

-SQA-SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

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NATIONAL CERTIFICATE MODULE DESCRIPTOR

-Module Number-	0081229	-Session-1988-89
-Superclass-	HC	

-Title-	JOB SEEKING SKILLS 2
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-DESCRIPTION-

Purpose This module is one of a range which provides breadth and balance in programmes of learning. The descriptor should read in conjunction with the Guidelines for Personal and Social Development modules.

Personal and Social Development modules are designed to develop:

- task management skills (planning, organising and decision making);
- interpersonal and group skills;
- self awareness, self reliance and self confidence;
- the ability to seek and use appropriate knowledge.

These aims have vocational as much as personal and social relevance.

The particular purpose of this module is to provide an opportunity for individuals to identify personal qualities, skills, abilities and potential in relation to job-seeking. It provides a framework within which individuals or groups can develop a range of job-seeking skills, undertake a job-search plan and develop self-presentation skills with a moderate degree of tutor support.

This module is suitable for inclusion in a wide range of programmes in preparing students for employment, for those who are not employed or for those changing employment. It provides certification for students undertaking a variety of Training Commission Courses and Department of Employment Initiatives.

This descriptor should be read in conjunction with 81228 Job Seeking 1 which sets less demanding targets for students.

Tutor denotes the individual leading the group in an education or training context.

Preferred
Entry

Any level 1 PSD module (see Guidelines for PSD Modules)
or
61002 Communication 2
or
Standard Grade in Social and Vocational Skills at 4

Learning
Outcomes

The student should:

1. plan a job search strategy with limited support.
2. undertake a range of job-seeking activities under limited supervision.
3. demonstrate skills of self-presentation in relation to job-seeking.
4. analyse and evaluate qualities and potential in relation to job-seeking.

Content/
Context

Corresponding to Learning Outcomes 1-4:-

The context within which job seeking skills can be developed are wide ranging. Individual/group needs will vary enormously and the form and structure of any programme of activities may differ according to varying circumstances. The type of programme which students are undertaking e.g. Restart, Job Club, or other Adult Training Strategy programmes may alter the emphasis of particular parts of the module, but tutors will find that it provides an appropriate and useful framework within which job seeking skills can be developed.

Tutors should note that at Level 2 the degree of support for students in devising and compiling a job search strategy would be limited and the extent of direction from the tutor would be restricted. The skills of planning, preparation and self-presentation in relation to job-seeking would be reflected in a higher level of student performance throughout the course of the module. In the practical exercises and simulated exercises, the type and format of activities would be more difficult and set more demanding targets and the required standard of

performance as reflected in the Performance Criteria is higher.

1. The student should, with limited tutor support, make an initial evaluation of his/her qualities and employment preferences. Students should be able to accurately match qualities and skills to appropriate employment preferences, and only require limited assistance from the tutor. From a variety of sources, identified mainly by the student, decisions on appropriate employment goals and necessary preparation activity for compiling a job search plan should be undertaken. Students should be able to identify eight sources which can provide information on job vacancies and the essential components of an effective job search plan. Limited tutor support should be provided for students at Level 2 to devise a job search log and job search plan.

The self assessment sheet and job search plan should be kept in a folder of assessment evidence, for later review and discussion by student and tutor.

Tutors should ensure that students are made aware of the importance of accurately recording job seeking activities in the job search log, and of adjusting the job-search plan, as appropriate during the course of the module. At Level 2, the job search plan is required to be more detailed than at Level 1. However, at this stage, the plan may only be in outline form and will develop in the course of the module.

2. Under limited supervision, the student should complete a range of practical exercises related to job seeking activities. Students should construct a detailed curriculum vitae, including a resume highlighting his/her positive features. Evidence should be provided that detailed application forms can be completed correctly and that a detailed job application letter and speculative letter are also successfully completed. Students should be able to analyse three job advertisements, and correctly identify employers' requirements in each. A complex telephone enquiry (simulated or real) should be successfully undertaken with limited support and evidence should be apparent that the student maintains his/her job search log in an accurate and methodical way. Any practical activities throughout the course of the module e.g. cold-calling, speculative approaches by letter or telephone, visits to a job centre etc. should be recorded in the job search log.

3. At Level 2 students should be able to demonstrate a range of self-presentation skills related to job seeking. Students should clearly demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the importance of self presentation skills, reflected in performance throughout the course of the module. Performance will be assessed in a simulated interview or role-play exercise if appropriate. Although self presentation skills are important in a range of other job seeking activities e.g. cold-calling, speculative approaches, etc., tutors should note that this aspect of student work will be principally assessed through simulated activities, where the student can be directly observed by the tutor. Students should provide clear evidence that they have made detailed preparations for a simulated interview and have participated with competence and commitment. The tutor should look for evidence of a range of interpersonal skills during the simulated interview and students should demonstrate skills in using the conventions of the interview to his/her advantage. Evidence that students can formulate their own responses to standard interview questions should also be noted.

Students should receive limited support from the tutor in relation to self presentation techniques before any assessment takes place, and should be given the opportunity to undertake another simulated interview if they fail to meet the Performance Criteria at Level 2.

Students should complete review sheets, analysing their own performance for later discussion with the tutor. The tutor should record student performance by means of notes or interview checklists.

4. Students should review their initial self evaluation, amending plan as appropriate to future job seeking activities. Students should demonstrate a high degree of insight into self evaluation, in relation to their performance in a simulated selection interview, in distinguishing both positive and negative features. In the same way, students should be able to analyse their interpersonal skills and review their overall performance throughout the course of the module. On the basis of such an analysis students should review their potential in relation to future job seeking.

At this stage, the items of the assessment folder as outlined in assessment procedures should be examined.

The tutor should conduct a personal interview using the folder of assessment evidence containing Self Assessment Sheet 1, Job Search Log, Practical Exercises in letter writing etc., Review Sheets on simulated Interview Performance, Self Assessment Sheet 2 Job Search Plan and Review Sheet.

Suggested Learning and Teaching Approaches

An important and key role of the tutor is to establish a framework within which students can develop confidence, effectively assess or re-assess skills and abilities, increase self-esteem, develop a positive approach to job seeking, and improve planning skills in relation to both short and long-term goals.

It is essential that an appropriate atmosphere is created at the start and initial sessions should focus on fostering confidence, encouraging positive thinking and establishing co-operative relationships. It is important that group cohesion is developed at an early stage and that the tutor is seen to be responsive to the needs of individuals in the group who may vary greatly in terms of background, experience and ability. The attitude of the tutor to the group is of critical importance and the tutors should have developed skills and attitudes of tutoring rather than teaching i.e. listening, counselling, attending etc.

Tutors should assist students to develop knowledge of training opportunities, the range of possible options related to temporary or part-time work, the variety of Training Commission provision for unemployed groups and also develop knowledge of local opportunities and the local labour market.

The following learning and teaching approaches are suggested for 81228 Job Seeking 1 and 81229 Job Seeking 2 and tutors should modify and adapt as appropriate.

A range of individual or group exercises can be used to develop self perception, identification of skills and abilities, planning skills and job seeking skills. Preliminary self assessment exercises at Level 1 would involve providing students with objective checklists or detailed prompt lists. Level 2 students would complete a series of blank sheets on which they would enter skills, abilities, qualities and aspirations. Tutors should encourage students to focus on strengths rather than weaknesses, and encourage positive thinking at an early stage. Tutors should encourage group discussion and positive reinforcement of perceived strengths.

Devising a Job-Search Log

Tutors should provide guidance to students on how to compile a log to record his/her activities in job seeking. Examples should be provided but the format(s) should be decided after discussion with the individual or group. Students should be encouraged to keep the log concise but practical and useful. Students should list all information essential for the easy maintenance of the log and ensure that it is in a form which permits easy reference and is useful without being too complex. Students should try out log formats using OHP transparency, blackboard or whiteboard. After discussion, when appropriate formats have been agreed by individuals or groups, pro-forma logs should be typed ready for use. If the log is to be an effective record of job seeking activities it should record the following; date, job title, company, person to contact, telephone no, address, action, follow-up.

Tutors should provide limited support in the student's construction of a realistic job search plan related to the student's abilities. This should be an ongoing activity throughout the course of the module.

Converting Weaknesses to Strengths

The tutor leads a brainstorming session focusing on what students consider are their perceived weaknesses in relation to job seeking. Students should note these, form small groups and attempt to identify ways in which all of the weaknesses highlighted can be converted into positive statements or alternatively be disguised effectively. Each group reports back to discuss, rejecting less plausible suggestions and focus on the more realistic methods of converting weaknesses into strengths. Students should then compile a leaflet aimed at giving hints to job seekers on this aspect of a positive approach to job seeking.

A range of teaching strategies can be used to prepare students for practical exercises in relation to job seeking. A wide range of material is available which include videos 'Game for a Job', 'Game for a Job 2: Looking and Choosing', 'Talking Heads', 'The Interview Game'.

At Level 2 teaching strategies should be aimed at developing skills, rather than improving basic skills. Tutors should focus on providing direction in relation to refining and reinforcing skills of self presentation etc.

Compiling Personal Information Sheets/Curriculum Vitae

Tutor restates the importance of a positive approach in relation to compiling a personal information chart/curriculum vitae. Students are encouraged to refer back to "converting weaknesses into strengths" exercise. A negative approach is unlikely to produce a positive CV. Tutors should issue worksheets designed to prompt students to think about their education, work experience and other relevant information, e.g. voluntary activities, interests, hobbies etc. Tutors should draw attention to the importance of only giving positive information, and should provide prompt lists of positive words and phrases. Discussion should focus on how best to circumvent negative aspects e.g. long periods of ill-health and unemployment, adverse reasons for leaving previous employment, criminal records etc. This is a group activity, but individual attention should be given to students who do not wish to discuss problems in an open forum.

Tutors assist students to collate information and provide guidance on presentation. Pro-forma personal information sheets/curriculum vitae can be used as a basis for discussion but the student should be encouraged to set his/her own CV out in a format which highlights what the student considers to be his/her strongest selling points. This may be his/her qualifications, work experience, positions of responsibility or, in the absence of any of these, aspects of his/her character, leisure activities, skills, interests or voluntary activities which are likely to impress a prospective employer.

Self Presentation Skills

Developing an awareness of the importance of self presentation is of key importance and tutors should emphasise that self presentation has a broader relevance than simply knowing how to present yourself at an interview. It is important to point out that this skill extends to application forms, letter writing, telephone technique, cold-calling etc.

Tutors should develop student skills of self presentation through techniques such as role-play, use of video etc. in preparation for simulated interviews.

Throughout the course of the module tutors should encourage self-review and self-evaluation as this is an important element of Learning Outcome 4. Individual or group discussion on performance during simulated interviews encourage this activity, but tutors should prompt students to focus on the positive aspects of performance before weaknesses are highlighted by the individuals themselves, or by peers. Positive reinforcement of strengths is useful in encouraging students to aim at improving performance and increasing activity in relation to job seeking.

Assessment
Procedures

Acceptable performance in the module is satisfactory achievement of all the Performance Criteria specified for each Learning Outcome.

The following abbreviations are used:

LO Learning Outcome
IA Instrument of Assessment
PC Performance Criteria

LO1-4

IA Practical Exercise and Personal Interviews

In the Practical Exercise the student is required to plan and undertake a series of practical and simulated activities in relation to job-seeking which he/she should assemble a folder of assessment evidence in relation to the Learning Outcomes as indicated below.

Personal interviews are central to the assessment and will be used to explore the students experience of job seeking activities (real or simulated/in relation to the stated Learning Outcomes and Performance Criteria).

Personal Interviews will be conducted by the tutor with individual students or groups as appropriate, at the discretion of the tutor, and may take place on an ongoing basis throughout the module or towards the end of the module. The interviews should focus on the Performance Criteria for each Learning Outcome and should draw on relevant assessment evidence from the student's folder.

LO1

Self Assessment Sheet/Job Search Plan

LO2

Practical Exercises/Job Search Log

LO3

Review Sheet on Simulated Interview Performance

LO4

Self Assessment Sheet 2 Review Sheet

- LO1 PLAN A JOB SEARCH STRATEGY WITH LIMITED SUPPORT
- PC The student:
- (a) makes an initial evaluation of his/her qualities, skills and employment preferences;
 - (b) accurately matches qualities and skills to chosen employment preferences;
 - (c) decides on appropriate employment goals based on information from a variety of sources;
 - (d) identifies eight sources providing information on job vacancies;
 - (e) identifies essential components of an effective job search plan;
 - (f) devises a job search log;
 - (g) compiles a job search plan.
- IA Personal Interview which focuses on the above Performance Criteria and draws on evidence from Self Assessment Sheet 1 and Job Search Plan.
- LO2 UNDERTAKE A RANGE OF JOB SEEKING ACTIVITIES UNDER LIMITED SUPERVISION
- PC The student:
- (a) constructs a detailed curriculum vitae including a resume highlighting positive features;
 - (b) completes a detailed application form correctly;
 - (c) completes a detailed job application letter and speculative letter correctly in all details;
 - (d) analyses three job advertisements, correctly identifying employers' requirements;
 - (e) completes a complex telephone enquiry which is correct in all details;
 - (f) maintains a job search log accurately and methodically.
- IA Personal Interview which focuses on the above Performance Criteria and draws on evidence from the Practical Exercises and Job Search Log.
- LO3 DEMONSTRATES SKILLS OF SELF-PRESENTATION IN RELATION TO JOB-SEEKING
- PC The student:
- (a) clearly demonstrates a knowledge and understanding of the importance of self-presentation skills in job seeking;
 - (b) makes detailed preparations for a simulated interview;

- (c) participates in a simulated interview with competence and commitment;
- (d) demonstrates skill in using the conventions of the interview to his/her advantage;
- (e) formulates his/her own responses to standard interview questions;
- (f) provides evidence of a range of self-presentation skills.

IA Personal Interview which focuses on the above Performance Criteria and draws on evidence from the Review Sheet and Simulated Interview Performance.

LO4

ANALYSE AND EVALUATE QUALITIES AND POTENTIAL IN RELATION TO JOB SEEKING

PC The student:

- (a) reviews his/her initial self-evaluation, amending plan as appropriate to future job seeking activities;
- (b) evaluates his/her performance in a simulated selection interview, distinguishing positive and negative features;
- (c) analyses his/her interpersonal skills distinguishing positive and negative features;
- (d) reviews his/her overall performance in relation to future job seeking activities;
- (e) reviews his/her potential in relation to future job seeking.

IA Personal Interview which focuses on the above Performance Criteria and draws on evidence from Self-Assessment Sheet 2 and Review Sheet.