

**-SQA-SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
NATIONAL CERTIFICATE MODULE: UNIT SPECIFICATION**

GENERAL INFORMATION

-Module Number- 7110045 -Session- 1995-96

-Superclass- KB

-Title- COMMUNICATION 3

-DESCRIPTION-

GENERAL COMPETENCE FOR UNIT: Reading, writing, listening and talking; understanding and using a variety of well-structured forms of English.

OUTCOMES

1. demonstrate an understanding of accessible written communication;
2. produce well-structured written communication;
3. demonstrate an understanding of accessible spoken communication;
4. deliver and participate in sustained spoken communication.

CREDIT VALUE: 1 NC Credit

ACCESS STATEMENT: 7110035 Communication 2; or Standard Grade English at General Level; or an equivalent level of proficiency in communication.

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NATIONAL CERTIFICATE MODULE: UNIT SPECIFICATION

STATEMENT OF STANDARDS

UNIT NUMBER: 7110045

UNIT TITLE: COMMUNICATION 3

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

OUTCOME

- 1. DEMONSTRATE AN UNDERSTANDING OF ACCESSIBLE WRITTEN COMMUNICATION**

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- A correct identification of the purpose of a communication is made and justified in terms of its main conventions.
- An accurate account is given of significant information, ideas and supporting details.
- Acceptable inferences are drawn from a communication about the writer's stance.
- An evaluation is made of the effectiveness of a communication in meeting its purpose.

RANGE STATEMENT

Type of communication: written communication which combines factual content and analysis with a sustained point of view; using a paragraph structure which allows for exemplification and analysis; using some complex sentences; using some complex language.

Degree of accessibility: dealing with topics which the candidate may have reasonably encountered through a general awareness of current issues or appropriate vocational context(s).

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Written and/or spoken evidence that the candidate has achieved all of the performance criteria and each aspect of the range statement.

Oral or written evidence that on one occasion the candidate has read an appropriate text. All of the performance criteria must be met within this task.

OUTCOME

2. PRODUCE WELL-STRUCTURED WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) The conventions adopted for the communication are appropriate to the writer's purpose and audience and are used consistently and effectively.
- (b) All essential information with supporting detail is presented accurately and coherently.
- (c) The structure of the communication is appropriate to the writer's purpose and audience.
- (d) Spelling is mainly accurate and syntax and vocabulary show some variation suited to purpose and audience.

RANGE STATEMENT

Type of communication: writing which is mainly concerned with the presentation and analysis of information; writing which is mainly concerned with developing a point of view or feeling.

Appropriacy of structure: the writing incorporates an introduction and conclusion; paragraphing reflects a developing line of thought; there is a clear distinction between the presentation of information and its interpretation; sentences will show accurate handling of clauses; linking between sentences will be clear.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Written evidence which shows that the candidate has met all of the performance criteria and each aspect of the range statement.

The candidate must produce two pieces of writing which correspond to the specified types of communication and on each occasion the candidate must achieve all of the performance criteria.

OUTCOME

3. DEMONSTRATE AN UNDERSTANDING OF ACCESSIBLE SPOKEN COMMUNICATION

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) A correct identification of the purpose and audience of a communication is made and justified in terms of its main characteristics.
- (b) An accurate account is given of significant information, ideas and supporting detail.
- (c) Acceptable inferences are drawn from a communication about the stance(s) adopted by the speaker(s).

- (d) An evaluation is made of the effectiveness of a communication in meeting its purpose.

RANGE STATEMENT

Type of communication: spoken communication which combines factual content with analysis and a point of view; which employs a discernible structure appropriate to the exploration of a single issue from different angles; which uses some complex language; spoken communication with verbal cues that clearly identify the different aspects of content.

Accessibility: dealing with topics which the candidate may have encountered through a general awareness of current issues or appropriate vocational context(s).

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Written and/or spoken evidence that the candidate has achieved all of the performance criteria and each aspect of the range statement.

Oral or written evidence that the candidate has listened to an appropriate item of spoken communication. On each occasion the candidate must achieve all of the performance criteria.

OUTCOME

4. DELIVER AND PARTICIPATE IN SUSTAINED SPOKEN COMMUNICATION

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) The conventions adopted for the communication are appropriate to the speaker's purpose and audience and are used consistently and effectively.
- (b) All essential information with supporting detail is presented accurately and coherently.
- (c) The structure of the communication is appropriate to the speaker's purpose and audience.
- (d) Deliberate use is made of features of delivery which are mainly appropriate to the speaker's purpose and audience.
- (e) Responses to the reactions or contributions of the listener(s) or other speaker(s) are made so as to promote continuing interaction.

RANGE STATEMENT

Type of communication: a presentation; interaction with one or more persons.

Appropriacy of structure: for the presentation, the purpose and general outline are stated in the introduction; the information is presented in a logical sequence; the relationship between the various aspects of the presentation is stated clearly; the conclusion incorporates a brief resume; for the interactive task the candidate clearly builds on the contributions of others.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Written and/or taped evidence that the candidate has achieved all of the performance criteria and each aspect of the range statement.

The candidate must make a presentation and take part in sustained interaction with one or more persons. On each occasion the candidate must achieve all of the performance criteria.

ASSESSMENT RECORDS

In order to achieve this unit, candidates are required to present sufficient evidence that they have met all the performance criteria for each outcome within the range specified. Details of these requirements are given for each outcome. The assessment instruments used should follow the general guidance offered by the SQA assessment model and an integrative approach to assessment is encouraged. (See references at the end of support notes).

Accurate records should be made of assessment instruments used showing how evidence is generated for each outcome and giving marking schemes and/or checklists, etc. Records of candidates' achievements should be kept. These records will be available for external verification.

Although there is no mandatory requirement for centres to produce taped evidence for each candidate it would be helpful if such evidence were available in relation to a sample of candidates for each module.

SPECIAL NEEDS

In certain cases, modified outcomes and range statements can be proposed for certification. See references at end of Support Notes.

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NATIONAL CERTIFICATE MODULE: UNIT SPECIFICATION

SUPPORT NOTES

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| UNIT NUMBER | 7110045 |
| UNIT TITLE | COMMUNICATION 3 |

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

NOTIONAL DESIGN LENGTH: SQA allocates a notional design length to a unit on the basis of time estimated for achievement of the stated standards by a candidate whose starting point is as described in the access statement. The notional design length for this unit is 40 hours. The use of notional design length for programme design and timetabling is advisory only.

PURPOSE This unit is designed to develop English language skills at a level of communication which is the minimum required for intermediate posts in business, administration and technician occupations.

It is intended to articulate with SEB and other courses in English and to provide a post-compulsory alternative to Standard Grade. The module offers a national framework within which centres can devise programmes to develop skills with particular reference to vocational contexts.

SQA publishes summaries of NC units for easy reference, publicity purposes, centre handbooks, etc. The summary statement for this unit is as follows:

On completion of the unit you will be able to use and understand well-structured English in a variety of written and spoken forms.

CONTENT/CONTEXT Corresponding to Outcomes 1-4:

In a Communication unit, Content/Context is best defined as the situations, media and activities through which the skills related to the outcomes are practised and developed.

The Communication unit should provide opportunities

- to use language for a variety of purposes with a balance between productive and receptive uses appropriate to the individual needs of the candidate: eg conveying information; describing feelings; arguing and persuading; giving assistance; gathering information; organising thoughts; keeping a record; questioning; recognising the needs of others; reading and listening for pleasure.

- to use language in a range of settings, personal, social and vocational; eg keeping a diary; making plans in a group; listening to instructions.
- to read a variety of texts and graphical and pictorial representations which offer a range of reading demands: eg books; newspapers and magazines; pamphlets; notices; advertisements; instructions; graphs; diagrams; tables; charts; reports.
- to use a range of written, graphic and pictorial forms: eg notes; business letters; logs; posters; annotated sketches; graphs and diagrams; tables; reports; essays.
- to listen to a variety of messages which offer a range of listening demands: eg working in a group; listening to a speaker; listening to a radio or television broadcast.

(Items of oral communication which are suitable for summative assessment will deal with topics which are familiar to the candidate in terms of format, subject, vocabulary and purpose.)

- to use a range of forms of oral communication: eg communicating in a group; taking part in an interview; reporting.

APPROACHES TO GENERATING EVIDENCE Learning and teaching in Communication must be active and candidate-centred. Candidates should have the opportunity to plan and make decisions for themselves, to show initiative and independence, and to work co-operatively in groups. Induction to the activities should ensure that the candidates have a clear understanding of the nature and purpose of the work.

There should be a variety of activities undertaken, some individual, some in small groups and some with the whole class. These should provide opportunities to use language in real situations for real purposes and may be part of projects or practical exercises set within the Communication unit or drawn from activities in other vocational or social contexts.

Teaching groups should be small enough to allow for practical activities of this kind to be undertaken, and to allow candidates to be involved in activities which stretch their capabilities and offer both the chance of success and the risk of failure.

It is recommended that Communication should be timetabled in blocks of time which are long enough to allow candidates to engage in realistic combinations of communication skills both in and out of the centre.

The provision of opportunities for rewriting, reviewing, revising and evaluating by the candidate, by peers and by the tutor/trainer should be seen as an essential feature of all formative activities.

Units of work in Communication should be designed to engage candidates in the varied and purposeful use of inter-related skills of language. Units can be of variable length and may allow for several different learning and teaching approaches. It is recommended that these units should be negotiated and planned in such a way that the evidence required for assessment is generated in the course of ongoing work rather than as a separate and discrete exercise.

Group work is to be encouraged as it gives candidates practical experience of the co-operation necessary in real life, particularly in vocational situations. However, work completed by candidates as members of a group or in a group project should be carried out without the aid of other members of the group where this work is to be submitted as evidence for that candidate's summative assessment.

Combining Communication with Other Modules: The content of other modules a candidate is taking can be drawn on to provide activities which involve the practice and development of communication skills. Communication units may be devised which are cross-unit and aim to develop communication skills in contexts drawn from other units. It is also possible to combine a Communication unit with another unit to create an enhanced learning and teaching programme. For example, a Communication unit could be combined with a PSD unit to provide particular contexts for the development of communication skills. In such a case, adequate time must be allowed to ensure that all important aspects of both units can be covered.

Open Enrolment: A special arrangement for enrolment applies to the Communication series 2-4. NC6 completion arrangements have been revised. Details of this will be found in the Council's current *Guide to Procedures*.

N.B. The statement of satisfactory performance for each outcome indicates the minimum required for the purpose of summative assessment. However, the number of activities undertaken by the candidate should not be limited to those specified under "Instrument of Assessment".

Tutor/trainer Support: Tutors/trainers should remember to distinguish between their differing roles in formative and summative assessment. In the former, as much help and support as is required by the candidate may legitimately be given by the tutor/trainer. Tasks which are intended to provide evidence for summative assessment must be completed by the candidate unaided. However, it would be acceptable for the tutor/trainer to draw the candidate's attention to any general area of error in relation to particular performance criteria or to redirect him or her to the task in hand.

Use of Dictionaries: This should be encouraged at all stages. Communication modules enable an 'open-book' policy to be adopted by centres as far as use of resources by candidates is concerned.

Use of Computers: Word processors, including those which can make use of spelling check type software, may be used by candidates.

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES Centres should note the following before designing assessment instruments:

Purpose

To an extent the purpose of the Communication is defined by the Range Statement "Type of communication". Nevertheless texts may have more than one purpose. These may reasonably include exposition, persuasion, expressing feelings and reactions, sharing an experience, entertaining or evaluating.

Conventions

At this level candidates should not only identify purpose by referring to the main content, but also to likely audience and these aspects of the form which make clear what type of text it is. In practice candidates may reasonably be expected to mention aspects of layout, including any graphic material, key phrases that help to identify the purpose, and words that convey an appropriate formality. Literary conventions will not normally be covered.

Characteristics

Candidates should also be able to comment on the choice of vocabulary and register.

Features of Delivery

These should include articulation, tone, modulation, pace and non-verbal signals.

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:

Outcomes 1 and 3 Restricted Response questions. Restricted response questions should only be set which address significant aspects of a text. It follows from this that all questions should be answered correctly if the candidate is to demonstrate coverage of the performance criteria.

Outcomes 2 and 4 Assignment.

EXEMPLARS For Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 the Range Statement: "Type of communication" does not specify a particular form. This has been done intentionally to ensure that the centre can exercise maximum flexibility when devising appropriate summative assessments. Nevertheless, taken together the range statements make clear which types of communication would be acceptable, and which would not.

Outcome 1

Journalism

The most fertile source of suitable assessment material will be provided by the more substantial type of newspaper; many of the articles included in the "Scotsman", "The Herald", "Independent", etc will be pitched at the appropriate level. Similarly

most glossy magazines will contain articles which will combine factual content, analysis and a sustained point of view. It should be comparatively easy to choose material that relates thematically to the general area being studied.

Brochures/Prospectuses Brochures/Prospectuses which advertise services or facilities, and which target a generally sophisticated readership may also be suitable for summative purposes. Financial services, health care and the leisure industry tend to generate large quantities of material that would fall into this category.

Advertisements

Advertisements may be appropriate for Communication 3 but the range statement does assume a paragraph structure that allows for exemplification and analysis. This would tend to rule out most advertisements, although there is a tendency among some advertisers to include quite substantial amounts of narrative in their copy. Adverts aimed at recruiting frequently follow this pattern.

Non-fiction

It is quite acceptable to base summative assessments on extracts from longer prose works which are sufficiently self-contained.

Fiction:

The use of fiction for summative purposes is essentially problematic. The Range Statement for Outcome 1 "Type of communication" specifies "written communication which combines factual content and analysis with a sustained point of view". In practice it may be difficult to find passages of fiction that clearly meet this definition. There is also the requirement to justify the identified purpose in terms of the main conventions. As the advice under "Assessment Procedures" makes clear these would not normally include literary conventions. A further difficulty is presented, by the requirement of PC(c) to 'draw acceptable inferences from a communication about the writer's stance and justify them by reference to the text'; we cannot assume that the writer's point of view is necessarily apparent in the authorial voice, or in the thoughts and observations of fictional characters.

Outcome 2

The Range Statement 'Type of communication' has been written to give maximum flexibility to the candidate who should nevertheless produce two types of writing which are appreciably different in terms of purpose and form. There follow some of the more obvious types of writing which could fulfil the performance criteria; the list is illustrative, and is by no means definitive.

Report - Candidates at this level are frequently required to investigate a topic and then produce a report. At this level a report must not only be concerned with the presentation of information - but with its analysis. This intention should be clearly reflected in the structure of the final product. Although the term "report" can be used quite loosely it is important if the candidate is to fulfil PC(a) that the conventions are understood in advance. At this level these may reasonably include an introduction which states the purpose of the report and its intended audience; relevant background information and main section which presents facts, sources and analysis; a conclusion which summarises all that has gone before and includes recommendations concerning further action. The developing line of thought will be apparent from the sentences in each section concerned with the analysis of information, and also in the conclusion.

The Discursive Essay - Again attention should be given to the conventions that define a Discursive Essay. Without such clarification there is a danger that the candidate may produce no more than a formless piece of transactional writing whose purpose and audience remain unclear. At this level it would be reasonable to expect a clear statement of intent in the introduction, a structure that supports the identification of opposing viewpoints and at least one attempt at synthesis or refutation and a clear conclusion. Attention should be paid to the need to demonstrate a "developing line of thought".

The Personal/Reflective Essay - While it is acceptable to produce personal/reflective writing as summative evidence, similar strictures apply. Before embarking on such a piece the candidate should have a clear sense not only of the purpose and intended audience but an understanding of the principles of organisation that would be appropriate. It may be helpful to define the intended audience in theoretical terms, eg "what you are to write could reasonably appear as a feature in a serious newspaper which was publishing a series of personal accounts of bereavement or loss. You should describe an experience in such terms that others could learn and benefit from the telling". In this example the principles of organisation could either be the description of a chronological sequence of events and the associated emotional states, or the emphasis could be on charting the stages in personal growth/decline with circumstantial detail introduced as appropriate.

TV or Book Review - These types of writing could yield suitable evidence, but, as with the categories mentioned above, the candidate must have a clear idea and should perhaps state in writing, who the intended audience is, as this information may have a substantial bearing on the register of the piece.

It is unlikely that a straightforward Letter of Application, ie containing details of the post applied for, personal details, brief resume of experience and formal qualifications would meet the range statement. If however the candidate was required to write a letter to a potential employer indicating why he or she should be considered for the post, then there would perhaps be an opportunity not only to present information but to analyse it as well.

Letter to Newspaper/Journal - A letter to a newspaper or journal would have the advantage of requiring the candidate to observe quite precise conventions in terms of layout, register and style, while offering a format that could be reasonably expected to cover the range statement.

Outcome 3

A talk from a visiting speaker could cover the range statement but it would probably be necessary to brief the speaker to ensure that the topic is approached from different angles.

Video-taped television programmes can also yield summative evidence. The taped extract must however be chosen carefully. The focus for assessment can be on a single speaker or on a discussion as long as most of the contributions are pitched at an appropriate level.

While recognising that listening is rarely a discrete activity it is important that listening is primarily concerned with the spoken aspect of a video and not exclusively with messages covered by other aspects of the medium.

A complete television play or an episode of a soap would generally not be suitable for summative purposes because of the likely complexity of messages and levels of communication running concurrently.

Outcome 4

Because of the evidence requirement that all PCs must be met by the same task, it may be necessary to insist that having delivered a talk the speaker invites and responds appropriately to at least one question from the audience. Alternatively the interaction can be of a non-verbal nature. This will ensure coverage of PC(e).

When a candidate's contribution to a small group discussion is being used as the basis for assessment it will be necessary to ensure that the situation is likely to yield evidence for the performance criteria relating to structure. This can be done in one of two ways.

1. If the discussion is organised so that, for example, each contributor speaks to an agenda item then it should be possible for each member of the group to speak for long enough to demonstrate that "the structure of a communication is appropriate to the speaker's purpose and audience".
2. The second way is to consider the overall shape of the discussion. If the candidate being assessed intervenes at an appropriate point to modify or develop a point of view previously expressed, then it can be reasonably argued that he or she is contributing to the overall structure of the discussion and accordingly meeting the performance criteria.

The interview format which is frequently used to generate evidence at this level would clearly meet the definition of a form of interaction with one or more people.

PROGRESSION The Open Enrolment arrangement for the Communication series 2-4 has significant implications for progression in relation to teaching methods and assessment procedures. A candidate who has achieved all four outcomes for Communication 3 can receive recognition of performance at a higher level in up to three outcomes. This means that candidates can be working constantly towards higher levels of competence in a differentiated framework.

Because the range statement for Outcome 1 of both Communication 3 and 4 describes types of text which differ in terms of complexity, it will not usually be possible to recognise exceptionally good answers on a Communication 3 text as evidence of having achieved at the higher level. The same applies to Outcome 3.

However, because of similarity between the types of communication appropriate to Outcome 2 at both Communication 3 and 4, it is technically possible for a piece of written work produced by a candidate studying for Communication 3 to be acceptable as evidence of having achieved at the higher level.

For this to happen it is important that the assignment be explained in a precise but not self-limiting way, and that the candidate appreciates the different levels of performance required for Communication 3 and 4.

RECOGNITION Many SQA NC units are recognised for entry/recruitment purposes. For up-to-date information see the SQA guide 'Recognised and Recommended Groupings'.

REFERENCES

1. Guide to unit writing.
2. For a fuller discussion on assessment issues, please refer to SQA's Guide to Assessment.
3. Procedures for special needs statements are set out in SQA's guide 'Students with Special Needs'.
4. Information for centres on SQA's operating procedures is contained in SQA's Guide to Procedures.
5. For details of other SQA publications, please consult SQA's publications list.

A support pack for this unit is available from SQA. Please call our Sales and Despatch section on 0141-242 2168 to check availability and cost. Quote product code B068.

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