

## National Unit Specification: General Information

**UNIT** Investigating Europe (Access 3)

**NUMBER** D36K 09

### **COURSE**

### **SUMMARY**

Developing planning, organisational, investigative, interpersonal skills and self-awareness through investigation activities into European themes with a high degree of tutor/trainer support.

### **OUTCOMES**

- 1 Contribute to the planning of investigation tasks on a European theme with tutor/trainer support.
- 2 Carry out allocated tasks within a European investigation under supervision.
- 3 Relate effectively to others in the analysis, planning and undertaking investigation tasks within a European investigation.
- 4 Identify the contribution of the knowledge and skills gained through a European investigation to own personal and social 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).

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## **Administrative Information**

**Superclass:** HB

**Publication date:** April 2000

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority 2000

**Version:** 01

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## National unit specification: statement of standards

**UNIT**            Investigating Europe (Access 3)

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 of investigation tasks on a European theme with tutor/trainer support.

#### Performance Criteria

- a) An initial self-assessment clearly identifies some qualities and skills.
- b) Identification of topics for a European investigation is accurate.
- c) The nature of the European topic selected for investigation is outlined clearly.
- d) Information provided by tutor/trainer is used effectively to aid planning of a European investigation.
- e) A step-by-step plan for the investigation is feasible, detailed and clear.
- f) Resources required for investigation are correctly selected.
- g) The feasibility of the plan is reviewed and the plan is adjusted as required.
- h) Tasks are allocated according to the pre-prepared plan, and are based on self assessment and others' preferences.

#### Evidence Requirements

PC a) An initial self assessment.

PC b) Written and/or oral evidence which indicates that the candidate can identify a minimum of four topics.

PCs (c)-(h) An investigation plan for one European topic.

### OUTCOME 2

Carry out allocated tasks within a European investigation under supervision.

#### Performance Criteria

- a) Activities are carried out according to the pre-prepared plan.
- b) Tasks are completed correctly and according to the pre-prepared plan.
- c) Results of investigations are recorded clearly and accurately.
- d) Tasks are reviewed thoroughly in order to establish whether their purpose has been achieved.
- e) The pre-prepared plan is reviewed to identify its strengths and weaknesses.

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## **National unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**UNIT**            Investigating Europe (Access 3)

### **Evidence Requirements**

Written and/or oral evidence which records the progress of the investigation, the results obtained and which relates progress to the plan.

PCs (a) and (b) Performance evidence for one European investigation topic.

### **OUTCOME 3**

Relate effectively to others in the analysis, planning and undertaking investigation tasks within a European investigation.

### **Performance Criteria**

- a) Instructions are listened to attentively and accepted in a positive manner.
- b) Advice is sought when required.
- c) Advice and assistance offered to others is appropriate.
- d) Contact is made effectively with sources identified by tutor/trainer.
- e) Behaviour is modified appropriately to meet the needs of different situations.

### **Evidence Requirements**

Performance evidence for one European investigation topic.

### **OUTCOME 4**

Identify the contribution of the knowledge and skills gained through a European Investigation to own personal and social development.

### **Performance Criteria**

- a) The initial self assessment is re-examined in terms of strengths and weaknesses and updated as appropriate.
- b) Feelings and reactions to the investigation tasks are expressed clearly.
- c) Learning gained is identified clearly and related to future personal, social and vocational goals.

### **Evidence Requirements**

PC (a) An updated self assessment.

PC (b) and (c) Written and/or oral evidence for one European investigation topic.

## National unit specification: support notes

### UNIT Investigating Europe (Access 3)

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

Corresponding to Outcomes 1-4:

- 1 The possible topics for a European investigation are wide-ranging covering, for example, culture, society, environment, politics, education, transport, consumer issues, leisure, finance etc. This list is not prescriptive and tutors/trainers will find that a range of other contexts provides appropriate topics for investigation which encourages the candidates to develop appropriate planning, organisational, investigative and interpersonal skills and self-awareness. Candidates may wish to focus their investigations on countries within the European Union with the exception of Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Investigations undertaken into European countries outwith the EU are equally valid.

Within a chosen context each candidate/group of candidates should make use of information provided by the tutor to agree on the definition of a topic to be investigated. These investigations should be limited in scope, clearly defined and explained to candidates. Tutors/trainers should give support in relation to topic choice which enables candidates to follow their own interests and to exploit the range of resources available on European issues.

- 2 Candidates may undertake a range of tasks associated with the investigation. These may include:
  - gathering information from books and other printed sources
  - gathering information via the media
  - interviewing those with particular knowledge and/or experience of the topic under investigation eg nationals from other European countries living in the local community
  - survey by oral or written questionnaire.

Where possible use might also be made of European embassies and consulates, European Institutes, university departments, Commission of the European Union's Information Office, tourist offices of European countries, newspapers and radio/TV programmes, the Internet.

Although a visit to another European country is not essential for this unit, many candidates do have the opportunity to visit Europe and where the investigation activity can be enhanced by such a visit, this should be discussed with the candidate so that all opportunities are explored.

## National unit specification: support notes (cont)

### UNIT Investigating Europe (Access 3)

The form in which results of the investigation are recorded may vary. Tutors/trainers should provide guidance to candidates on appropriate methods which may include some or all of written notes, questionnaires, photographs, audio or video recordings, posters, newspaper cuttings.

- 3 Candidates should practise and develop skills in working cooperatively with others in both the formal and informal learning situation, ie by accepting instructions positively, seeking advice and help from peers and tutor/trainer when required, offering assistance to peers as necessary, making arrangements, making contacts with sources identified by tutor/trainer, meeting and talking to people in out-of-centre activity, presenting oneself in a manner consistent with the impression he or she wishes to create.

In an investigation into the culture of another European country, for example, candidates might demonstrate interpersonal skills through questioning visiting speakers, interviewing people who have visited the country, interviewing librarians, contacting societies, institutes, embassies etc representing the country.

- 4 Towards the end of the unit each candidate should review the investigation tasks which he or she has undertaken in order to identify personal strengths and weaknesses and to express personal feelings and reactions towards both the process of carrying out the investigation and to the knowledge gained during the investigative activities. Candidates should review the value of the learning experience to their own personal and social development.

### **GUIDANCE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACHES**

In this unit the tutor/trainer plays an important part in providing information and advice and in creating an appropriate framework within which planning, decision making and organising can take place. The level of support in relation to this is anticipated to be substantial and it is likely that, especially in the initial stages, candidates will not be working for long periods without supervision and that they will seek advice and information from the tutor/trainer at regular intervals.

It is expected that in the course of the unit each candidate will compile a folder of assessment evidence containing planning sheets of the proposed investigation, log sheets which record the activities undertaken by the candidates in the process of the investigation, material (in appropriate print or non-print format) which records the results of the investigation activities and a final review sheet with reflections on the investigation process and its relevance to personal and social development.

## National unit specification: support notes (cont)

### UNIT Investigating Europe (Access 3)

This unit can be used in a number of ways eg:

- as a follow-on to Local Investigations 1 it can assist candidates to identify similarities and differences between local patterns of living, culture, environment etc and those in Europe
- as a complement to Experiencing Europe 1 to assist candidates to investigate a European topic in which interest has been developed. It could also be integrated with Experiencing Europe 1
- before candidates visit Europe to provide a useful framework for preparatory activity in finding out about the European country to be visited.

Corresponding to Outcomes 1-4:

- 1 Induction to the unit including explanation of its key features and establishing working relationships. An important role of the tutor/trainer is to provide appropriate support at this early stage, particularly in relation to setting the scene, exploring a variety of contexts for European investigation and defining of the topics to be investigated.

Involving candidates in the decisions which affect them is valuable for personal development as well as being a powerful motivating factor. Among the areas for negotiation in this unit are:

membership of investigation groups; choice of investigation topics; roles within groups and allocation of tasks to group members; methods of investigation; methods of recording results of investigation.

Appropriate tutor/trainer input would involve preliminary instruction in methodology in relation to investigation activities. Preparation for learning through investigation prior to the fieldwork activity, library visit, interview, survey etc is important.

Additionally tutor/trainer support will take the form of assistance with planning, methods of investigation and recording of results.

- 2 Briefing and debriefing sessions at regular intervals, group discussion on successful task completion, difficulties encountered etc, discussions as to optimum methods of recording results may be appropriate. Guidance on handling, categorising and understanding of resources may be appropriate.

## National unit specification: support notes (cont)

### UNIT Investigating Europe (Access 3)

The candidates should undertake a series of mini-investigations. The number of investigations will be determined by the complexity of tasks undertaken and the progress made during the course of the unit. This form of organisation is preferred as it permits the achievement of effective learning through repeated investigations, each with a decreasing level of tutor/trainer input. Improvement of performance will take place as a result of tasks undertaken and a constructive review of activities after each mini-investigation.

- 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 active guidance to the investigation groups. 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.
- 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 own personal and social development.

### GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT

During the unit the candidate is required to contribute to the planning and completion of investigation tasks in a European investigation during which he or she should assemble a folder of assessment evidence in relation to the outcomes. Personal interviews are central to the assessment and will be used to explore the candidate's experience of the investigation tasks 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 on-going basis throughout the unit and should draw on relevant evidence from the candidate's assessment folder.

## National unit specification: support notes (cont)

### UNIT Investigating Europe (Access 3)

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 self assessment and planning sheet.
- 2 Personal interview drawing on evidence from planning sheet, log sheet and record of findings of investigation in appropriate format.
- 3 Personal interview drawing on evidence from log sheet.
- 4 Personal interview using review sheet.

### 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).