



## National Unit Specification: general information

**UNIT** Working with Children and Young People with Autism  
(SCQF level 6)

**CODE** F7J1 12

### SUMMARY

This Unit enables candidates to explore the nature of autism and the different ways that particular forms of autism affect children and young people and their parents. It also provides the opportunity to investigate how carers and others can work with children and young people with autism by looking at current work practices and examining alternative strategies and approaches.

The Unit is designed to provide knowledge and understanding of the 'Autism Spectrum Disorder' and to allow the candidates to refer to different issues, which may arise while following a career working with people with autism. This Unit is a specialist optional Unit in the Professional Development Award in Education Support Assistance (SCQF level 6).

This Unit is suitable for candidates who wish to develop knowledge, understanding and skills needed to work with children and young people with autism.

### OUTCOMES

- 1 Explain the nature of autism and the autism spectrum.
- 2 Investigate the triad of impairments.
- 3 Investigate the possible effects on the family or informal support network of children or young people with autism.
- 4 Investigate ways to meet the needs of children or young people with autism within the learning environment.

### RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre.

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#### Administrative Information

**Superclass:** PN

**Publication date:** August 2009

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 01

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

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### **CREDIT VALUE**

1 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.*

### **CORE SKILLS**

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills in this Unit. The Unit provides opportunities for candidates to develop aspects of the following Core Skills:

- ◆ Communication (SCQF level 5)
- ◆ Working with Others (SCQF level 5)

These opportunities are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit Specification.

## **National Unit Specification: statement of standards**

### **UNIT**      Working with Children and Young People with Autism (SCQF level 6)

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**

Explain the nature of autism and the autism spectrum.

##### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Describe the nature of autism and the autism spectrum in relation to current theories.
- (b) Describe the causes of autism and other conditions associated with autism in relation to current findings in the field.
- (c) Identify and explain the triad of impairments.

#### **OUTCOME 2**

Investigate the triad of impairments.

##### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Explain ways to meet the needs of children or young people with impairment of social interaction.
- (b) Explain ways to meet the needs of children or young people with impairment of communication.
- (c) Explain ways to meet the needs of children or young people with impairment of thought and imagination.

#### **OUTCOME 3**

Investigate the possible effects on the family or informal support network of children or young people with autism.

##### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Describe possible feelings and relationship issues within the family.
- (b) Describe different stressors which might occur in the family life.
- (c) Describe choices the family has to make.

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

### **UNIT            Working with Children and Young People with Autism (SCQF level 6)**

#### **OUTCOME 4**

Investigate ways to meet the needs of children or young people with autism within the learning environment.

#### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Identify and describe a range of agencies which can offer support to the family and the child or young person with autism.
- (b) Identify and describe a range of intervention methods and resources available to support the child or young person with autism.
- (c) Identify and describe a range of professional help available to meet the needs of the family and the child or young person with autism.

#### **EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT**

Evidence is required to demonstrate that the candidate has achieved all of the Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

##### **Outcome 1**

Evidence is required which demonstrates that candidates have achieved Outcome 1 to the standards specified in the Outcome and Performance Criteria. The evidence for this Outcome must be obtained under controlled supervised conditions at appropriate points throughout the Unit.

Candidates must provide evidence of the following:

Their knowledge and understanding of the nature of autism, the meaning of the autism spectrum, the possible causes of autism, and the definition of the triad of impairments.

##### **Outcomes 2, 3 and 4**

Candidates must provide evidence of their knowledge and understanding of the following:

The triad of impairments; how families/carers may be affected by the children or young people with autism; a range of voluntary and professional support available and a range of strategies and resources which may be used to support children and young people with autism.

## **National Unit Specification: support notes**

### **UNIT            Working with Children and Young People with Autism (SCQF level 6)**

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**

##### **SUMMARY**

This Unit has been developed as a specialist optional Unit within the Professional Development Award in Education Support Assistance. It may also be used as a free-standing Unit to develop knowledge, understanding and skills required to work with children and young people with autism.

Candidates will have the opportunity to gain an understanding of:

- ◆ the autism spectrum
- ◆ the diagnostic features of autism (or Triad of Impairment)
- ◆ the possible effects of this on the development of a child or young person
- ◆ the possible effects of this on the family and peers of a child or young person
- ◆ the possible additional needs of a child or young person with autism
- ◆ the importance of promoting independence
- ◆ the strategies and equipment available to facilitate access to the curriculum

##### **Outcome 1**

Candidates should be encouraged in Outcome 1 to understand current definitions and theories of autism with reference to Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV). Reference within the spectrum should be made to pervasive developmental disorders (PDD) autistic and non-autistic conditions such as Asperger's, PDD nos, Fragile X syndrome, Rett's syndrome and Childhood disintegrative disorder.

The diagnostic features of autism (or the Triad of Impairment) should focus on social impairment, impairment of communication and of thought and imagination. Theory of causes should be current and may include brain, genetic or any other major findings or research. Associated conditions such as self-mutilation, motor abnormalities, sleep, appetite problems etc should be explored.

##### **Outcome 2**

Ways of helping in Outcome 2 should cover patience, understanding, empathy, a positive attitude, encouragement, sensitivity, planning, consistency, recording, awareness, and teaching and language skills, in relation to the stated Performance Criteria.

## National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

### UNIT Working with Children and Young People with Autism (SCQF level 6)

#### Outcome 3

Candidates should be encouraged to explore issues of positive and negative feelings and relationships within the family context in Outcome 3. Issues may cover siblings, responsibilities, attachment, stress on parent relationships etc. Stressors may include respite, fatigue, separation/divorce, adoption/foster care, financial problems, and community isolation. Candidates may be encouraged to look at how support agencies (Outcome 4 PC a) support these, and relate to choices to be made (Outcome 3 PC c), which may include education, integration, residential care, adoption or intervention programmes.

#### Outcome 4

Candidates should be encouraged to relate issues and support to local and national strategies and statutory, private and voluntary agencies. This Unit should be delivered in line with local and national current theories and strategies.

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

A variety of methods can be used:

- ◆ thought sharing/mind-mapping
- ◆ small group exercises
- ◆ case studies
- ◆ worksheets/books/handouts
- ◆ large group discussions
- ◆ individual investigations
- ◆ video/audio materials
- ◆ visits to appropriate settings
- ◆ exchange of ideas from candidate's own experience and workplace
- ◆ simulation exercises
- ◆ visiting speakers

The information required to complete the investigation could be gathered from a variety of sources for example visiting speakers, the Internet, books, videos and/or placement experiences. Visits to other educational establishments may be useful.

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR CORE SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Throughout this Unit there is the opportunity to develop the Core Skills of *Working with Others* and *Communication*. Candidates will be producing written and oral communication evidence as part of assessment and will also be carrying out an investigation.

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

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

Outcome 1                    Restricted response questions, lasting no more than 30 minutes  
Outcomes 2, 3 and 4        An investigation based on a child or young person with autism

Time should be allowed for any necessary re-assessment.

#### **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)*.

#### **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](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements)