

National Unit Specification: General Information

UNIT Work Experience (Access 3)

NUMBER D36H 09

COURSE

SUMMARY

Developing planning, organisational, investigative, interpersonal skills and self awareness through organising and undertaking a work experience placement with a high degree of tutor/trainer support.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Contribute to the planning and arrangement of a work experience placement with tutor/trainer support.
- 2 Carry out allocated tasks during work experience under supervision.
- 3 Relate effectively to others in the analysis, planning and undertaking work experience.
- 4 Identify the contribution of the knowledge and skills gained through work experience to own personal, social and vocational development.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

No formal entry requirements.

CREDIT VALUE

1 Credit.

CORE SKILLS

Information on the automatic certification of any core skills in this unit is published in *Automatic Certification of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 1999).

Administrative Information

Superclass: HB

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National unit specification: statement of standards

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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 the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1

Contribute to the planning and arrangement of a work experience placement with tutor/trainer support.

Performance Criteria

- a) An initial self-assessment clearly identifies some qualities and skills.
- b) Information provided by the tutor/trainer is used effectively to aid planning of a work experience.
- c) A work experience placement is chosen which matches own qualities and skills.
- d) Taking account of own and others' preferences, a step by step application process for the work experience placement is devised and implemented.
- e) Required preparations for the work experience are accurate and comprehensive in terms of gathering essential information.
- f) Arrangements are confirmed clearly and accurately.

Note on range for the outcome

Essential information: dates; working hours; initial contact; location.

Evidence Requirements

PC (a) An initial self assessment.

PCs (b)-(f) Written and/or oral evidence which meets all the performance criteria for one work experience placement.

OUTCOME 2

Carry out allocated tasks during work experience under supervision.

Performance Criteria

- a) The allocation of tasks for work experience is agreed with supervisor, in accordance with results of initial self assessment.
- b) Allocated tasks are carried out under supervision and to a standard agreed with the supervisor.
- c) Placement requirements are complied with at all times.
- d) Health, safety and hygiene requirements are observed at all times.

Note on range for the outcome

Placement requirements: times of attendance; appropriate dress; rules on use of equipment.

National unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Evidence Requirements

PCs (a)-(d) Performance evidence for all of the performance criteria for one work experience placement.

Written and/or oral evidence which supports the performance evidence.

OUTCOME 3

Relate effectively to others in the analysis, planning and undertaking work experience.

Performance Criteria

- a) Work practices are observed attentively.
- b) Instructions are listened to attentively and accepted in a positive manner.
- c) Advice and assistance are sought when required.
- d) Advice and assistance are offered to others when required.
- e) Behaviour is modified appropriately to meet the needs of different situations.

Evidence Requirements

PCs (a)-(e) Performance evidence for one work experience placement.

OUTCOME 4

Identify the contribution of the knowledge and skills gained through work experience to own personal, social and vocational development.

Performance Criteria

- a) The initial self-assessment is re-examined in terms of personal strengths and weaknesses and updated as appropriate.
- b) Response to comments made in the placement supervisor's report is positive and constructive.
- c) Feelings and reactions to the work experience are expressed clearly.
- d) The application process is reviewed and strengths and weaknesses within it clearly identified.
- e) Learning gained is identified and related to future personal, social and vocational goals.

Evidence Requirements

PC (a) An updated self assessment.

PCs (b)-(e) Written and/or oral evidence for one work experience placement.

National unit specification: support notes (cont)

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

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT

Candidates should be encouraged to appreciate that the unit is not primarily concerned with factual knowledge or specific work skills, but rather with the development of more general skills and qualities. This involves candidates reflecting on their attitude to:

- identifying their interests and capabilities;
- finding out about work routines and conventions;
- exploring working with others;
- planning and organising;
- finding out about the organisational structure, processes and equipment of placements.

Corresponding to outcomes 1-4:

- 1 In this unit the planning and organisation of the work experience will be highly supported by the tutor/trainer, take place within the centre and draw upon a bank of work experience placements or the candidate's own work experience. Tutors/trainers should encourage candidates to identify general vocational interests such as indoor/outdoor, manual/office, production/service etc. The placement should provide an introduction to the world of work and the opportunity to begin to develop self-awareness of the candidate's skills, aptitudes and interests in relation to work.
- 2 The contexts for work experience are wide ranging. The tutor/trainer should be clear about the nature of the experience which the placement will offer the candidate. Placement supervisors will often be able to increase the education or skill content of the work experience if approached tactfully. Placement supervisors must be fully briefed about the purposes of the placement activity. Candidates must receive adequate support to enable them to be clear about the tasks which are to be performed, the times and conditions of attendance, the appropriate dress and safe operation of equipment, health, safety and hygiene requirements. Appropriate guidelines on safety, insurance and other constraints must be observed.

Placement experience should be a minimum of 20 hours duration taking place in one or more locations. Placements may involve the candidate as much in observing aspects of a workplace as in participating in specific activities or procedures. Candidates' existing work actively eg. Saturday or evening jobs may provide appropriate experience.

National unit specification: support notes (cont)

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- 3 Candidates should practise and develop skills in working cooperatively with others both in their centre and in the workplace, ie by accepting instructions positively, seeking advice and help when required, making arrangements, making contact with sources identified by tutor/trainer, meeting and talking to people in the workplace, presenting oneself in a manner consistent with the impression he or she wishes to create.
- 4 Following the work placement each candidate should review the experience in order to reassess personal strengths and weaknesses and to express personal feeling and reactions towards both the work experience, the knowledge and skills gained during it and to review the initial organisational process. The interview provides an opportunity for the candidate to respond to the report of the workplace supervisor. Candidates should review the value of the learning experience to their own personal, social and vocational development, in particular to future plans for work, education or training.

GUIDANCE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACHES

A placement register with a wide range of work and skills contexts is necessary. Supervisors are often willing to adapt placements to the needs of candidates. Although setting up the placement register initially is time consuming, less time is required to maintain the network once established.

It is expected that in the course of the unit each candidate will compile a folder of assessment evidence containing self-assessment sheets, a planning sheet for the work experience, log sheets which record the activities undertaken by the candidates during the work placement and a final review sheet with reflections on the work experience and its relevance to personal, social and vocational development.

Corresponding to outcomes 1-4:

- 1 Induction to the unit including explanation of its key features and establishing working relationships.

Involving candidates in decision making is valuable for personal development as well as being a powerful motivating factor. In this unit candidates should be given a high degree of tutor/trainer support but this should not preclude negotiation on selection of placement and methods of making arrangements.

National unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Individual and group exercises to enable candidates to assess their own capabilities, skills and interests in relation to work should be carried out. Instruction on current health and safety at work legislation, appropriateness of dress, behaviour etc. should all be considered prior to the commencement of the work placement.

Choice of work placement should be made after consideration of print materials, videos, experiences of group members, visits to work places, speakers etc.

Communication skills can be integrated into this phase of the unit through letter writing, telephoning, interviews, composition of curriculum vitae etc. Thus the candidate may learn how to operate effectively in formal situations. Equally as important are informal networks - making and using contacts, having the courage to ask, learning the work culture, tapping possible sources of information such as friends and family. Tutors/trainers may exploit such aspects by allowing candidates to brief and debrief one another in small groups.

Role play, cases studies and videos may be used to prepare candidates for the type of activities in which they may be involved and to help them decide on appropriate use of skills and behaviours in a variety of situations.

- 2 Candidates should record experiences as they occur in log sheets/work diary and should be encouraged to monitor their own progress. The work supervisor should produce a short report to agreed specifications to record the candidate's performance and progress in the workplace. This report should cover not only vocational skills but also interpersonal skills and growth. Tutors/trainers should be careful to highlight the requirements of Outcome 3 and to emphasise the need for candidates to record their experiences in these areas.

The tutor/trainer should visit the candidate during the work placement and assess the situation. In many areas of work experience the tutor's/trainer's knowledge may not exceed that of the candidate. It is important to recognise this limitation and for the tutor/trainer to play a supportive role.

- 3 All learning activities should be designed to develop personal and social development skills. Initially the role of the tutor/trainer is to offer support and guidance to the candidates. However candidates must have the opportunity to do things for themselves, to make choices and decisions, to ask for assistance from the tutor/trainer and others when this is felt to be necessary, to interact with others and to try out new activities and new roles in a climate which feels safe.

National unit specification: support notes (cont)

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The work placement will be a new environment for many candidates and preparation for the placement should recognise this so that candidates are thoroughly prepared before commencing the placement.

- 4 In a short interview with each individual the tutor/trainer will discuss the activities undertaken throughout the unit and the feelings of the candidates towards these. Tutors/trainers should not prompt performance but should create an atmosphere and framework within which candidates are encouraged to speak openly about their progress towards the defined goals, their feelings and reactions in relation to the tasks undertaken and the contribution which the learning activities have made towards their personal and social development.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT

During the unit the candidate is required to contribute to the planning and to complete a work experience placement during which he or she should assemble a folder of assessment evidence in relation to outcomes. Personal interviews are central to the assessment and will be used to explore the candidate's experiences in the work placement in relation to the stated performance criteria.

The tutor/trainer may conduct personal interviews with individual candidates or with groups, as appropriate. The interviews will take place on an ongoing basis throughout the unit and should draw on relevant evidence from the candidate's assessment folder.

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:

Corresponding to Outcomes 1-4:

1. Personal interview drawing on evidence from planning and self-assessment sheets.
2. Personal interview drawing on evidence from planning sheet, log sheets and reports from the workplace supervisor and from the tutor/trainer.
3. Personal interview drawing on evidence from log sheets and reports from the workplace supervisor and the tutor/trainer.
4. Personal interview using review sheet.

National unit specification: support notes (cont)

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SPECIAL NEEDS

This unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment and Certification Arrangements* (SQA, 1998).