

National Unit Specification: General Information

UNIT Residential Experience (Higher)

NUMBER D36M 12

COURSE

SUMMARY

Developing planning, organisational, investigative, interpersonal skills and self awareness through a residential experience.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Devise and organise a residential experience to meet personal development goals.
- 2 Undertake a programme of residential experience to a pre-planned specification.
- 3 Foster and maintain good working relationships in the analysis, planning and implementation of a residential experience in testing circumstances.
- 4 Analyse and evaluate the contribution of the knowledge and skills gained through a residential experience to own personal and social development.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Access to this unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, it would be beneficial if the candidate had achieved Residential Experience (Intermediate 2) or equivalent.

CREDIT VALUE

1 Credit.

CORE SKILLS

Information on the automatic certification of any core skills in this unit is published in *Automatic Certification of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 1999).

Administrative Information

Superclass: PM

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National unit specification: statement of standards

UNIT Residential Experience (Higher)

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 the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1

Devise and organise a residential experience to meet personal development goals.

Performance Criteria

- a) An initial self-assessment clearly identifies qualities and skills and realistic personal development goals are set.
- b) Information from a range of sources is used effectively to aid the organising of a residential experience.
- c) The residential experience selected is the most relevant to personal goals and the selection is justified taking into account problems and consequences associated with different choices.
- d) A detailed step-by-step plan for organising the residential experience, which allows for alternative approaches if necessary, is devised and implemented and includes a plan for conducting a work-based project during the residential experience.
- e) The planning tasks which the candidate is most suited to carry out are negotiated effectively, taking full account of own and others' strengths.
- f) Potential problems or limitations with the residential experience are identified accurately.
- g) Required preparations for implementing the residential experience are organised efficiently and effectively and are comprehensive in terms of gathering essential information.
- h) Resources required to plan and implement the residential experience are selected and obtained.
- i) Arrangements are confirmed clearly and accurately.

Note on range for the outcome

Essential information: dates; initial contact; location; travel arrangements.

Evidence Requirements

PC (a) An initial self assessment.

PCs (b)–(i) Plan for one residential experience plus supporting written and/or oral evidence The plan should include references to unfamiliar resources.

National unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Residential Experience (Higher)

OUTCOME 2

Undertake a programme of residential experience to a pre-planned specification.

Performance Criteria

- a) The programme for the residential experience is feasible in terms of timing, resources and personal development goals.
- b) The activities within the programme are planned and prioritised for maximum effectiveness.
- c) Regular review of the progress of the programme clearly shows flexibility of approach and problem solving skills.
- d) The project based on the residential experience is implemented effectively and according to plan.
- e) The conclusions of the project are communicated clearly and accurately.
- f) Mutually negotiated 'house rules' and appropriate health, safety and hygiene requirements are observed at all times.
- g) The programme is completed to the required specification.

Evidence Requirements

PC (a) A programme for one residential experience.

PCs (a)–(g) Performance evidence for one residential experience.

Written and/or oral evidence which supports the performance evidence and the project.

OUTCOME 3

Foster and maintain good working relationships in the analysis, planning and implementation of a residential experience in testing circumstances.

Performance Criteria

- a) Anticipated needs of peers and others are met with unsolicited advice and assistance.
- b) Advice is sought when required and evaluated effectively.
- c) Ideas, information and judgements and criticisms volunteered are relevant, accurate and sensible.
- d) Disagreement is dealt with sensitively and tactfully.
- e) Instructions and advice are responded to positively and constructively.
- f) Co-operative working relationships in unfamiliar situations are developed and initiated independently.
- g) A friendly, cooperative atmosphere is promoted through effective verbal and non-verbal behaviour.
- h) Appearance, manner and behaviour are appropriate to circumstances.
- i) Opinions of others during the residential experience are evaluated critically.
- j) The opportunity to assume a leadership role is negotiated effectively.

National unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Residential Experience (Higher)

Evidence Requirements

PCs (a)–(j) Performance evidence for one residential experience.

OUTCOME 4

Analyse and evaluate the contribution of the knowledge and skills gained through a residential experience to own personal and social development.

Performance Criteria

- a) The initial self assessment is analysed in terms of strengths and weaknesses and progress towards defined goals is evaluated objectively.
- b) Comments, feedback and advice from others, including the tutor's/trainer's report are evaluated and recognised objectively in conclusions.
- c) Analysis of the planning and implementation of the project based on the residential experience is detailed, clear and accurate.
- d) Conclusions relating to the residential experience, including feelings, reactions, and value of own contribution are expressed clearly, accurately and with insight.
- e) The original planning process for the residential experience is evaluated critically.
- f) Suggestions for improvements to the original planning process for the residential experience are justified.
- g) Performance in task management skills and interpersonal skills is evaluated and related to future personal, social and vocational goals.

Evidence Requirements

PC (a) An updated self assessment.

PCs (b)–(g) Written and/or oral evidence for one residential experience.

National unit specification: support notes

UNIT Residential Experience (Higher)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. None of the sections of the support notes is mandatory.

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT

Residential experience is essentially a group activity but it is also necessary to record the contribution and learning experienced by individuals.

The unit is concerned with the development of high level skills and qualities in planning, organising and dealing with people and situations in preparing for and undertaking a residential experience. The development of the following skills is important: a high degree of self-awareness in relation to examination of skills, abilities, interests and capabilities and the formulation of accurate personal development goals; investigation and examining different potential residential opportunities and evaluating their advantages and drawbacks; dealing with others in unfamiliar and testing circumstances; organising the routine activities required to ensure the smooth running of a residential experience and anticipating unexpected situations and reacting accordingly; assuming a leadership role in appropriate situations.

Corresponding to outcomes:

1. In this unit candidates are asked to construct an initial in-depth self assessment which identifies their skills, qualities and interests in relation to a residential experience and prioritises personal goals which could be attained as a result of a residential activity. Candidates are expected to define what is required in order to plan, organise and implement the residential experience and to devise a detailed plan to this end, including the identification of sources of planning information, the gathering of this information and an outline of the proposed project based on the residential experience (eg a study of the recreational facilities which will be available during the residential experience; identification and contact with possible outside speakers; making a video which serves as a record of the residential experience). Group sessions should then be held to negotiate an agreed plan, taking into account the consequences or problems associated with different choices. Each candidate should show evidence of major responsibility for planning and organising at least one aspect of the residential experience.

The role of the tutor/trainer in this unit is that of consultant as candidates are expected to demonstrate a high degree of autonomy in planning and undertaking activities. Candidates should ensure that they are fully aware of the constraints placed upon them by such factors as finance, distance, length of stay, suitability of location. The tutor/trainer should ensure that candidates have adequate provision made for their health, safety and welfare.

National unit specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Residential Experience (Higher)

- 2 Candidates should negotiate to produce a suitable programme for the residential experience which will enable them to achieve the identified personal goals. A detailed specification for the programme should be produced which is feasible in terms of timing and resources. Each candidate should demonstrate that the programme, as devised, matches his or her identified individual goals. Individuals or groups should carry out tasks allocated to them in the programme. The standard of performance and the timescale should be set through negotiation with group members. Skills should be pooled and opportunities taken for expertise to be shared with others through instruction, demonstration etc. The tutor/trainer input to this process should be minimal. Tutors/trainers should be aware of the need to look for evidence of flexibility of approach and problem solving. Appropriate guidelines on safety, insurance etc must be observed.

Normally at least 10 hours should be devoted to the project. The findings of the project may be presented in written and/or audio-visual form. The aims of the project should be clearly stated and the findings or results of the project should match these aims completely.

- 3 An extremely high degree of interpersonal skills is required in this unit. Candidates are required to initiate cooperative working relationships and to anticipate and respond to the needs of others and to show that they can respond in a sensitive and tactful way. The residential experience and the project based upon it will provide the opportunity to use interpersonal skills in a wide range of contexts; to seek and evaluate advice and to show evidence of volunteering ideas, information and judgements. It will also enable candidates to present themselves in a manner which they perceive to be appropriate in a variety of situations. Candidates should organise review sessions which allow plans to be reconsidered, events reviewed and feelings expressed. Working cooperatively is a key issue in this type of experience, as are the concomitant skills of dealing with conflict and responding to others according to the situation.
- 4 During and after the residential stay each candidate should review the experience in order to reassess personal strengths and weaknesses with an extremely high degree of insight and self-awareness. The initial self-assessment should be reconstructed to accommodate the learning gained and the candidate should identify progress towards developmental goals. The interview provides an opportunity for the candidate to evaluate and comment upon the report of the tutor/trainer and to conduct a detailed explanation of the project findings. Conclusions should also reflect the candidate's ability to recognise comments, feedback and advice as well as his or her own personal feelings. Candidates should review the value of the learning experience to their own personal and social development.

National unit specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Residential Experience (Higher)

GUIDANCE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACHES

The tutor's/trainer's role will be largely consultative and he or she will be a resource for planning, time management advice, planning of the project, information on health and safety, constraints within which the candidates must work etc. The tutor/trainer should also act as a general mentor and should ensure that the group is kept motivated.

It is expected that in the course of the unit each candidate will compile a folder of assessment evidence containing self-assessment sheets, a planning sheet for the residential experience, log sheets which record the activities undertaken by the candidates during the residential experience and a final review sheet with reflections on the residential experience and its relevance to personal and social development.

Corresponding to outcomes 1-4:

- 1 Induction to the unit including explanation of its key features and establishing working relationships.

Involving candidates in decision making is valuable for personal development as well as being a powerful motivating factor. In this unit the areas for negotiation are wide ranging and cover most of the stages of planning and undertaking the residential experience.

Individual and group exercises to enable candidates to assess their own capabilities, skills and interests in relation to a residential experience should be carried out. Personal development goals which can be met through a residential experience should be defined by individuals and plans should be made which allow progress towards these goals. These outline plans form the basis for group negotiation of a mutually agreed plan. The tutor/trainer may opt to act as arbitrator and may even insist on the right of veto in some situations.

Brainstorming may generate lists of elements which have to be taken into account when planning and organising a residential experience. Candidates should match their personal qualities and skills against what needs to be done and negotiate the allocation of tasks. The tutor/trainer should provide only very limited support, advising on financial record-keeping, costing, feasibility of plans etc.

Communication skills can be integrated into this phase of the unit through letter writing, telephoning, interviews and contacting and dealing with formal agencies. Equally as important are informal networks - making and using contacts, having the courage to ask, tapping possible sources of information such as friends and family. Informal group discussion may exploit these aspects.

National unit specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Residential Experience (Higher)

In addition to planning and completing tasks allocated by the group each candidate should plan a project related to the residential experience. The project would require the candidate to assume a leadership role.

Role play, observation, case studies and examples from previous residential experiences may be used to prepare candidates for the type of activities in which they may be involved and to help them decide on appropriate use of skills and behaviour in a variety of situations. When candidates have negotiated a role which requires them to lead and instruct a group they may require some training.

- 2 Candidates should record experiences as they occur in log sheets/log books and should be encouraged to monitor their own progress. Tutors/trainers should encourage discussion and recording of experiences when they occur. Tutors/trainers should be careful to highlight the requirements of Outcome 3 and to emphasise the need for candidates to record their experiences in these areas.
- 3 All learning activities should be designed to develop personal and social development skills. However candidates must have the opportunity to do things for themselves, to make choices and decisions, to ask for assistance from the tutor/trainer and others when this is felt to be necessary, to interact with others and to try out new activities and new roles in a climate which feels safe.

The residential experience will be a new environment for some candidates and preparations should recognise this so that candidates are thoroughly prepared in advance.

- 4 In an interview with each individual the tutor/trainer will discuss the activities undertaken throughout the unit and the feelings of the candidates towards these. The interviews should be of a sufficient length to allow a thorough investigation of the candidate's learning. Tutors/trainers should not prompt performance but should create an atmosphere and framework within which candidates are encouraged to speak openly about their progress towards the defined goals, their feelings and reactions in relation to the tasks undertaken and the contribution which the learning activities have made towards their own personal and social development.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT

During the unit the candidate is required to contribute to the planning and to complete a residential experience during which he or she should assemble a folder of assessment evidence in relation to the outcomes. Personal interviews are central to the assessment and will be used to explore the candidate's experiences in the residential experience in relation to the stated performance criteria.

National unit specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Residential Experience (Higher)

The tutor/trainer may conduct personal interviews with individual candidates or with groups, as appropriate. The interviews will take place on an on-going basis throughout the unit and should draw on relevant evidence from the candidate's assessment folder.

Centres may use the Instruments of Assessment which are considered by tutors/trainers to be the most appropriate. Examples of Instruments of Assessment which could be used are as follows:

Corresponding to outcomes 1-4:

- 1 Personal interview drawing on evidence from planning and self-assessment sheets.
- 2 Personal interview drawing on evidence from planning sheet, project report, log sheets and report from the tutor/trainer.
- 3 Personal interview drawing on evidence from log sheets and reports from the tutor/trainer.
- 4 Personal interview using self-assessment and review sheets.

SPECIAL NEEDS

This unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment and Certification Arrangements* (SQA, 1998).