



## National Unit Specification: general information

**UNIT** Health Sector: Working Safely (Intermediate 1)

**CODE** F599 10

### SUMMARY

This Unit has been designed as a mandatory Unit of the Intermediate 1 Health Sector Course, but can also be taken as a freestanding Unit. It is suitable for candidates who have no previous experience of the health sector.

In this Unit candidates will carry out a risk assessment. Candidates will identify possible hazards and risks, including risks in relation to infection, in a setting within the health sector. Candidates will identify measures to minimise or eliminate these. This Unit will allow candidates to develop an awareness of their own responsibilities in maintaining a safe working environment.

Candidates will participate in a practical activity which will help develop knowledge and understanding of infection control measures.

The health sector includes the National Health Service (NHS) (primary and secondary care), independent healthcare, complementary therapies, the life sciences and retail pharmaceutical industries and the community and voluntary sector.

### OUTCOMES

- 1 Carry out a basic risk assessment to a given brief.
- 2 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the spread of infection and associated control measures in a health sector environment.

### RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre.

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#### Administrative Information

**Superclass:** PL

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## **National Unit Specification: general information (cont)**

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### **CREDIT VALUE**

0.5 credit at Intermediate 1 (3 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 4\*).

*\*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**

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills in this Unit. Opportunities for developing aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in *Guidance on Learning and Teaching Approaches* for this Unit.

## National Unit Specification: statement of standards

### UNIT Health Sector: Working Safely (Intermediate 1)

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

Carry out a basic risk assessment to a given brief.

##### Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify the main hazards present in a given setting within a health sector provision.
- (b) Identify the associated risks in the given setting.
- (c) Identify a way to minimise each associated risk in the given setting.

#### OUTCOME 2

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the spread of infection and associated control measures in a health sector environment.

##### Performance Criteria

- (d) Describe how infection can spread in a health sector environment.
- (e) Describe the personal responsibility of the individual in relation to preventing infection.
- (f) Identify a range of infection control measures in a health sector environment.
- (g) Demonstrate how the spread of infection can be prevented in a specified practical activity.

### EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Written and or/recorded oral and performance evidence is required to ensure that the candidate has achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

#### Outcome 1 — Written/Oral evidence

Evidence for Outcome 1 will be gathered in open-book conditions at appropriate points in the Unit. Candidates will be provided with a brief specifying a setting in a provision within which the risk assessment will be carried out. The specified setting must be one which has known potential hazards associated with infection.

Candidates are required to:

- ◆ identify **three** hazards, **one** of which must be in relation to infection, in a specified setting within a provision
- ◆ identify **one** risk associated with each hazard
- ◆ identify **one** way to minimise **each** identified risk

## National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

### UNIT Health Sector: Working Safely (Intermediate 1)

The provision will be selected from the range below:

- ◆ National Health Service — primary care
- ◆ National Health Service — secondary care
- ◆ independent healthcare
- ◆ complementary therapies
- ◆ life sciences industry
- ◆ retail pharmaceutical industry
- ◆ community and voluntary sector

The hazards in relation to infection will be selected from:

- ◆ contamination of surfaces and equipment
- ◆ clinical waste
- ◆ exposure to needles
- ◆ blood and body fluid spillages
- ◆ exposure to an infected person

The evidence for Outcome 1 must be presented in the form of a completed risk assessment. The risk assessment will be carried out in a real or simulated setting under supervision at an appropriate point in the Unit. Guidance on appropriate settings are provided in the support notes.

Candidates must organise and present findings in an appropriate format. A template for the risk assessment will be provided.

### Outcome 2 — Written/Oral and Performance Evidence

Written and/or oral evidence is required for Outcome 2 Performance Criteria (a), (b) and (c) and will be gathered under open-book, supervised conditions.

For Performance Criteria (a), (b) and (c), candidates are required to:

- ◆ describe **three** ways in which infection can spread in a health sector environment
- ◆ describe the personal responsibility of the individual in relation to preventing infection
- ◆ identify **one** measure to control infection for **each** way in which infection can spread

Further guidance on ways in which infection can spread and infection control measures are provided in the support notes.

Performance evidence is required for Performance Criterion (d). Candidates are required to:

- ◆ demonstrate how the spread of infection can be prevented in a specified practical activity

## **National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)**

### **UNIT**      Health Sector: Working Safely (Intermediate 1)

An assessor observation checklist must be used to support the performance evidence for Performance Criterion (d). Observation should be based on a practical activity.

Further guidance on appropriate practical activities can be found in the support notes.

The National Assessment Bank (NAB) pack provided for this Unit illustrates the standard that should be applied. It contains a candidate brief, a risk assessment template, a series of structured questions and an assessor observation checklist. If a centre wishes to design its own assessments for this Unit, they should be of a comparable standard.

## National Unit Specification: support notes

### UNIT Health Sector: Working Safely (Intermediate 1)

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.

#### GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

This Unit has been designed as a mandatory Unit of the Intermediate 1 Health Sector Course, but can also be taken as a freestanding Unit. It is suitable for candidates who have no previous experience of the health sector.

In this Unit candidates will carry out a risk assessment. Candidates will identify possible hazards and risks, including risks relation to infection, in a setting within the health sector. Candidates will identify measures to minimise or eliminate these. This Unit will allow candidates to develop an awareness of their own responsibilities in maintaining a safe working environment.

Candidates will participate in a practical activity which will help develop knowledge and understanding of infection control measures.

The health sector includes the National Health Service (NHS) (primary and secondary care), independent healthcare, complementary therapies, the life sciences and retail pharmaceutical industries and the community and voluntary sector.

#### Outcome 1

Candidates will learn about risk assessments and why and how these are carried out. Candidates should be made aware of the difference between a hazard and a risk:

- ◆ a hazard is something with the potential to cause harm
- ◆ a risk is the likelihood of harm from a hazard

A common hazard in the health sector is the spread of infection. For infections to occur the person must be at risk of infection. The very young, the very old and those whose immune systems are weakened through illness or the effects of drugs and certain treatments are particularly vulnerable to infection.

The nature of the work carried out in the health sector, often involving invasive procedures, leaves staff and patients exposed to the risk of infection. Settings where staff and patients could be exposed to the risk of infection include: dental surgeries, accident and emergency units, hospital wards, operating theatres and treatment rooms. Equipment used in these settings needs to be manufactured and packaged in clean rooms — ie rooms that are scrupulously clean and free from contamination.

Candidates will learn how to carry out a basic risk assessment in a health setting. The risk assessment could be in relation to:

- ◆ access for people with disabilities
- ◆ lone working

## National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

### UNIT Health Sector: Working Safely (Intermediate 1)

- ◆ work station
- ◆ infection control

Candidates will be given a brief specifying the type of provision, and the area within that provision, in which the risk assessment will be carried out. Candidates should use this information to identify potential hazards and risks including those in relation to the spread of infection. The range of hazards in relation to infection and types of provision is specified in the Evidence Requirements for Outcome 1.

#### Outcome 2

Candidates should be aware of the various ways that infection can be spread in a health sector environment. Infection by pathogenic microorganisms can cause a wide range of diseases. Infection control measures are designed to protect patients, visitors and workers in the health sector.

Ways in which infection can spread include:

- ◆ cross contamination (hands/clothes/equipment)
- ◆ droplet spread
- ◆ biomedical devices
- ◆ contamination of the environment

Infection control measures include:

- ◆ cleaning and disinfection of the environment
- ◆ cleanliness, decontamination and sterilisation of equipment
- ◆ hand hygiene
- ◆ management of spillages
- ◆ isolation of a patient in a single room
- ◆ management of sharps (needles, scalpels etc)

Candidates should be made aware of the personal responsibility of all workers in the health sector to comply with infection control measures which are designed to protect patients, staff and others in a health sector environment.

Examples of relevant practical activities which could be in a real or simulated environment could include:

- ◆ hand decontamination — six step handwashing technique
- ◆ decontamination of surfaces
- ◆ decontamination of equipment
- ◆ Putting on, removing and disposing of an item of Personal Protective Equipment — gloves, apron, gown, goggles, visor, mask
- ◆ dealing with a spillage of blood or body fluids

## **National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)**

### **UNIT      Health Sector: Working Safely (Intermediate 1)**

Centres must adhere to the relevant Health and Safety legislation when carrying out the practical activity. There are opportunities in this Outcome to build up an understanding of the workplace ethos and the behaviours and practices in relation to infection control required of employees in the health sector.

#### **Employability Skills**

In this Unit candidates will generate evidence for the following employability skills:

- ◆ understanding of roles and responsibilities in the workplace
- ◆ awareness of health and safety
- ◆ awareness of infection control procedures
- ◆ awareness of organisational standards for quality

Although not directly assessed in this Unit, there are opportunities to develop the following employability skills:

- ◆ positive attitude to learning and the workplace
- ◆ self respect and respect and consideration for others
- ◆ willingness to listen to others and respond constructively to feedback
- ◆ awareness of equality and diversity
- ◆ willingness to contribute to team work
- ◆ awareness of the importance of maintaining confidentiality
- ◆ reflecting on own abilities
- ◆ ability to follow instructions
- ◆ awareness of organisational standards for appearance and behaviour
- ◆ understanding of care values

These skills can be practised in real or simulated workplace environments and individual or group classroom activities.

### **GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT**

#### **Outcome 1**

As part of learning and teaching, a range of scenarios could be devised demonstrating hazards and risks within various types of provision in the health sector. Scenarios could focus on settings within the health sector such as dental surgeries, accident and emergency units, hospital wards, operating theatres and treatment rooms. The scenarios could be presented to candidates in the form of written descriptions, multimedia presentations, illustrations, computer simulations, real work environments and classroom mock ups. It is essential that candidates experience health and safety as an interactive process and delivery should be based on practical scenarios wherever possible.

Candidates could work in groups to identify hazards, and the associated risks, then decide how these risks could be minimised or prevented. This could be a useful way to prepare candidates for assessment.



## National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

### UNIT Health Sector: Working Safely (Intermediate 1)

#### Outcome 2

The main approach to teaching and learning in this Outcome should be experiential. This involves learning through practical experiences and activities. Teacher/lecturer exposition will be required to establish key points of knowledge and understanding.

Workplace visits could provide an ideal opportunity to observe infection control measures being carried out in practice. An ultra violet light box could be used in the teaching of handwashing techniques.

The activities should be undertaken in a real or simulated work environment. The teacher/lecturer should provide a demonstration on the safe and correct method prior to candidates undertaking any practical activities. Delivery of this Unit could incorporate a variety of teaching and learning methods including:

- ◆ teacher/lecturer presentations and demonstrations
- ◆ group work and discussions
- ◆ handouts
- ◆ visiting speakers
- ◆ workplace visits
- ◆ practical activities
- ◆ individual and group research
- ◆ internet searches

#### OPPORTUNITIES FOR CORE SKILL DEVELOPMENT

In this Unit candidates will be involved in carrying out a risk assessment. This may allow them to develop the three component activities of *Problem Solving* — Critical Thinking, Planning and Organising and Reviewing and Evaluating, when preparing, planning, carrying out and reviewing the risk assessment. If the candidate uses a computer while undertaking any part of this Unit, they will have the opportunity to develop *Information Technology* skills.

#### GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

The Evidence Requirements are fully expressed in the mandatory section of this Unit Specification.

#### Outcome 1

Candidates will be supplied with a brief. The brief will specify the type of provision, and the area within that provision, within which the risk assessment will be carried out. The specified setting **must** include hazards associated with infection. Candidates are required to:

- ◆ identify **three** hazards, **one** of which must be in relation to infection, in a setting within a provision
- ◆ identify **one** risk associated with each hazard
- ◆ identify **one** way to minimise **each** identified risk

## National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

### UNIT Health Sector: Working Safely (Intermediate 1)

Candidates should be supplied with an appropriate template to record the risk assessment. The risk assessment will be carried out in a real or simulated setting under supervision at an appropriate point in the Unit.

#### Outcome 2

It would be appropriate for Outcome 2 Performance Criteria (a), (b) and (c) to be assessed before Performance Criterion (d). The evidence for Performance Criteria (a), (b) and (c), will be generated under open-book, supervised conditions. Evidence could be gathered in response to a series of structured questions within a time limit of one hour. Candidates are required to:

- ◆ describe **three** ways in which infection can spread in a health sector environment
- ◆ describe the personal responsibility of the individual in relation to preventing infection
- ◆ identify **one** measure to control infection for **each** way in which infection can spread

For Outcome 2 Performance Criterion (d), candidates should be given the opportunity to practise the skills before being assessed. An observation checklist should be used when gathering evidence. Performance evidence for this assessment should be generated by participation in a practical activity under supervision either in a real or simulated health sector environment. Assessor observation checklists of performance evidence must be retained.

The National Assessment Bank (NAB) pack provided for this Unit illustrates the standard that should be applied. It contains a candidate brief, a risk assessment template, a series of structured questions and an assessor observation checklist. If a centre wishes to design its own assessments for this Unit, they should be of a comparable standard.

#### 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 communications 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)*.

#### CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES AND/OR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)).