fitness, coaching, or community work, and it provides a strong foundation for further study.