

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Computer Applications (Access 3)

NUMBER DF33 09

CLUSTER Computing Studies (Access 3)

SUMMARY

This Unit is designed to develop knowledge and understanding of computer applications (word processing, spreadsheets, databases and graphics) and practical skills related to computer applications, through the use of contemporary hardware and software. This knowledge and understanding, and these practical skills, may then be applied by the candidate to solve practical problems related to computer systems. It is designed for candidates undertaking the Access 3 Computing Studies Cluster, but is also suitable for anyone wishing to develop basic competence in word processing, databases, spreadsheets and computer graphics.

OUTCOMES

1. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of basic facts and terminology relevant to the features, purposes and uses of four specified areas of computer applications.
2. Demonstrate basic practical skills in the context of computer applications, using contemporary hardware and software.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre. Candidates doing this Unit do not need any prior experience, knowledge or qualification in Computing Studies or IT.

Administrative Information

Superclass: CD

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT Computer Applications (Access 3)

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Access 3 (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 3*).

**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.*

CORE SKILLS

This Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skills for the Unit: Information Technology Access 3

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Computer Applications (Access 3)

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

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of basic facts and terminology relevant to the features, purposes and uses of four specified areas of computer applications.

Performance Criteria

- a) Basic computing terminology is used appropriately.
- b) Identification of uses types and features of applications software is correct.

Evidence Requirements

Written or oral evidence that the candidate can identify the features, purposes and uses of computer applications correctly. Evidence should be obtained using a knowledge test set at an appropriate point or points in the Unit, under examination conditions. The test(s), lasting no more than 45 minutes in total, must sample content in each of the following areas:

- ◆ word processing
- ◆ spreadsheets
- ◆ databases
- ◆ graphics packages

(The content statements are reproduced for convenience as a table in the support notes for this Unit).

The standard to be applied is illustrated in the National Assessment Bank items available for this Unit. If a centre wishes to design its own assessments for this Unit, they should be of a comparable standard.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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OUTCOME 2

Demonstrate basic practical skills in the context of four specified areas of computer applications, using contemporary hardware and software.

Performance Criteria

- a) Basic features of hardware are used with guidance.
- b) Basic features of software are used with guidance.
- c) Practical tasks are carried out in familiar contexts.

Evidence Requirements

Observation checklist showing that the candidate has demonstrated practical skills at an appropriate level in the following contexts:

- ◆ word processing
- ◆ spreadsheets
- ◆ databases
- ◆ graphics packages

Hard copy evidence should be provided for all four of these activities.

These practical skills may all be demonstrated in a single extended task, or a number of smaller tasks.

The practical skills should be demonstrated in the context defined in the content statements.

The candidate will be allowed access to books, notes, online help and teacher guidance while completing the task(s).

(The content statements are reproduced for convenience as a table in the support notes for this Unit.)

The standard to be applied is illustrated in the National Assessment Bank items available for this Unit. If a centre wishes to design its own assessments for this Unit, they should be of a comparable standard.

National Unit Specification: support notes

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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

The content for this Unit is detailed below (and also in the National Course Specifications: Course details.)

Content Statements: All packages
Demonstration of the following practical skills in an appropriate application package: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ start/open application package◆ create new document◆ open existing document◆ save document◆ close/quit/exit from package
Correct identification of the following terminology: new, open, save, close/quit/exit, print

Content Statements: Word processing
Demonstration of the following practical skills in an appropriate application package: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ edit text (insert, amend, delete)◆ format text<ul style="list-style-type: none">- font, size, style, colour- justify text (left, right, full, centre)◆ select character, word, block of text◆ add graphics (clip art, photo, other graphics)◆ undo◆ move, resize added object◆ use spellcheck
Correct identification of the following terminology: spell check, enter, delete, undo, font, size, bold, italic, underline, centre, clip art
Identification of personal uses for word processing
Identification of changes made to a document

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Content Statements: Spreadsheet
Demonstration of the following practical skills in an appropriate application package: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ enter numbers, text, formulas◆ delete cell contents◆ insert content in named cells◆ select cell, row, column, block, whole spreadsheet◆ change font, size, style, text colour◆ centre text◆ automatic addition of a set of numbers
Correct identification of the following terminology: cell, row, column, spreadsheet
Identification of uses for spreadsheets
Reading simple information from a simple spreadsheet

Content Statements: Database
Demonstration of the following practical skills in an appropriate application package: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ browse/navigate◆ add a record◆ enter data◆ delete a record◆ sort on single field◆ search on single field
Correct identification of the following terminology: database, search, sort, add, delete
Identification of personal uses for a database
Obtaining information from a database

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Content Statements: Graphics
Demonstration of the following practical skills in an appropriate application package: Use of basic tools and operations (including the following as available) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ change/manipulate an image◆ create a new image
Tools <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ rectangle◆ ellipse◆ line◆ freehand◆ text◆ library of standard shapes
Operations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ use rubber/delete◆ select object or block◆ set and change attributes (colour, pattern, thickness)◆ insert clip art or other image◆ move◆ resize

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

Candidates will require individual access to appropriate computer hardware and software throughout this Unit.

The two Outcomes should be delivered in an integrated way rather than sequentially. For Outcome 2, the practical activities should be taught and used to illustrate and exemplify the knowledge and understanding required for Outcome 1.

The amount of time spent on each area of content will vary depending on the teaching methodology used and the ability and prior experience of the candidates. However, the following times are suggested as a rough guide:

word processing	9 hours
spreadsheets	9 hours
databases	9 hours
graphics	9 hours

1½ hours should be set aside to:

- ◆ administer the Outcome 1 test
- ◆ gather evidence for Outcome 2

A further 2½ hours is allowed for remediation and re-assessment if required.

If the Unit is delivered as part of a Cluster, the Cluster documentation will provide further information on teaching and learning in a Cluster context, including the identification of a number of 'themes' to facilitate holistic learning across the Cluster.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

National Assessment Bank tests have been created specifically to assess Outcome 1 of the Unit. This assessment consists of a set of short answer tests, and must be conducted under examination conditions. In order to gain success in this Outcome, the candidate must achieve at least the cut-off score for the test. If a centre wishes to design its own assessment for this Unit, they should be of a comparable standard.

Outcome 2 requires the candidate to demonstrate practical skills while using contemporary hardware and software. These practical skills may be demonstrated as a single extended task or a number of relatively small tasks. The task(s) will normally be undertaken by the candidate as part of the teaching and learning activities of the Unit, rather than as separate formal assessment activities. The candidate will be allowed access to books, notes and teacher help while completing the task(s). The practical skills should be demonstrated in the context defined in the content statements.

To gain success in this Outcome, the candidate must demonstrate practical skills in the following contexts:

- ◆ word processing
- ◆ spreadsheets
- ◆ databases
- ◆ graphics

Hard copy evidence should be provided for all four activities. A single page of output from each type of software showing evidence of practical skill at the appropriate level is sufficient evidence.

A pro-forma observation checklist for Outcome 2 is provided in the National Assessment Bank materials.

All evidence must be retained by the centre. The assessment of this Unit is subject to moderation by SQA.

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 special alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, September, 2003).