

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT English: Group Discussion (Access 3)

NUMBER DF5W 09

COURSE

SUMMARY

The Unit English: Group Discussion focuses on talking and listening skills. Candidates will talk about issues, interests, ideas and texts in group discussion. A range of basic skills will be developed as candidates talk for transactional and expressive purposes and interact within a group.

This Unit is free-standing, and is additional to the component Units of the Access 3 Cluster in English.

The content of the Unit comprises:

- the basic skills required for individual talk, discussion and listening
- the basic skills required for reading and researching topics and texts
- the basic skills required for writing notes and plans
- knowledge of a range of relevant oral and aural skills.

OUTCOME

Participate in group discussion.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, the Unit is designed to build upon skills and experience gained in previous study of oral skills.

Administrative Information

Superclass: KB

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

CREDIT VALUE

0.5 Credit at Access 3 (3 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	None	
Core skills components for the Unit	Oral Communication	Acc 3

Information on the automatic certification of any core skills in this Unit is published in *Automatic Certification of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, publication code BA0906).

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 the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME

Participate in group discussion.

Performance criteria

Content of Contributions

Contributions show some awareness of purpose by including a few relevant points of content.

Expression

Contributions are mainly audible and show some awareness of appropriate verbal or non-verbal techniques.

Response to Other Points of View

Contributions show a few signs of taking account of what others say and show an awareness of the need to relate to other members of the group.

Note:

According to purpose, content is likely to be comment, ideas, responses, opinion, information, argument.

According to the nature of the discussion, response to others may include analysing, summarising, using, expanding, supporting, challenging, refuting their contributions; and showing an awareness of the need to relate to other members of the group may include acknowledging others' status (eg as chair), encouraging contributions, involving other group members, speaking readily but not excessively.

Evidence requirements

The candidate's participation must be essentially unassisted and take place under supervision in the presenting centre in a paired discussion or in a larger group.

The nature of the discussion must be such that all the criteria can be met, including those relating to taking account of what is said in the group or paired discussion.

The candidate must meet all the performance criteria in one discussion.

Some form of evidence (for example, checklist, recording) should be retained. A brief note of the context and sources of information should accompany the form of evidence.

N.B. At this level, some support through prompting is permissible, though such support should be limited.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT English: Group Discussion (Access 3)

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 20 hours.

While all language purposes may be covered in this Unit, there will be particular focus on purposes related to discussion of information, ideas and opinions.

The candidate will compose, deliver, contribute to, watch, listen, discuss and evaluate a selection from such texts as:

- individual speeches and presentations
- extracts from broadcast communications (news, documentary, debate, advertisement)
- group discussions
- those which form the focus of literary and language study in other Units.

The candidate will engage in a variety of language activities such as:

- planning and constructing simple oral communications for specified purposes and audiences
- rehearsing and delivering simple oral communications for specified purposes and audiences
- making a simple oral presentation about a text or an aspect of a text or topic
- contributing constructively and purposefully to group discussion of topics or texts
- watching and/or listening to a range of oral presentations, speeches, interviews and group discussions
- responding critically to a range of oral presentations (for example, speeches, interviews, group discussions, broadcasts).

Outcome

Participate in group discussion.

The candidate will be assessed in group discussion.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

The summary table gives an indication of content and context. There will be a need to set time aside to create the context and content which will provide the resources for candidates' ideas.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT English: Group Discussion (Access 3)

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

In order to develop skills in group discussion, candidates will need:

- an understanding of what makes for a good contribution
- an understanding of how to go about improving their skills
- an opportunity to reflect on and evaluate their progress
- feedback from the teacher/lecturer and/or other candidates.

Discussion is a collaborative activity in which the participants typically share a common intention to explore an issue or to consider a topic from their several stances. It is not a competitive activity nor is it mere random or desultory conversation. The discussion will have an agreed agenda or task set by the participants.

The participation required is not simply a passive activity; it requires active contribution with a view to influencing the eventual outcome of the discussion by various means, such as initiating ideas and supporting or challenging the contributions of others. The discussion must take place within the context of a pair or larger group.

The discussion may be in Scots.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

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

It should also be made clear that success in this outcome does not depend wholly on the candidate's knowledge: the Unit is concerned with oral skills.

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).