
ESOL in Study-related Contexts

SCQF: level 6 (9 SCQF credit points)

Unit code: J215 76

Unit outline

The general aim of this unit is to develop the language skills needed for familiar and less familiar study-related contexts for learners whose first language is not English. Learners develop the skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, using detailed and complex English language.

Learners who complete this unit will be able to:

- 1 Understand detailed and complex language written in English
- 2 Produce written English using detailed and complex language
- 3 Understand detailed and complex language spoken in English
- 4 Communicate orally in English using detailed and complex language

This unit is available as a freestanding unit. The unit specification should be read in conjunction with the *Unit Support Notes*, which provide advice and guidance on delivery, assessment approaches and development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work. Exemplification of the standards in this unit is given in unit assessment support.

Common European Framework of Reference for languages levels of SQA ESOL qualifications

SQA's National Qualifications in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) correspond with levels A1 to C1 on the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR). This has been confirmed by UK NARIC – the UK's designated national agency for recognising and comparing international qualifications and skills.

CEFR level		SQA ESOL qualifications			SCQF
		Level	Course	Freestanding units	
Proficient user	C1	Higher	✓	✓	6
Independent user	B2	National 5	✓	✓	5
Independent user	B1	National 4	✓	✓	4
Basic user	A2	National 3	✓	✓	3
Basic user	A1	National 2	n/a	✓	2

Recommended entry

Entry to this unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by one or more of the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ National 5 course or equivalent units

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. For further information, please refer to the *Unit Support Notes*.

Standards

Outcomes and assessment standards

Outcome 1

1 Understand detailed and complex language written in English by:

- 1.1 Identifying overall purpose, main points and aspects of detail
- 1.2 Identifying how detailed and complex vocabulary and text features are used to convey meaning
- 1.3 Identifying opinions or attitudes
- 1.4 Identifying features of layout

Outcome 2

2 Produce written English using detailed and complex language by:

- 2.1 Using detailed and complex structures and vocabulary, as appropriate
- 2.2 Using grammar, spelling and punctuation to convey meaning effectively
- 2.3 Using conventions of style and layout, as appropriate

Outcome 3

3 Understand detailed and complex language spoken in English by:

- 3.1 Identifying overall context, main points and aspects of detail
- 3.2 Identifying opinions or attitudes

Outcome 4

4 Communicate orally in English using detailed and complex language by:

- 4.1 Using detailed and complex structures and vocabulary, as appropriate
- 4.2 Communicating coherently and fluently to convey meaning effectively
- 4.3 Maintaining interaction, as appropriate

Evidence requirements for the unit

Assessors should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, and understanding of their learners, to determine the most appropriate ways to generate evidence and the conditions and contexts in which they are used.

For this unit, learners will be required to provide evidence of their reading and writing, listening, and speaking skills by:

- ◆ understanding at least one text written in detailed and complex English language
- ◆ producing at least one written text using detailed and complex English language
- ◆ understanding at least one text spoken in detailed and complex English language
- ◆ communicating orally in at least one interaction using detailed and complex English language

Evidence should be gathered in combination with other outcomes where possible, either from this unit or in combination with the outcomes from the unit *ESOL for Everyday Life*. Evidence may also be gathered for individual outcomes where appropriate.

Contexts will be drawn from at least one familiar or less familiar study-related context.

Exemplification of assessment is provided in unit assessment support.

Advice and guidance on possible approaches to assessment is provided in the *Unit Support Notes*.

Development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

It is expected that learners will develop broad, generic skills through this unit. The skills that learners will be expected to improve on and develop through the unit are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These must be built into the unit where there are appropriate opportunities.

1 Literacy

- 1.1 Reading
- 1.2 Writing
- 1.3 Listening and talking

4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship

- 4.6 Citizenship

5 Thinking skills

- 5.3 Applying

Amplification of these is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills should be at the same SCQF level of the unit and be consistent with the SCQF level descriptor. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work is given in the *Unit Support Notes*.

Appendix: unit support notes

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing this unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this unit. They should be read in conjunction with the:

- ◆ unit specification
- ◆ unit assessment support packs

Developing skills, knowledge and understanding

Teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

The purpose of this section is to provide general advice and guidance on approaches to gathering assessment evidence within the *ESOL in Study-related Contexts* unit.

Naturally occurring evidence

Assessment approaches should aim to help learners progress through the unit and enable them to demonstrate their achievements in a range of ways. Practitioners should explore opportunities in the day-to-day delivery of the unit to observe learners providing evidence which satisfies a unit completely or partially. This is naturally occurring evidence.

Thematic approaches

Practitioners will be aware of the opportunities to assess performance across the four skills by adopting a themed approach such as those shown below. It is also possible to generate evidence which may satisfy the requirements of more than one unit within a single themed programme of work.

Practitioners will use a variety of different texts in drawing up a programme of work for the unit. The term ‘text’ may refer to print or electronic media.

Activities which may be included in a teaching programme for *ESOL in Study-related Contexts* are illustrated in the table below:

Reading	Writing	Listening	Speaking
For information/comprehension: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ identify purpose and attitude of writer ◆ identify tone ◆ identify register ◆ distinguish between fact/opinion ◆ recognise structure ◆ identify links ◆ make inferences ◆ give a critical view 	Practise in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ developing vocabulary ◆ identifying/using correct register ◆ discussing issue ◆ narrating events ◆ describing people/places/emotion ◆ summarising events/ideas/views, etc ◆ expanding an idea ◆ developing an argument ◆ structuring a piece ◆ predicting ◆ producing texts individually or with other ◆ employing specific forms of writing ◆ peer assessment and feedback ◆ writing conclusions ◆ editing and re-drafting ◆ mastering conventions of academic presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ listen for information ◆ listen for new vocabulary ◆ listen for speaker's purpose ◆ listen for the overall gist ◆ listen to identify tone/register/attitude/accent ◆ listen to take notes ◆ listen to distinguish between fact/opinion 	Participate in group discussion by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ offering view or opinion ◆ supporting another view ◆ offering counter-view ◆ offering or requesting further information ◆ encouraging others ◆ reviewing or summarising ◆ offering conclusions ◆ delivering presentations ◆ interviewing others ◆ describing experience ◆ narrating events

A thematic approach to provide naturally occurring assessment evidence

Themes should be of relevance to the needs and experiences of the learners. Teaching and learning should provide as many opportunities as possible and practical for collaborative learning. Peer- and self-assessment should feature largely. Themes may address educational issues, personal ambitions or concerns, career pathways, educational attainment, etc.

The table below illustrates how practitioners may adopt a themed approach to the planning of teaching and learning.

Naturally occurring evidence from themes

Theme	Reading	Writing	Listening	Speaking
The Scottish education system. Project work.	Research a minimum of two texts outlining the Scottish education system, including websites identified by the teacher. Take notes under relevant headings.	Write a discursive essay comparing and contrasting with another education system.	In a discussion with your partner find out about another education system.	In your discussion share information about an education system you know well.
An influential person.	Read about a famous person who has influenced you in your choice of study or work.	Write an article for a blog on your chosen person and say why they have influenced you.	Answer questions on your presentation.	Deliver a presentation on your chosen person.

The needs and interests of all learners should clearly be taken into account in determining themes and topics. Learners who are already in a course of study or work-based training programmes may, for example, be motivated by opportunities to develop their English language skills in the context of their particular occupational or general study areas.

Evidence for assessment against unit outcomes can be generated from each of these activities in an integrated way.

Illustrative language tables (ILTs) 1 and 2 contains further illustrative guidance to support the development of learners' language in a systematic way.

Illustrative language tables

The guidance on the language coverage for *ESOL in Study-related Contexts* is set out in two illustrative language tables (ILTs): ILT1 and ILT2.

Both the ILTs offer an overview of how this language can be adjusted according to learner level to support learning. As the levels go up, there is increasing complexity of both language and cognitive skills required of the task, ranging from everyday, to work or study-related. Taking this perspective, it also means that the skills can be taught and supported in an integrated way for practice and assessment as would happen naturally in the learning context.

Illustrative language table 1 (ILT1) shows language and skills at different ESOL levels:

- i) Work on language features can be adjusted from 'concrete' to 'abstract', and/or 'familiar' (known context) to 'unfamiliar' (unknown context), developing both everyday and subject- or context-specific language.
- ii) Language is set out at word, sentence and text/paragraph level, followed by strategies for the four skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking.

Illustrative language table 2 (ILT2) sets out integrated tasks or activities demonstrating a possible range of genres, or styles of communication, for personal, social, transactional, work and study-related contexts.

Illustrative language table 1: Language and skills for SCQF level 6 ESOL: detailed and complex, familiar and less familiar.	
Language at word level	Focus on formation: root, stem, prefix, suffix; spelling. Meaning: denotation, connotation, figurative, literal. Choice: standard, dialect, colloquial, slang.
Detailed and complex, familiar and less familiar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ revise and build on National 5 (if appropriate) ◆ able to make considered choices about spelling a word; most patterns internalised ◆ understand and use detailed and complex vocabulary and phrases for everyday use and work and study contexts, including specialised concrete and abstract words and phrases ◆ unfamiliar words processed and understood ◆ explore connotative meanings, multiword collocations, colloquial language/figurative and metaphorical ◆ use analogy for explanations
Language at sentence level	Focus on word order for information focus; combining phrases to sentence structure for clarity; simple, compound, complex; standard, dialect, slang.
Detailed and complex, familiar and less familiar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ convey precise information through developing control of complex subordination; the use of apposition; elision ◆ develop control of features encountered at National 5 level and explore a wider range of simple, compound and complex sentence structures, eg nominalisation; fronted clauses; it-clefts; embedded clauses; finite and non-finite verb forms to vary sentence structure ◆ combine clauses and phrases with finite and non-finite verb forms ◆ explore simple, continuous, perfect, perfect continuous verb forms
Language and skills at text and paragraph level	Identify genre; model it; then scaffold candidate practice in rhetorical organisation, layout and language features — linking sentences and sections of text, getting the right tone and level of formality. Use across the four skills: reading, writing, listening, speaking.
Detailed and complex, familiar and less familiar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ understand and use the appropriate structure of required genre forms for study and work ◆ build and link paragraphs to construct a coherent argument and make purpose clear to the reader: use logical and sequence markers in quite complex and detailed texts to suit purpose ◆ produce effective openings and conclusions ◆ engage the audience and lead through the argument ◆ identify tone and how it is conveyed; cope with inference ◆ cope with complex and detailed language that may be both familiar and less familiar in terms of content ◆ summarise or expand upon information

Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ build on and develop skills from National 5 if appropriate ◆ explore a variety of materials of different lengths, in different written formats and genres (text types) for understanding ◆ deal with abstract concepts, infer meaning, read between the lines, explore nuances of attitude and tone ◆ practise looking through several texts to find relevant information (quantity of texts needs to be built up gradually) ◆ deduce meaning from context and use advanced dictionary or thesaurus for vocabulary development of items required to be understood deeply or used
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ build on and develop skills and strategies from National 5 if appropriate ◆ notice rhetorical patterns in other texts and write at length on a range of topics appropriate to study goal — this will include complex familiar and less familiar topics, following genre conventions and using detailed and complex language ◆ refer to sources in own words and acknowledge sources in bibliography ◆ engage the reader and lead through the argument, for example practise demonstrating attitude, justifying an opinion, explaining, comparing
Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ build on and develop skills and strategies acquired at National 5 if appropriate ◆ develop skills to process familiar material more quickly and to cope with some unfamiliar listening contexts ◆ practise asking for clarification and repair misunderstandings ◆ work on identifying main points and some relevant details ◆ practise following a discussion involving a number of speakers in a range of contexts ◆ work on role play and scenarios to follow one-to-one exchanges with only occasional clarification required ◆ further work on a variety of accents: notice differences and similarities between own and others speaking pronunciation and styles
Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ build on and develop skills and strategies from National 5 ◆ communicate on a range of topics adequately for meaningful participation in a range of complex events using detailed and complex language and covering familiar and less familiar topics ◆ practise managing complex one-to-one, small group interactions, discussions and presentations successfully ◆ pay attention to appropriate tone and style of negotiations to achieve a goal ◆ use personal and impersonal styles ◆ use intonation and stress at sentence level to convey more precise meaning: accept that there is an L1 accent, but ensure this does not impede understanding

Illustrative language table 2:
Integrated tasks for all ESOL levels: select function, and language difficulty according to level. SCQF level 6 candidates should be aiming for the last column of language difficulty.

'Functions grid' shows personal, social, transactional, work and study-related contexts.

Activities in these areas should offer receptive, investigative, and productive tasks in a range of formats for practice in preparation for assessment.

Genre and purpose: text response				
function	personal response	review	interpretation	critical response
personal	react emotionally, talk about how you feel about something, thank, praise	talk about how you felt about an event	interpret the significance of an event or object	talk about how you make a decision, decide on the pros and cons
social	find out how your friends feel about something	share feelings with friends about something in the past	decide how to respond to an invitation	think about how to advise a friend or how to ask a friend's advice
trans-actional	respond to an everyday communication	talk about how you responded to an everyday communication	consider a response to an official communication (for example from NHS, bank, local council)	consider the best approach to solving a transactional problem, viewing it from all angles
work	make a personal response to a work communication	talk about how you feel about a communication in the work place	consider business response	consider the pros and cons of a business decision or strategy
study	talk and/or write about your feelings in response to a text	evaluate a literary, visual or musical text	interpret the message of a text	challenge the message of a text

Genre and purpose: stories				
function	recount	narrative	exemplum	anecdote
personal	recount personal events	talk about something that happened to you with a focus on the end or outcome	judge a character or behaviour in a story	tell something about yourself with a lesson or point in it
social	recount events with friends	tell a story that will interest friends with a focus on the end or outcome	state likes and/or dislikes	tell something about a social group with a lesson or point in it
transactional	recount events, for example at the library	report a transactional event with a particular outcome	carry out or complete a survey	advise or warn someone by telling them an exemplary tale
work	recount events at work	talk about a work situation or event where a problem was resolved	complete a form	report an event with a lesson for the work situation in it
study	recount events; methodology	resolve a complication in an academic story; discussion of results	report an event with a lesson in it, such as an accident or a great success	use analogy to make a point
Genre and purpose: procedures				
functions	procedure	procedural recount		
personal	help a family member	talk about how you helped a family member		
social	give directions	recommend shopping online		
transactional	complete forms	make phone calls and leave messages		
work	give instructions for procedure	talk about how something was done in the past		
study	detail how to do experiments and/or carry out observations	recount experiments and observations (methodology)		

Genre and purpose: information reports			
function	descriptive report	classifying report	persuasive report
personal	describe your house, an object or place	talk about things you are good at, likes and dislikes	think through pros and cons of a problem
social	describe a place where your family lives now or in the past	talk about group preferences and habits	persuade someone to accept an invitation, or make arrangements
transactional	do an internet search for something you need to buy	find out the kinds of shops, leisure facilities or schools available to you in your area	explain to a local councillor a need in your area
work	prepare or read applications	prepare or read CVs	explain to your boss a need for some new resource at work
study	classifying and describing a phenomenon	classifying and describing types of phenomenon	make a recommendation based on evidence
Genre and purpose: explanations			
functions	sequential explanation	factorial explanation	consequential explanation
personal	explain how to do something you often do	justifying an opinion – giving reasons (factors) for how you feel or felt	explain the effects of an event on how you feel
social	explain how to do something to a group	give causes or reasons for a decision to a group	give advice
transactional	prepare and understand procedures in social structures	explaining the thinking behind systems or procedures (finance and managing money)	recommend strategies for managing finance
work	prepare and understand procedures at work	explaining the thinking behind work systems or procedures	explain the thinking behind work strategies and long term goals
study	explain a sequence of development or procedure	explaining multiple factors that might contribute to or cause something, such as increased sales, drought	explaining multiple effects

	Genre and purpose: factual stories			
functions	autobiographical recount	biographical recount	historical recount	historical account
personal	recount life events	recount life stages	recount family events in the past	explain how you learned something
social	talk to friends about their previous activities	tell friends about someone's life stages	recount friends, shared interests	explain how you became friends with a group
transactional	give a report of your medical history for the GP	report your family's medical history for your GP	recount, cultural events, celebrations, social issues	explain how the health service worked in the past
work	prepare a CV to a future employer	recount life stages of someone at work	recount historical events of a trade or workplace	explain how a trade or workplace expanded or declined
study	recount methodology	recount chronological developments	recount historical events	explain historical events

	Genre and purpose: arguments	
functions	exposition	discussion
personal	make arrangements; talk about something you would like to do	Compare items, places, events to make a choice
social	enquire in order to set out a proposition that you want to take further, for example what venues are available for your planned event	find out information that will give you points for and against a social event or situation, for example holiday, sharing a house
transactional	make phone calls and/or leave messages	plan how to discuss an ailment with a doctor
work	use and understand problem-solving strategies	consider/plan how to discuss something with a work colleague or boss
study	argue for a point of view	discuss two or more points of view; draw on informal or formal sources (as appropriate to learner level)

Combining assessment within units

Assessment could be combined in this unit by holistically assessing all the outcomes of the unit in a single assessment. When assessment within the unit is holistic, teachers and lecturers should take particular care to track the evidence for each individual outcome.

Administrative information

Published: November 2019 (version 4.1)

Superclass: FK

History of changes to national unit specification

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
2.0	Page 3 – standards: assessment standards across all four outcomes have been amended. In outcome 1 and outcome 3, 'Explaining' has been replaced by 'Identifying' in each assessment standard. The words 'clearly expressed' have been removed from assessment standard 1.3. In outcome 2, assessment standard 2.2 has changed from 'Using grammar, spelling and punctuation sufficiently accurately to convey meaning' to 'Using grammar, spelling and punctuation to convey meaning effectively'. In outcome 4, assessment standard 4.2 has changed from 'Communicating sufficiently accurately, coherently and fluently to convey meaning' to 'Communicating coherently and fluently to convey meaning effectively'.	Qualifications Development Manager	April 2014
2.1	The words 'clearly expressed' have also been removed from assessment standard 3.2.	Qualifications Development Manager	August 2014
3.0	Level changed from Higher to SCQF level 6. Unit support notes added.	Qualifications Manager	September 2018
4.0	Unit code updated.	Qualifications Manager	July 2019
4.1	UK NARIC benchmarked CEFR information added.	Qualifications Manager	November 2019

This specification may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged. Additional copies of this unit can be downloaded from SQA's website at www.sqa.org.uk.

Note: readers are advised to check SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk to ensure they are using the most up-to-date version of the unit specification.

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2019