



## National Unit Specification

### General information

**Unit title:** Practical Skills for Employment (SCQF level 4)

**Unit code:** HX50 44

**Superclass:** HC

**Publication date:** January 2018

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 01

### Unit purpose

This unit is aimed at learners involved in an organised pre-apprenticeship programme within an employment setting.

In this practical unit, learners will be involved in developing practical skills for employment, including: professional behaviour and personal appearance within a work environment, how to manage self during a work placement, organising own personal finance, investigating the company you are working for and demonstrating effective completion of own role during the work placement.

The unit can be undertaken on its own but would be best completed alongside *Developing Essential Skills* (SCQF level 4), as part of the Pre-Apprenticeship award (SCQF level 4).

### Outcomes

On successful completion of the unit the learner will be able to:

- 1 Investigate the importance of professional behaviour and personal appearance in a work environment.
- 2 Manage self during work placement.
- 3 Organise own personal finance in line with employer requirements.
- 4 Investigate the company you are working for.
- 5 Demonstrate effective completion of own role and describe the tasks you perform.

### Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 4: (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 4)

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

**Unit title:** Practical Skills for Employment (SCQF level 4)

### **Recommended entry to the unit**

Entry requirements are at the discretion of the presenting centre.

### **Core Skills**

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the support notes for this unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this unit.

### **Context for delivery**

If this unit is delivered as part of a group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes.

This unit can be delivered as part of the Pre-Apprenticeship award (SCQF level 4), or it can be completed as a stand-alone unit.

There is an Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this unit, which provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard. The ASP can be downloaded from the SQA secure website and it is a valid, reliable and practicable assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard.

### **Equality and inclusion**

This unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website [www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).

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

**Unit title:** Practical Skills for Employment (SCQF level 4)

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**

Investigate the importance of professional behaviour and personal appearance in a work environment by:

#### **Performance criteria**

- (a) Investigating the importance of specific clothing and personal appearance for different workplace situations.
- (b) Investigating appropriate forms of interaction with work colleagues and customers.
- (c) Investigating the importance of following instructions and handling constructive criticism.

### **Outcome 2**

Manage self during work placement by:

#### **Performance criteria**

- (a) Making reliable transportation arrangements for the journey to and from place of work
- (b) Investigating the consequences of non-attendance or late attendance at work for employee and employer.
- (c) Investigating appropriate use of own mobile phone and social media accounts during work placement.
- (d) Investigating the importance of maintaining a positive attitude during work activities

### **Outcome 3**

Organise own personal finance in line with employer requirements by:

#### **Performance criteria**

- (a) Setting up a bank account suitable to receive payment from an employer.
- (b) Gaining access to money held in own account while maintaining account security.
- (c) Completing simple calculations involving income and deductions on a simple payslip.
- (d) Investigating your National Insurance Number, employee benefit schemes and pensions.

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

**Unit title:** Practical Skills for Employment (SCQF level 4)

### **Outcome 4**

Investigate the company you are working for by:

#### **Performance criteria**

- (a) Identifying the main products and services offered by the organisation.
- (b) Investigating the company's customers and competitors.
- (c) Identifying your place within the organisational structure and the lines of reporting.

### **Outcome 5**

Demonstrate effective completion of own role and describe the tasks you perform by:

#### **Performance criteria**

- (a) Completing individual tasks as instructed by your line manager.
- (b) Contributing to the completion of tasks involving more than one person.
- (c) Describing the main tasks you are responsible for.

#### **Evidence requirements for this unit**

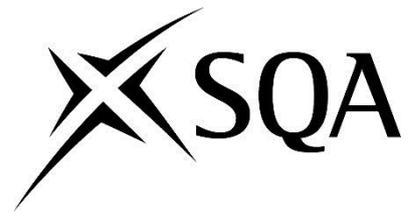
Evidence is required to demonstrate that learners have achieved all the outcomes and performance criteria. Evidence collected for this unit can be written and/or oral.

For Outcomes 1 to 4, the evidence could be generated through short classroom activities which are either based on learner's reflections of and their experiences in the workplace or which are completed in a workplace context. For Outcome 5, the evidence will mainly come from direct observation or witness testimony, observing the learner completing tasks during their work placement.

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

**Unit title:** Practical Skills for Employment (SCQF level 4)

Outcome	Evidence must be collected to show that each learner:
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ has investigated at least two different work roles where specific clothing is required. Evidence could include pictures or descriptions of clothing and reasons why the clothing is required.</li> <li>◆ can identify words, phrases and terms of address that would be appropriate and those that would be inappropriate to use with workplace colleagues and customers.</li> <li>◆ can give at least two examples of the consequences of failure to follow instructions or give at least two examples where following instructions will be vital, they must also provide evidence that gives at least two examples of constructive criticism and appropriate responses.</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ can give details of their route to and from their place of work, the cost of fares, the pick-up and drop-off points (if appropriate) and the time of collection and arrival.</li> <li>◆ can give details of the rules covering late arrival at work and absence from work, for their own workplace.</li> <li>◆ can give details of the rules covering mobile phone and social media usage in their own workplace.</li> <li>◆ can give an example in which a positive attitude made a difference in their working role.</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ can distinguish between a current account and a savings account and can complete a simple application to open a bank account.</li> <li>◆ can answer simple questions about PIN numbers, account numbers, sort codes, and maintaining security.</li> <li>◆ can interpret and perform simple calculations involving basic tax and NI deductions on payslips.</li> <li>◆ can give at least one example of an employee benefit (not necessarily one that they are entitled to), learners must also be able to answer simple questions about NI numbers and pensions.</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ can provide details of at least two of the main products or services available from the organisation they work for.</li> <li>◆ can identify at least one of the company's main competitors and at least two main customer groups.</li> <li>◆ can identify their position on a simple organisational structure or a team structure that includes their line manager and at least one other member of staff.</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ can demonstrate the completion of at least three tasks set by their line manager in the workplace.</li> <li>◆ can demonstrate teamwork in the completion of at least one workplace task.</li> <li>◆ can describe at least three of their main responsibilities in their workplace role.</li> </ul>



## National Unit Support Notes

**Unit title:** Practical Skills for Employment (SCQF level 4)

Unit support notes are offered as guidance and 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

This unit has been designed to supplement learning that takes place during work placements from school or college. The work placements will normally be set up to provide initial vocational experience that will help prepare school pupils for a Modern Apprenticeship or full-time employment within the business they complete their placement. The work placements should involve a minimum of two afternoons or full-days per week over a period of at least ten weeks. Work placements completed as a one week block, would not be appropriate for the delivery of this unit.

The following statements provide suggested topics and themes that could be covered by centres when delivering this unit:

#### Outcome 1

- ◆ Looking at the appropriate dress rules for: customer facing roles; office based roles; and roles requiring specific clothing and headwear to meet health and safety regulations. Also considering the importance of personal appearance and cleanliness.
- ◆ Understanding that: appropriate forms of address may vary in different workplaces and in different circumstances; the importance of customer care; the effect of negative and positive first impressions; etc.
- ◆ Understanding the chain of command, the importance of following direct instructions and the appropriate way to deal with constructive criticism.

#### Outcome 2

- ◆ Finding a means of travel to and from a place of work, with costings and journey times, and if appropriate, checking if more than one travel option is available.
- ◆ Understanding that poor attendance can lead to loss of trust from employer and could eventually lead to dismissal. In addition, employers need to find cover for absent staff which can impact elsewhere on the business.
- ◆ Considering the impact of mobile phone use in the workplace and rules companies may have to ban or restrict their use during working hours and considering the appropriate use of social media postings in relation to your work placement.
- ◆ Understanding the importance of attitude and demeanour during work activities. The effect a positive attitude can have on own wellbeing as well as the way you may appear and be treated by work colleagues and/or customers.

## National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Practical Skills for Employment (SCQF level 4)

### Outcome 3

- ◆ Requirements for setting up bank account: name, address, etc. How PIN number, Account Number and Sort Number can be used and the importance of maintaining security of these details.
- ◆ Using ATPs, use of chip and pin, importance of maintaining security of PIN number, account number and sort code.
- ◆ Simple calculations involving hours worked and hourly rate. Also, considering overtime payments such as double time. Simple overview of gross and net earnings and an awareness of deductions for income tax and National Insurance.
- ◆ Understanding that different organisations may offer different benefits to their employees. From low interest loans and reductions on purchases to company cars, health insurance and corporate memberships.
- ◆ Understanding the role of NI number and pensions, the importance of early adoption and the life insurance element (including dependents).

### Outcome 4

Generally, learners will be given an overview of the organisation they are working for as part of their induction process. Where an induction has been arranged for the learner, they should be reminded to collect and record information about the organisation's:

- ◆ Products and services.
- ◆ Organisation or team structure.
- ◆ Customers and competitors.
- ◆ The learner must be able to identify their role within a simple organisation or team structure and they must be able to identify their line management arrangements (eg how many people report to the same line manager).

### Outcome 5

- ◆ The learner will be observed in the workplace, performing the duties assigned to them and the main three or four duties should be witnessed by their line manager. A witness statement (checklist) can then be completed and signed by the learner's line manager as part of their portfolio of evidence.
- ◆ The learner should be observed undertaking tasks in support of others or working as part of a team or dealing with a customer enquiry. Again, this should be witnessed, and signed by the learner's line manager.
- ◆ Learners will provide a short description of the main tasks they perform.

## National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Practical Skills for Employment (SCQF level 4)

### Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

The delivery of this unit could involve the learner:

- ◆ reflecting on knowledge and skills they have used in the workplace, such as following instructions, having a positive attitude and using appropriate forms of interaction with colleagues and customers.
- ◆ completing classroom based activities to develop some basic knowledge of payslips, pensions, bank accounts.
- ◆ carrying out some research relating to their place of work, including the rules concerning absence and mobile phone usage, the structure and lines of reporting for the team in which they work and their competitors and customers.
- ◆ carrying out general research relating to the clothing required in different roles (for example, office versus shopfloor) and employee benefits offered by different companies.
- ◆ completing tasks set by their line manager in the workplace.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

### Guidance on approaches to assessment of this unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

There is no specific order in which the outcomes within this unit must be completed. The outcomes can be offered in any sequence, although certain standards within the outcomes may be achieved more easily by learners once they have gained sufficient workplace experience. For example, it may be easier to give examples of the effect a positive attitude can have, or to give examples relating to following instructions, once the learner has spent some time on their work placement.

It is intended that this should be a practical unit and much of the evidence can be generated by the learner reflecting on their experience in the workplace and through the learner demonstrating the completion of tasks in the workplace. In addition, the learner will be expected to demonstrate some elements of knowledge they have gained by responding to short answer questions and completing simple calculations, as required.

## National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Practical Skills for Employment (SCQF level 4)

### Opportunities for 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 Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the evidence requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at [www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment](http://www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment).

### Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this unit. There are opportunities to develop Core Skills throughout the unit though. For example: calculations involving payslips, simple tax and pensions could provide opportunities to develop evidence covering part of the *Numeracy* Core Skill; likewise, reflective accounts of experiences from their work placement could provide opportunities to develop evidence of writing or oral presentation which could be mapped against the *Communication* Core Skill.

## History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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## General information for learners

### Unit title: Practical Skills for Employment (SCQF level 4)

This section will help you decide whether this is the unit for you by explaining what the unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

The *Practical Skills for Employment* unit at SCQF level 4 is designed to recognise the valuable learning and development which takes place both in preparation for entering the workforce and during a work experience placement. Some of the learning will involve classroom based activities, some will require research into new topics or reflection on your experiences in your work placement, and some will relate to the tasks you perform during your work placement.

The topics you can expect to cover in this unit will include:

- ◆ The importance of dress, behaviour and following instructions in the workplace
- ◆ Payslips, bank accounts and a simple introduction to tax and pensions
- ◆ Organising travel to and from work
- ◆ Company rules concerning use of mobile phones
- ◆ The need for regular attendance and good timekeeping
- ◆ The advantages of having a positive attitude
- ◆ Finding out about your employers competitors and customers
- ◆ Understanding who your boss is and the roles and positions of your colleagues

This unit can be done on its own but will often be completed along with the *Developing Essential Skills* unit at level 4, to contribute towards the Pre-apprenticeship award at level 4.