# National Unit specification: general information

**Unit title:**    Creative Writing 2

**Unit code:**    D0YF 12

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| **Superclass:** | KC |
| **Publication date:** | June 2012 |
| **Source:** | Scottish Qualifications Authority |
| **Version:** | 02 |

## Summary

This Unit is designed to allow the candidate to explore the challenges and constraints of writing within chosen genres. It may be used to encourage self-expression and to develop an awareness of the creative possibilities of language. It may have application in such vocational areas as journalism, advertising, public relations and marketing and the cultural heritage industry. Alternatively, it may be used to encourage self-expression and to develop an awareness of the creative possibilities of language.

## Outcomes

1    Write to express feeling in a chosen genre.
2    Write a narrative in a chosen genre.
3    Write in verse or prose in response to a brief.

## Recommended entry

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, it would be beneficial if candidates have attained English at SCQF level 4, or equivalent qualifications or experience.

## Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 6: (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*)

*SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

# General information (cont)

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## Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

# 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

Write to express feeling in a chosen genre.

## Performance Criteria

(a) The genre is evident.
(b) Exploration of feeling is consistent and sustained.
(c) Language is effective in terms of the writer's purpose.
(d) Feeling is expressed implicitly as well as explicitly.
(e) Spelling, punctuation and syntax contribute to the expression of meaning.

# Outcome 2

Write a narrative in a chosen genre.

## Performance Criteria

(a) The genre is evident.
(b) The narrative has a clear structure.
(c) Language is effective in terms of the writer's purpose within the chosen genre.
(d) Narrative techniques chosen are consistent with the writer's purpose.
(e) Spelling, punctuation and syntax contribute to the expression of meaning.

# Outcome 3

Write in verse or prose in response to a brief.

## Performance Criteria

(a) The chosen genre is effective in terms of the brief.
(b) Structure is clear and effective in terms of the brief.
(c) Language is effective in terms of the brief.
(d) Techniques chosen are mainly consistent with the brief.
(e) Spelling, punctuation and syntax contribute to the expression of meaning.

# National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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## Evidence Requirements for this Unit

### Outcome 1

The candidate will produce one piece of creative writing in a genre of their own choice. Satisfactory performance will be achievement of all the Performance Criteria.

Performance Criteria Note: 'genre' is used to include literary genres such as the short story, the narrative poem, etc; genre is also used here to include journalistic writing.

### Outcome 2

The candidate will produce one piece of narrative writing in a genre of their own choice. Satisfactory performance will be achievement of all the Performance Criteria.

Performance Criteria Note: 'genre' is used to include literary genres such as the short story, the narrative poem, etc; genre is also used here to include journalistic writing.

### Outcome 3

The candidate will produce one piece of writing in a genre of their own choice. Satisfactory performance will be achievement of all the Performance Criteria.

Performance Criteria Note: 'genre' is used to include literary genres such as the short story, the narrative poem, etc; genre is also used here to include journalistic writing.

Performance Criteria Note: 'brief' refers to the requirements of the task. This brief should be negotiated between the tutor and the candidate.

In Performance Criterion (d), 'techniques' may, where appropriate, include graphical presentation, typography and layout.

# National Unit specification: support notes

## Unit title:    Creative Writing 2

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes 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

While all language purposes may be covered in this Unit, there will be particular focus on purposes related to the creative expression of feelings and ideas. Candidates will study and respond to the main concerns and processes of creative writing in a variety of texts, media and genres, including literary genres such as the narrative poem, as well as journalistic writing.

The Outcomes of this Unit have been designed to offer experience in writing formally complete pieces in genres chosen by the candidate, for example short stories, dramatic sketches or poems of various kinds.

As Outcome 3 requires the construction of a brief it is advised to first work on Outcomes 1 and 2 in order to establish strengths and weaknesses, before negotiating a specific task for Outcome 3.

An appropriate starting point might be to ask candidates to write about events in their own lives. Models of expressive writing in a variety of genres might also be provided by the tutor.

Obvious appropriate genres would include the short story and narrative poem where characterisation, setting, structure, dialogue, narrator's viewpoint and other narrative techniques may be discussed and practised.

In Outcome 2, candidates in vocational areas such as journalism or media studies may wish to convey a narrative account of a real or imaginary event as in a news article, and a non-fictional narrative would be acceptable. Candidates should be aware of the importance of selecting and ordering details in a news account and of the techniques of presentation, sentence structure and paragraphing adopted by different kinds of publications.

The summaries below give an indication of content and context in relation to different forms of creative writing. Candidates, teachers and lecturers should keep in mind that while the focus of study in this Unit will be on the creative expression of ideas and feelings, opportunities will arise for integrating related skills — in literary appreciation and textual analysis, for example — that will be developed in other Units.

Some distinctive characteristics of the four specified forms of creative writing are given below.

## National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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**Reflective Essay**

The reflective essay will:

♦ aim to interest or give pleasure, not, as a rule, information
♦ concern itself with, usually, a single idea, insight, experience
♦ be genuinely contemplative; its personal tone may be confidential, concerned, amused, indignant...
♦ communicate to the reader a clear sense of the writer's personality
♦ not merely offer the product of reflection, but engage the reader in the **process** of reflection.

Whatever the topic or the approach taken, the central feature of the reflective essay will be its **reflective** quality.

It follows that certain types of writing cannot be accepted as reflective essays, in particular:

♦ writing that is mainly transactional or argumentative in effect
♦ writing that is clearly in some other literary writing form, such as fiction
♦ writing that is merely an account of personal history.

**Prose Fiction**

In prose fiction**,** the range of subject matter and themes open to the writer is limitless, and there is great scope here for different forms of writing. Whatever the subject matter or form chosen, candidates should be advised that the writing of fiction requires skill and control of the following features:

♦ a plot or clear narrative framework, centred on identifiable characters and leading to some kind of denouement
♦ a structure which shapes content and theme
♦ dialogue, imagery and symbolism
♦ a stance or tone, which, while not intrusive or obvious, demonstrates the writer's command of the material.

Fiction is primarily a means of aesthetic expression. It should be noted, however, that it can serve many other functions and purposes, for example:

♦ to entertain, amuse
♦ to raise awareness of an issue
♦ to satirise
♦ to comment on the human condition.

Fiction writing allows candidates to choose from a wide variety of possible treatments, including the innovative and the experimental. The chosen treatment will depend to a large extent on the candidate's distinctive aim and literary grasp of theme and topic.

# National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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### Poetry

Of all genres, poetry allows the greatest freedom of subject matter and approach but also calls for the greatest discipline and control.

Writing poetry involves much more than chopping up prose into lines. Poetry should be recognisably different from prose, for example, in choice and arrangement of words, lines and verses/stanzas and deployment of sound and rhythm.

When writing poetry, candidates should bear in mind the following considerations:

♦ a poem should attempt to present its topic in a striking and original way
♦ whatever the range and variety of references and detail, the poem's theme should be focused and unified through its imagery and structural control
♦ a poem should contain a clear sense of the writer's imaginative/emotional/intellectual involvement with the topic
♦ a poem should aim to engage the reader's imaginative/emotional/intellectual responses as fully as possible
♦ none of a poem's individual parts should seem unnecessary
♦ a poem's overall effect will be aesthetically pleasing.

Careful thought should be given to the appropriateness of stance and tone in the treatment of the topic: this will determine the entire structure of the poem.

Poetry offers great variety of possibilities for layout and formal presentation.

### Drama

For writers of drama there is a wide range of choices in topic, approach and form. In creating a dramatic script, however, candidates should demonstrate their understanding of the nature and potential of the genre. In particular, they should be able to:

♦ create characters who are credible, interesting and capable of provoking an intellectual and/or emotional response in the reader
♦ make effective use of dialogue — and other modes of communication (including non-verbal modes such as gesture, body-language)
♦ establish a setting in which, and a situation out of which, the drama will arise
♦ develop and communicate a recognisable theme, a centre of interest that will give point to the script
♦ produce a particular effect, mood or atmosphere
♦ demonstrate familiarity with the requirements of script layout and presentation
♦ convince the reader of the potential of the script for dramatic realisation in an appropriate medium, ensuring always that stage directions, technical effects and other production notes are directly linked to the action.

A dramatic script may prove an effective vehicle for the treatment of a wide range of topics and approaches.

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## Guidance on learning and teaching approaches for this Unit

This Unit is largely concerned with self-expression and a candidate-centred approach is essential. Candidates must be encouraged to take initiative in the content of their work and in their choices of models.

Creative writing may derive from intensely personal experience and be produced in form, styles and manners unique to the individual. At the same time it has to be acknowledged that, in a vocational context, writing is often done in response to a brief. Tasks must therefore be the subject of careful negotiation between tutor and candidate to allow individuals to find and develop their own style of writing.

Candidates will be required to produce pieces of work which are complete, although a chapter of a novel or a scene from a play would meet this requirement.

Candidates should expect to redraft work as part of the creative process. Redrafting might usefully follow from peer group discussion.

Candidates should be introduced to a variety of literary, commercial and media genres. It is likely that in developing the candidate's ability in creative writing, the writer's workshop approach will be adopted.

While many writing tasks such as reports, business letters, etc require adherence to current conventions, creative writing need not be confined to these conventions but is likely to make imaginative use of language.

Candidates may enjoy and benefit from collaborative work, providing it is clear that individual contributions meet the criteria for assessment, eg jointly producing an anthology of creative writing with graphic art; jointly devising plot and characters for a murder mystery game. Planning performance events to showcase final Outcomes such as singing/musically accompanying song lyrics; acting, staging and recording short plays and reading/recording stories and poems could provide a focus, during writing, towards potential readers and audience.

Specific learning and teaching activities could include:

♦ tutorial groups
♦ creative writing workshops
♦ group discussion
♦ collaborative writing
♦ discussion of drafts
♦ use of stimuli and literary models
♦ workshops with visiting authors
♦ genre transformation
♦ identification and manipulation of point of view
♦ constructing and manipulating different forms
♦ group and personal reading of texts
♦ analysing literary devices and effects
♦ experimenting with different forms of writing.

# National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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## Guidance on approaches to assessment for this Unit

The length of a piece of writing will depend on the chosen form, but must be sufficient to permit demonstration of all Performance Criteria. In order to achieve the Unit Outcomes, all three pieces of writing must meet all of the Evidence Requirements and Performance Criteria.

In relation to Outcome 3, techniques could include graphical presentation, typography and layout, where appropriate.

The word 'brief' should be given the widest interpretation possible. For example, the candidate could be asked to create a piece of advertising copy or write a love poem; write an article for a teenage magazine or script the scene of a family conflict; produce a tourist leaflet or write a short story. In each case candidates should choose an appropriate genre for their writing. To some extent the nature of the brief will determine the genre chosen, but while candidates will use the genre's conventions in their writing, they should also be encouraged to adapt those conventions to suit their creative purposes, eg a love poem as a piece of advertising copy is not unknown.

The brief sets out the requirements of the task and should be negotiated between the tutor and the candidate.

As assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching process, candidates should undertake a number of activities for formative purposes.

It is recommended that each piece of writing is produced through a process including the stages of draft title and proposals, outline plan, first draft and final submission. Draft materials could be retained as evidence of authenticity.

Use of Reference Works, Dictionaries and the Internet
Candidates should be encouraged to make use of as wide a range of linguistic and other reference works as resources allow, for example, many websites provide excellent free writing tutorials, templates and exemplars for radio and television plays, etc. Candidates should be encouraged to share resources they discover with members of the class.

Use of ICT
Use of ICT, including use of spell-check software, may be used by candidates, especially, but not exclusively, where such facilities may be a creative tool.

## Opportunities for the use of 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 e-checklists. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Further advice is available in *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education (AA1641, March 2003), SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools (BD2625, June 2005)*.

## National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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## Opportunities for developing Core Skills

In this Unit candidates will develop skills of writing within chosen genres. They will develop an awareness of the creative possibilities of language.

Candidates will:

♦ Recognise different genres
♦ Use language effectively
♦ Use spelling, syntax and punctuation correctly
♦ Select and use appropriate narrative techniques
♦ Produce pieces of writing

This means that as candidates are doing this Unit they will be developing aspects of the Core Skills of *Communication* and *Problem Solving*.

In addition aspects of the following Core Skills could be developed where particular learning and teaching approaches are adopted:

*Working with Others* — through group discussion of creative writing.

*Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* — through use of computer applications such as word processing and page making to produce written work.

## Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website **www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements**

## History of changes to Unit

| Version | Description of change | Date |
|---------|----------------------|------|
| 02 | Updated to match the new shell and support notes amended. | 20/06/2012 |
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