

# National 2 English and Communication Course Support Notes



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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this document for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

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# Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the National 2 English and Communication Course. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering the Course and its Units. They should be read in conjunction with the *Course Specification*, and the *Unit Specifications* for the Units in the Course.

# General guidance on the Course

## Aims

The general aim of the Course is to develop learners' skills in reading, watching, listening to and understanding texts and in communicating their responses.

The Course aims to enable learners to develop the ability to:

- ◆ Understand and respond to simple word-based texts
- ◆ Create simple word-based texts to communicate idea, opinions or information
- ◆ Listen and respond to simple spoken ideas, opinions or information
- ◆ Communicate simple ideas, opinions or information

## Progression into this Course

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre.

Prior to undertaking this Course, learners would benefit from having an awareness of communication skills and a basic knowledge of language.

By building on the early and first level experiences and outcomes for Literacy and English, this qualification will provide learners with opportunities to consolidate and further extend their communication and language skills.

This qualification may be suitable for learners who have successfully completed qualifications in English, Communication or related areas at SCQF level 1.

## Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Course

This section provides further advice and guidance about skills, knowledge and understanding that could be included in the Course. Some Units may offer more opportunities than others for the development of skills, knowledge and understanding. The table below shows where there are opportunities to develop these within the individual Units of the Course.

Skills, knowledge and understanding	Unit title
Understand and respond to simple word based texts	English and Communication: Understanding Language (National 2)
Create simple word-based texts to communicate idea, opinions or information	English and Communication: Listening and Talking (National 2)
Listen and respond to simple spoken ideas, opinions or information	English and Communication: Creating Texts (National 2)
Communicate simple ideas, opinions or information	English and Communication: Listening and Talking (National 2)

## Progression from this Course

Learners may progress from National 2 English and Communication to other Units or Courses at National 2.

Related Courses at National 2 level which would provide opportunities for consolidation and breadth of learning in the area of language include Core Skills: Communication (SCQF level 2).

Related Courses at National 3 level which would provide opportunities for consolidation and extension in the area of language include National 3 English and Core Skills: Communication (SCQF level 3)

Learners may choose to extend their learning through the Personal Development Award at SCQF level 2. The purpose of the Personal Development Award is to provide learners with an opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to participate in their communities, to consolidate their broader learning and achievements through a range of new and familiar experiences and to help them to become increasingly independent. Thus the Award seeks to develop basic life skills, including the ability to use information and communicate effectively.

The literacy and communication skills developed within the National 2 English and Communication Course will also support learners to progress to further study, employment and/or training.

# Hierarchies

**Hierarchy** is the term used to describe Courses and Units which form a structured sequence involving two or more SCQF levels.

It is important that any content in a Course and/or Unit at one particular SCQF level is not repeated if a learner progresses to the next level of the hierarchy. The skills and knowledge should be able to be applied to new content and contexts to enrich the learning experience. This is for centres to manage.

## **Relationships between National 3 and National 2 Units**

Some National 3 Units can substitute for the National 2 Units and so contribute to the Course Award.

The table below shows the relationships between these National 3 and National 2 Units.

<b>National 2 Unit Title</b>	<b>Substitute Unit from National 3</b>
English and Communication: Understanding Language	English: Understanding Language
English and Communication: Creating Texts	English: Producing Language
English and Communication: Listening and Talking	Literacy

# Approaches to learning and teaching

The purpose of this section is to provide general advice and guidance on approaches to learning and teaching which can be used for any of the component Units within the Course.

Effective learning and teaching will draw on a variety of approaches to enrich the experience of learners. In particular, a mix of approaches which provide opportunities for personalisation and choice will help to motivate and challenge the learners.

The skills based focus of the Course readily lends itself to a variety of approaches to learning and teaching which reflect those used within broad general education and the values and principles of Curriculum for Excellence.

Learning should, where possible, be relevant to the learner's everyday life, their overall learning programme, and/or work and leisure. Teachers/lecturers could also consider interdisciplinary and cross-curricular approaches to learning and teaching and explore how extra-curricular activities or the personal interests of learners could be included and recognised.

Learners should be given the opportunity to use their normal mode of communication and have access to the appropriate resources for support where they would normally be available in real-life situations in which the activity is being carried out.

The distribution of time between the various Units is a matter of professional judgement and is entirely at the discretion of the centre. Each Unit is likely to require an approximately equal time allocation, although this may depend on the learners' prior learning in the different topic areas, learning and teaching methods adopted and the design of the Course.

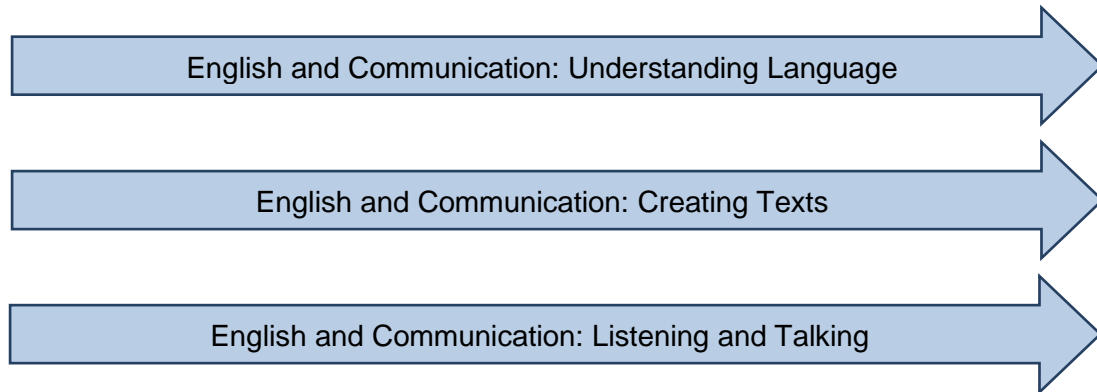
## **Sequencing and integration of Units**

Skills are likely to be taught in an integrated way and the amount of time spent on each of the skills and each of the Units will depend on the needs of the learners and their prior skills, knowledge and understanding.

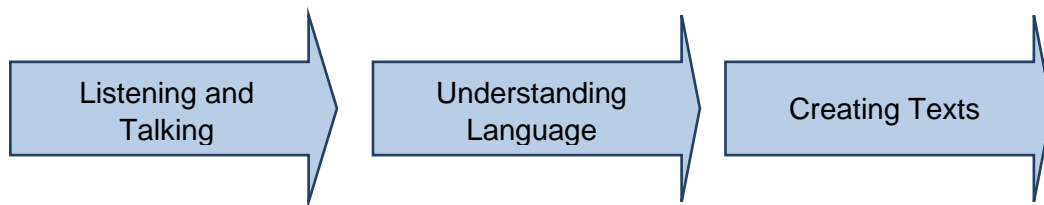
Learners will be at different stages of development in terms of all four skills and practitioners will choose the most appropriate order and pace for an individual learner's needs. The amount of time spent on each skill will depend on the needs of the learner and prior skills, knowledge and understanding.



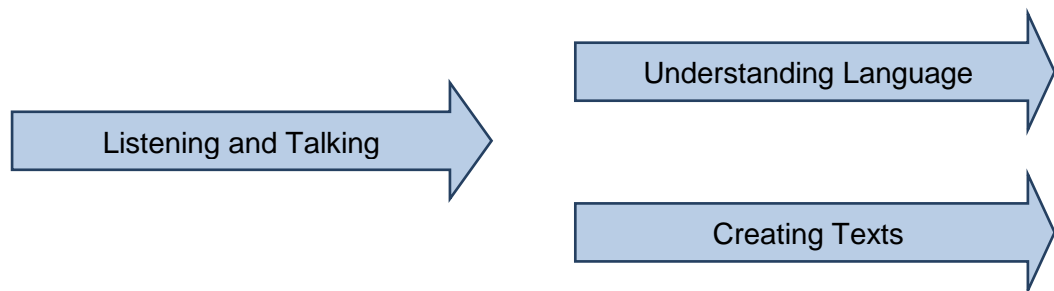
The following diagram illustrates this integrated approach to delivering the Units.



Units can also be delivered in sequence. This type of delivery allows for a focus on specific skills. The following diagram illustrates this approach.



Alternatively, Units may be delivered sequentially and 'in parallel'. This type of delivery also allows for a focus on specific skills.



Some learners benefit from developing listening, talking and reading before they develop their writing skills. It may also be beneficial for some learners to focus on the receptive modes before developing the productive modes. Teachers/lecturers will use their professional judgement when developing learning and teaching programmes.

### **Possible approaches to learning and teaching**

There are a wide variety of learning and teaching approaches which can be used to deliver this Course. This section of the *Course Support Notes* provides advice and guidance and examples of some approaches that could be used.

Many of these activities will arise naturally within the English classroom and could be further developed in other curriculum areas. Suggestions for combining assessment across curriculum areas are contained in the Approaches to Assessment section.

The skills within the National 2 English and Communication Course can be developed in a wide range of contexts and activities, for example:

- ◆ a theatre outing which could provide opportunities for the development of all four skills, for example booking tickets, reading programmes, watching/listening to a play, expressing opinions, creating very simple drama scripts
- ◆ a work experience activity which combines reading and writing (for example job adverts, forms, letters) and listening and talking (for example talking in pairs).
- ◆ a poetry activity focusing on listening to poetry, discussing rhyme and writing rhymes
- ◆ using artwork as a focus for reading and listening/talking (for example drawing pictures based on information learners have listened to, followed by talking about the pictures)
- ◆ 'Planning for Parents' Evening', for example writing invitations, posters, menus and letters
- ◆ a short story study (for example discussing character and creating learners' own characters, then creating narratives with these characters)
- ◆ reading, writing and making recipes as part of a whole school 'Healthy Eating' focus
- ◆ using film for a thematic study, including writing simple film reviews and talking about issues related to the theme

At all times, teachers/lecturers should provide opportunities for personalisation and choice to ensure that learning is relevant and motivating. Learners will be motivated within National 2 English and Communication by, for example, making personal choices about texts and topics, choosing how to present their writing or choosing the ideas to include in an individual talk.

Practitioners should familiarise themselves with the Outcomes and share these and the Assessment Standards with learners.

Teachers/lecturers will use different learning and teaching strategies to suit the needs of all learners. Active learner involvement and cooperative learning strategies will support learners. Innovative and creative ways of using ICT will be a valuable resource in creating inclusive learning and teaching approaches, for example, using language software programmes such as those used for word processing or the creation of presentation slides or using PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) to communicate with learners.

Language activities which are relevant and meaningful will help to engage and motivate learners, for example, using 'real-life' situations and texts such as writing for work purposes or talking about hobbies/interests. Examples of contexts for the development of literacy skills might include subject related/specific language activities, work experience, cross-curricular activities, work/leisure activities, daily routine, interests/hobbies, local issues, study/learning activities, out-of-school activities, work based or lifelong learning.

Cross-curriculum working can provide a framework for the development of combined approaches to generating evidence as part of learning and teaching.

For example, learners could be involved in events such as:

- ◆ fairs/festivals/events
- ◆ coffee mornings
- ◆ shows and concerts
- ◆ fund raising/charity work
- ◆ work experience

Learners could demonstrate their language skills by:

- ◆ creating posters
- ◆ presenting/displaying creative writing
- ◆ giving talks
- ◆ creating labels, signs, tickets
- ◆ keeping a diary or log
- ◆ writing or talking about experiences
- ◆ creating blogs

Learning about Scotland and Scottish culture will enrich the learners' learning experience and help them to develop the skills for learning, life and work they will need to prepare them for taking their place in a diverse, inclusive and participative Scotland and beyond. Where there are opportunities to contextualise approaches to learning and teaching to Scottish contexts, teachers and lecturers should consider this.

# Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

The literacy skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work are subsumed within the National 2 English and Communication Course.

The table below contains suggestions of how thinking skills can be developed within the National 2 English and Communication Course.

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work	Approaches for learning and teaching
<b>5.0 Thinking Skills</b>	
<b>5.2 Understanding</b> Understanding is the ability to demonstrate the meaning of items of information, to explain the order of events in a sequence, and to interpret in a different setting or context.	Learners will develop their understanding skills when they read texts and find information or when they explain the ideas within a text. For example, learners show understanding of the information in a set of instructions by carrying out the instructions.
<b>5.5 Creating</b> Creating is the ability to design something innovative or to further develop an existing thing by adding new dimensions or approaches. It also includes the ability to make, write, say or do something new.	Learners will develop their creating skills when they create new texts or when they express themselves in new ways or contribute new ideas to talks, interactions and discussions. For example, learners might listen to simple drama dialogue then create their own drama dialogues.

# Approaches to assessment

Learners will benefit from receiving accurate and regular feedback regarding their learning. This helps to ensure they are actively involved in the assessment process. It is also important that different approaches to assessment are adopted to suit the varying needs of learners.

## **Assessment strategies and methods**

There are a wide variety of assessment strategies and methods which can be used within the National 2 English and Communication Course.

Centres are encouraged to develop criteria for success which focus on small, well-defined steps in learning. In this way, the learner is more likely to achieve success in the Course and in any subsequent learning.

There may be opportunities in the day-to-day delivery of the Course to observe learners providing evidence which satisfies, completely or partially, a Unit or Units. This is naturally occurring evidence.

Evidence for assessment purposes is very likely to be gathered on this naturally occurring on-going basis rather than from more formal assessment methods.

Examples might include:

- ◆ observation of listening and talking (using an observation checklist, video recording, photography or equivalent)
- ◆ peer assessment (this could include peer review and peer moderation)
- ◆ oral questioning during and on completion of a language activity (a recording or transcript as evidence)
- ◆ learning and teaching activities which provide naturally occurring opportunities for assessment (for example demonstration of language skills used during the learning process)
- ◆ video recording or photographing or filming the learner's activities
- ◆ identifying opportunities to capture evidence within extra-curricular activities (both within the centre and within the wider community)
- ◆ integrating assessment across curriculum areas (for example many other Units can provide a context for consolidation and/or assessment of listening, talking, reading and writing)

Evidence for the Course will require the learner to demonstrate the following Outcomes and Assessment Standards:

<b>Unit title</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Assessment Standard</b>	<b>Assessment Standard</b>	<b>Assessment Standard</b>	<b>Evidence Requirements</b>	<b>Suggested examples of evidence</b>
<b>English and Communication: Understanding Language</b>	1. understand and respond to simple word-based texts	1.1 identifying the purpose of the text	1.2 identifying the main ideas within the text		Responses to reading at least two word-based texts of different genres, types or formats	1. Responses to reading a short story AND 2. Responses to reading a news article
<b>English and Communication: Creating Texts</b>	1. create simple word-based texts to communicate ideas, opinions or information	1.1 using appropriate language for purpose	1.2 using appropriate structure for purpose	1.3 using basic tools for language, as appropriate to purpose	At least two word-based texts of different genres, types or formats	1. A set of instructions AND 2. A letter
<b>English and Communication: Listening and Talking</b>	1. listen and respond to simple spoken ideas, opinions or information	1.1 identifying the purpose of spoken ideas, opinions or information	1.2 identifying the main ideas, opinions or information		Responses to listening on at least two occasions for different purposes	1. Responses to listening to a radio play AND 2. responses within a conversation about a past event
	2. communicate simple ideas, opinions or information	2.1 conveying the purpose of the communication	2.2 explaining the main ideas, opinions or information		At least one individual talk OR contributions to at least one interaction or discussion	1. Contributing to a discussion about class rules OR 1. A talk about 'My family'

It is important that teachers/lecturers keep accurate records of the evidence required to meet Assessment Standards. This will also support learners by:

- ◆ informing them of their progress
- ◆ identifying where further consolidation is required
- ◆ providing feedback on the effectiveness of teaching
- ◆ ensuring that the Course requirements are fulfilled

Evidence of a learner's achievements gathered for Assessment Standards purposes must be retained and stored appropriately for moderation purposes.

Opportunities for extension and consolidation of skills and knowledge should be built into this Course; how this is organised will depend on the teacher/lecturer, the needs of the learners and the teaching approach used.

Further advice on assessment and re-assessment is contained within the *National Assessment Resource*.

### **Authentication**

For guidance on authentication of evidence which takes place outwith the direct supervision of the teacher/lecturer responsible for the learner, eg outside the school or classroom, refer to the SQA Guide to Assessment.

## **Combining assessment across Units**

Evidence which is generated during the Course can be used as 'combined evidence'. This means that a learner's responses can be used to satisfy Outcomes from more than one Unit. This is illustrated below:

<b>Suggested activity</b>	<b>Learner evidence</b>
Reading (for example reading a story then answering oral questions about the story)	Oral responses can provide evidence for reading and talking
Listening (for example replying to questions in a conversation)	Oral responses can provide evidence for listening and talking
Reading (for example writing about a poem after reading a poem)	Written responses can provide evidence for reading and writing
Listening (for example the learner listens to a podcast and writes down the main ideas)	Written responses can provide evidence for listening and writing

It is important to ensure that all or some of the Assessment Standards for both Outcomes are satisfied if evidence is integrated in this way.

### **Integrated approaches to assessing Listening and Talking**

The integration of listening and talking activities will allow learners to develop both their listening and talking skills in the context of 'natural' conversations/transactions.

Learners could produce or listen to:

- ◆ Talks
- ◆ Monologues
- ◆ Audio books
- ◆ Transactions
- ◆ Discussions
- ◆ Interviews
- ◆ Role plays
- ◆ Dialogues

Learner responses can provide evidence of both listening and talking. During the conversation or discussion, it is important that the speaker(s) contributes ideas and uses language at a level which allows the listener(s) to satisfy the Assessment Standards.

Some suggested activities which integrate listening and talking are listed below:

- ◆ Two learners discuss their holiday plans
- ◆ Learners participate in role plays as customer/waiter as part of an 'eating out' topic
- ◆ A group of learners listen to a radio play and answer oral questions
- ◆ A learner answers questions orally after reading a text
- ◆ Learners listen to a visiting writer talking about his/her novel and afterwards discuss that they have heard
- ◆ A learner speaks via the internet to another learner

The table below contains two examples of integrated listening/talking activities and how they might generate integrated evidence for listening and talking.



<b>Activity – interview with a writer</b>	<b>Preparation</b>	<b>Interview</b>	<b>Assessment Standards for English and Communication: Listening and Talking</b>	<b>Learner evidence</b>
Learner interviews a writer who visits the class to talk about his/her work	<p>Learner prepares questions to ask</p> <p>Approaches to recording questions/answers are agreed</p> <p>Learner practises question/answer session with the teacher</p> <p>Learner develops awareness of interview format including importance of tone/register, turn-taking, structure</p>	<p>Learner asks questions and visitor answers</p> <p>Interview is recorded for learner portfolio</p>	<p>1.1 identifying the purpose of spoken ideas, opinions or information</p> <p>1.2 identifying the main ideas, opinions or information</p> <p>2.1 conveying the purpose of the communication</p> <p>2.2 explaining the main ideas, opinions or information</p>	<p>Learner responses show understanding of the purpose of the interview</p> <p>Learner responses show understanding of the speaker’s main ideas</p> <p>Learner explains the purpose of the interview – to find out information</p> <p>Learner’s questions ask about the writer’s main ideas</p>

Activity – giving a talk 'What I like to eat'	Preparation	Individual talk	Assessment Standards for English and Communication: Listening and Talking	Learner evidence
<p>Learner talks about favourite foods to a small peer group</p> <p>(Peers prepare questions to ask after the talk)</p>	<p>Learner prepares what to say (and what questions peers might ask afterwards)</p> <p>Approaches to recording talk/using visual aids, eg slides are agreed</p> <p>Learner practises talk</p> <p>Learner prepares for possible questions</p> <p>Learner develops awareness of talk format including importance of beginnings and endings, tone, use of slides</p>	<p>Learner gives talk</p> <p>Talk is recorded for learner portfolio</p>	<p>2.1 conveying the purpose of the communication</p> <p>2.2 explaining the main ideas, opinions or information</p> <p>1.1 identifying the purpose of spoken ideas, opinions or information</p> <p>1.2 identifying the main ideas, opinions or information</p>	<p>Learner explains the purpose of the talk</p> <p>Learner's talk explains his/her favourite foods with reasons</p> <p>Learner understands the purpose of peer questions</p> <p>Learner answers show understanding of what was asked</p>

### Assessment across the curriculum

Evidence can be generated by combining one or more of the Units within the National 2 English and Communication Course with other Units at National 2.

The table below shows suggested activities which could be generated in the context of other National 2 Units.

<b>Suggested activity</b>	<b>Evidence could be generated in the context of the following National 2 Units</b>
Writing a personal health plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ English and Communication: Creating Texts</li><li>◆ Food, Health and Wellbeing: Food for Health</li></ul>
Creating a multimodal text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ English and Communication: Creating Texts</li><li>◆ Working with Images, Graphics and Sound</li></ul>
Writing for a performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ English and Communication: Creating Texts</li><li>◆ Creating Materials for Performance</li></ul>
Expressing very simple ideas in a drama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ English and Communication: Listening and Talking</li><li>◆ Developing Performance Skills</li></ul>
Reading a play script	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ English and Communication: Understanding Language</li><li>◆ Using Performance Skills</li></ul>
Writing an e-mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ English and Communication: Creating Texts</li><li>◆ Internet Applications</li></ul>
Creating a poster about the local area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ English and communication: Creating Texts</li><li>◆ Social Subjects: Organising and Communicating Information</li></ul>

Further advice about this type of work is contained within the appropriate *Unit Support Notes*.

# Equality and inclusion

The additional support needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences or when considering any reasonable adjustments that may be required. Assessment methods should offer all learners an equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement. This should be reflected in the language used, the use of different assessment presentation methods and the use of appropriate illustrative materials which reflect an inclusive view.

Learners undertaking qualifications at SCQF level 2 are likely to require more support with their learning than at other levels, and learners should be given as much support as they need to engage with learning, teaching and assessment activities whilst maintaining the integrity of the Outcomes and Assessment Standards.

Examples of support might include:

- ◆ allowing extra time to complete activities
- ◆ practical helpers under direct learner instruction could assist with practical activities (this could also include a reader or scribe as appropriate)
- ◆ the use of specialised and adapted equipment
- ◆ the use of ICT and other assistive technologies

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Course Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Course.

It is important that centres are aware of and understand SQA's assessment arrangements for disabled learners, and those with additional support needs, when making requests for adjustments to published assessment arrangements. Centres will find more guidance on this in the series of publications on Assessment Arrangements on SQA's website: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html).

# Appendix 1: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications are available on SQA's website at: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html).
- ◆ [\*Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Course Specifications\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Design Principles for National Courses\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Guide to Assessment \(June 2008\)\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Overview of Qualification Reports\*](#)
- ◆ Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas
- ◆ [\*SCQF Handbook: User Guide\*](#) (published 2009) and SCQF level descriptors (to be reviewed during 2011 to 2012): [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/4595.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/4595.html)
- ◆ [\*SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool\*](#)

## Appendix 2: Suggested web resources

The following tables show suggested web resources for teachers/lecturers. Some web resources may also be suitable for learners; these are marked in bold.

Title/organisation	Brief description
HMIE Journey to Excellence	Literacy Resources and Case Studies involving best practice
Scottish Information Literacy Project	Ideas and research on literacy
<b>Creative Scotland</b>	<b>Website incorporates Scottish screen resources</b>
An Adult Literacy and Numeracy Curriculum Framework for Scotland	Adult literacy resources and advice
<b>Scotland on Screen</b>	<b>Archive film clips for use with learners</b>
Education Scotland	Resources and advice on games based learning including Literacy
<b>'The Daily What' Online Newspaper</b>	<b>A newspaper resource for pupils linked to Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes</b>
Association for Scottish Literary Studies	Scottish literature website offering guidance and resources
National Assessment Resource	NAR assessment exemplars for literacy and English at all levels
<b>David Wray writing frames</b>	<b>Templates for learners in a variety of genres</b>
<b>Voki</b>	<b>Software which supports the creation of speaking avatars</b>
<b>Piclits</b>	<b>An online tool for creating stories with pictures</b>
<b>Pixton</b>	<b>An online tool for creating comic strips</b>

Reading Strategies	Site provides reading strategies to support learners
Learning and Teaching Scotland Literacy	Support and advice on literacy as a responsibility for all
Active Learning Strategies for Literacy	Active learning ideas for literacy across the curriculum
Knowledge of Language	Advice on Knowledge of Language skills for practitioners, parents and pupils

# Administrative information

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**Published:** April 2012 (version 1.0)

**Superclass:** to be advised

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## History of changes to Course Support Notes

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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Note: You are advised to check SQA's website ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version.



## Unit Support Notes — English and Communication: Understanding Language (National 2)



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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this document for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

# Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the English and Communication: Understanding Language (National 2) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- ◆ English and Communication Understanding Language (National 2) *Unit Specification*
- ◆ National 2 English and Communication *Course Specification*
- ◆ National 2 English and Communication *Course Support Notes*
- ◆ appropriate assessment support materials

# General guidance on the Unit

## Aims

The general aim of this Unit is to help learners to develop their skills in reading and understanding different types of word-based texts. Learners will demonstrate their understanding of language by responding to texts in different ways.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to understand and respond to simple word-based texts.

## Progression into this Unit

Entry to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre.

Prior to undertaking this Unit, learners would benefit from having an awareness of communication skills and a basic knowledge of language

By building on the early and first level experiences and outcomes for Literacy and English, this qualification will provide learners with opportunities to consolidate and further extend their communication and language skills.

This qualification may be suitable for learners who have successfully completed qualifications in English, Communication or related areas at SCQF level 1.

## Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the National 2 English and Communication *Course Support Notes*.

If this Unit is being delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

## Progression from this Unit

Learners may progress from the Understanding Language (National 2) Unit to related Units at National 2 or National 3 as below:

- ◆ Core Skills: Communication (SCQF level 2 or level 3)
- ◆ National 3 English Course or relevant component Units

Communication has applications in many other subject areas as well as life and work. The skills, knowledge and understanding developed in this Unit could therefore support progression into other curriculum areas, into National Certificate Group Awards and into further study, employment and training.

# Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

There are a wide variety of learning and teaching approaches which can be used to deliver this Unit. This section of the *Unit Support Notes* provides advice and guidance and examples of some approaches that could be used.

At all times, teachers/lecturers should provide opportunities for personalisation and choice to ensure that learning is relevant and motivating. Learners will be motivated within English and Communication: Understanding Language (National 2) by, for example, making personal choices about texts and topics, choosing which text to read or choosing how they wish to respond to show understanding.

Practitioners should familiarise themselves with the Outcomes and share these and the Assessment Standards with learners. Centres are encouraged to develop criteria for success to share with learners which focus on small, well-defined steps in learning to understand language. In this way, the learner is more likely to achieve success in the Unit and in any subsequent learning.

Learners will read simple word based texts. Examples of simple word-based texts might include: blogs, simple stories or poems, wikis, instructions, letters, forms, e-mails, invitations, short newspaper and magazine articles, simple reports, advertisements, leaflets, timetables, simple reflections, simple explanations/opinions, simple experiences, simple play scripts.

Learners will begin to develop critical literacy skills, for example by using simple research skills such as making simple notes under headings. Learners should develop an awareness of the difference between fact and opinion, for example by reading texts which contain facts/information and comparing and contrasting these with texts which contain opinions or discussing the difference between fact and fiction.

Preparatory activities such as word recognition or prediction activities will support learners in engaging with texts. Learners will develop the ability to select and use resources before and as they read, for example, learners may access word banks or images to help them understand texts.

## **Reading fiction texts**

Learners can develop the ability to understand fiction texts, for example, stories, poems, simple drama scripts or dialogues between imagined characters. Learners will develop awareness of the structure of the different genres, for example, reading prose and poetry in order to understand that poems can be written in lines, verses and may use rhythm/rhyme, whereas prose is written in sentences and paragraphs.

Learners might also read play scripts to develop an awareness of structure and layout of, for example, layout of dialogue, characters' names and stage directions.

The following table contains suggested approaches to developing learners' skills in reading fiction:

<b>Genre</b>	<b>Suggested approaches/activities</b>
Simple short stories, eg westerns, science fiction, thriller, romance, horror	Talking about the purpose of the story/theme/setting
	Focus on plot – explain what happens by summarising/paraphrasing
	Focus on the story opening/ending
	Make a storyboard of the story
	Create a timeline for plot/characters
	Highlight words/phrases in the story
	Select information or ideas from the story
Poems, eg song lyrics, simple poems	Talking about the purpose of the poem/theme
	Line completion/line ordering
	Rhyming/rhythm games
	Make a storyboard of the poem
	Selecting words/phrases from the poem
	Finding repetition/rhyme
	Reading poems aloud
Drama scripts, eg simple plays, simple dialogues between characters	Talking about the purpose of the drama/theme
	Focus on how characters speak/what characters say
	Make a storyboard of the play
	Watch/listen to a film/theatre version of the play
	Talk about relationships between characters
	Highlight words/phrases in the play which show characters' feelings/relationships

### Reading non-fiction texts

Learners can develop the ability to understand non-fiction texts, for example reports, leaflets, menus, timetables, signs, e-mails. Learners will develop awareness of the structure of the different genres, for example, how instructions are set out or the layout of a letter.

The following table contains suggested approaches to developing learners' skills in reading non-fiction:

<b>Suggested approaches/activities</b>
Using prior knowledge of text types
Prediction exercises
Highlighting words/phrases or ideas
Question and answer
Focus on layout/structure by reordering text
Cloze procedure
Use of symbols/pictures
Directed Activities Related to Text (DARTs) which include prediction, highlighting, cloze procedure and sequencing
Comparing different texts

Evidence for assessment purposes will be gathered on a naturally occurring, on-going basis, rather than from more formal assessment methods.

Naturally occurring evidence can be gathered in a variety of ways. Examples of contexts might include:

- ◆ reading word-based texts in real life contexts, for example, for events in school/college
- ◆ identifying opportunities to demonstrate understanding of texts within extra-curricular activities (both within the centre and within the wider community)
- ◆ integrating assessment across curriculum areas (for example, many other Units can provide a context for consolidation and/or assessment of reading)

It is likely that learners will produce evidence for all Assessment Standards within one text.

Learners will respond in different ways to word-based texts, for example, by answering written or oral questions. Learners' responses will demonstrate that they can find information in a text/in texts and that they can identify why the text has been written.

Other examples of learner responses include:

- ◆ answering questions about a text either orally or in writing
- ◆ making an item by following written instructions, for example, making a dish from a recipe
- ◆ making a storyboard or a mind map to show understanding of a story
- ◆ making visual images, for example, drawing a character
- ◆ highlighting a text, for example, underlining key ideas or information
- ◆ sequencing information, for example, sorting jumbled up words or sentences

Where learners generate evidence in the form of oral or written answers, a variety of suggested questions/prompts are given below. Questions/prompts should be appropriate to the text being read.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Assessment Standards</b>	<b>Evidence of reading – questions/prompts</b>
Understand and respond to simple word-based texts	1.1 identifying the purpose of the text	What is the writing for? Why has this text been written? What is the purpose of the text? Is the text explaining/ persuading/ inviting/informing?
	1.2 identifying the main ideas, within the text	What is/are the main or important idea(s)? What is the text about? Who is the text about? What does the writer think about the topic? What happens in the text? What does the text tell you?

It is important that teachers/lecturers keep accurate records of the evidence required to meet assessment standards. This will also support learners by:

- ◆ informing them of their progress in understanding texts and identifying next steps
- ◆ identifying where further consolidation is required
- ◆ providing feedback on the effectiveness of teaching
- ◆ ensuring that the Unit requirements in are fulfilled

Further advice on assessment and reassessment is contained within the *National Assessment Resource*.

## **Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work**

Information about developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work in this Unit is given in the relevant *Course Support Notes*.

# Equality and inclusion

Inclusive approaches and methods which might be used to support individual learners in English and Communication: Understanding Language (National 2) Unit include:

- ◆ Braille
- ◆ alpha smarts
- ◆ laptops
- ◆ electronic spellcheckers
- ◆ speech to text software
- ◆ text to speech software
- ◆ voice recorders
- ◆ adapted texts/materials
- ◆ PECS
- ◆ assistive technologies such as speech recognition programmes

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Unit Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Unit.

Alternative approaches to Unit assessment to take account of the specific needs of learners can be used. However, the centre must be satisfied that the integrity of the assessment is maintained and where the alternative approach to assessment will, in fact, generate the necessary evidence of achievement.



# Appendix 1: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications on SQA’s website: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14976.html>
- ◆ [\*Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Course Specifications\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Design Principles for National Courses\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Guide to Assessment \(June 2008\)\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Overview of Qualification Reports\*](#)
- ◆ *Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas*
- ◆ *Research Report 4 — Less is More: Good Practice in Reducing Assessment Time*
- ◆ *Coursework Authenticity — a Guide for Teachers and Lecturers*
- ◆ [\*SCQF Handbook: User Guide\*](#) (published 2009) and SCQF level descriptors (to be reviewed during 2011 to 2012): [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/4595.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/4595.html)
- ◆ [\*SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool\*](#)
- ◆ SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools
- ◆ SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education
- ◆ SQA e-assessment web page: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/5606.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/5606.html)

## Appendix 2: Suggested web resources

The following tables show suggested web resources for teachers/lecturers. Some web resources may also be suitable for learners; these are marked in bold.

Title/organisation	Brief description
HMIE Journey to Excellence	Literacy Resources and Case Studies involving best practice
Scottish Information Literacy Project	Ideas and research on literacy
Creative Scotland	Website incorporates Scottish screen resources
An Adult Literacy and Numeracy Curriculum Framework for Scotland	Adult literacy resources and advice
Scotland on Screen	Archive film clips for use with learners
Education Scotland	Resources and advice on games based learning including Literacy
<b>'The Daily What' Online Newspaper</b>	<b>A newspaper resource for pupils linked to Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes</b>
Association for Scottish Literary Studies	Scottish literature website offering guidance and resources
National Assessment Resource	NAR assessment exemplars for literacy and English at all levels
<b>David Wray writing frames</b>	<b>Templates for learners in a variety of genres</b>
<b>Voki</b>	<b>Software which supports the creation of speaking avatars</b>
<b>Piclits</b>	<b>An online tool for creating stories with pictures</b>
<b>Pixton</b>	<b>An online tool for creating comic strips</b>

Reading Strategies	Site provides reading strategies to support learners
Learning and Teaching Scotland Literacy	Support and advice on literacy as a responsibility for all
Active Learning Strategies for Literacy	Active learning ideas for literacy across the curriculum
Knowledge of Language	Advice on Knowledge of Language skills for practitioners, parents and pupils

# Administrative information

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**Published:** April 2012 (version 1.0)

**Superclass:** to be advised

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## History of changes to Unit Support Notes

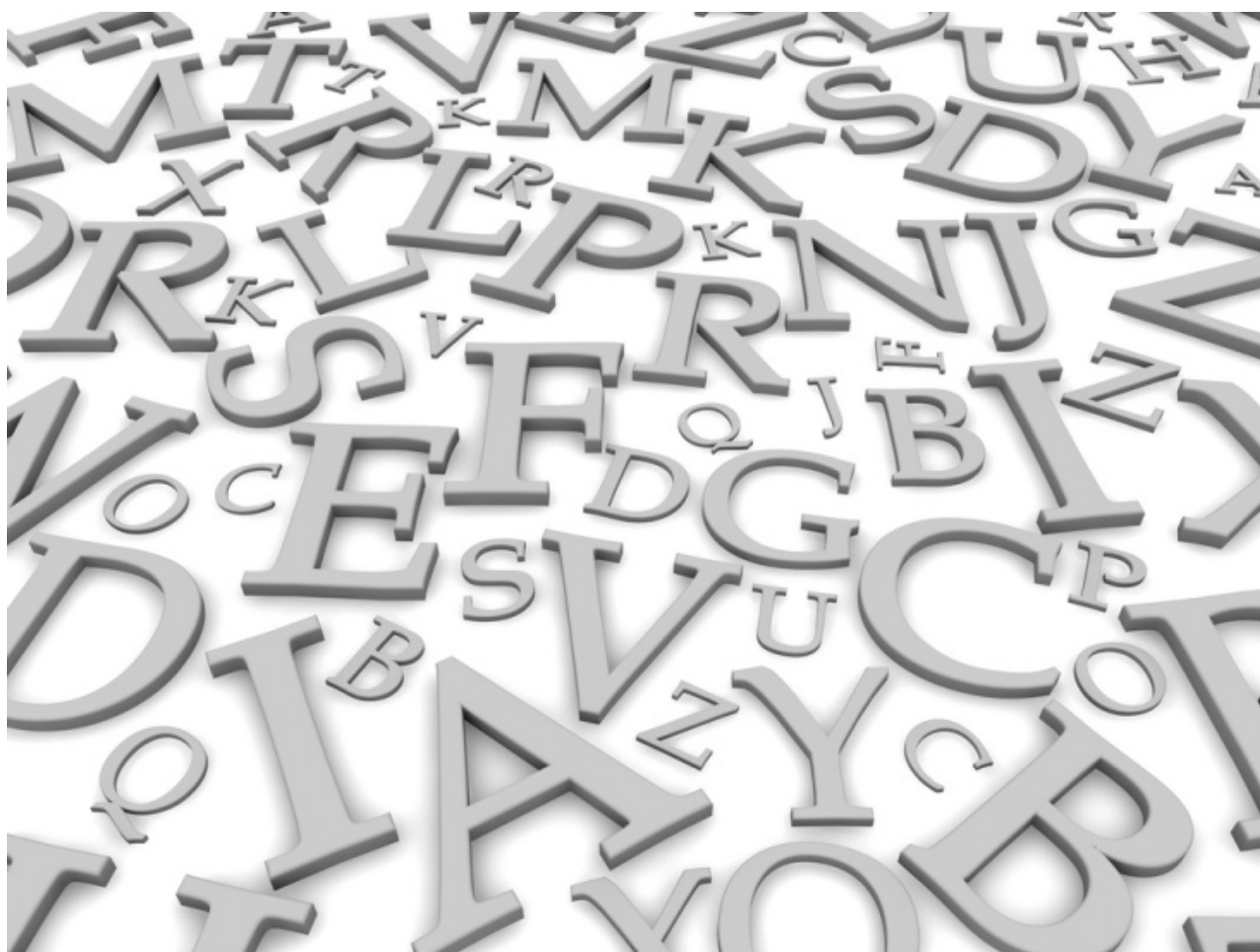
Unit details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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## Unit Support Notes — English and Communication: Creating Texts (National 2)



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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this document for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

# Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the English and Communication: Creating Texts (National 2) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- ◆ English and Communication: Creating Texts (National 2) *Unit Specification*
- ◆ National 2 English and Communication *Course Specification*
- ◆ National 2 English and Communication *Course Support Notes*
- ◆ appropriate assessment support materials

# General guidance on the Unit

## Aims

The general aim of this Unit is to help learners to develop their skills in communicating ideas, opinions and information by creating a variety of texts. Learners who complete this Unit will be able to create simple word-based texts to communicate ideas, opinions or information

## Progression into this Unit

Entry to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre.

Prior to undertaking this Unit, learners would benefit from having an awareness of communication skills and a basic knowledge of language

By building on the early and first level experiences and outcomes for Literacy and English, this qualification will provide learners with opportunities to consolidate and further extend their communication and language skills.

This qualification may be suitable for learners who have successfully completed qualifications in English, Communication or related areas at SCQF level 1.

## Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the National 2 English and Communication *Course Support Notes*.

If this Unit is being delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

## Progression from this Unit

Learners may progress from the English and Communication: Creating Texts (National 2) Unit to related Units at National 2 or National 3 such as:

- ◆ Core Skills: Communication (SCQF level 2 or level 3)
- ◆ National 3 English Course or relevant component Units

Communication has applications in many other subject areas as well as life and work. The skills, knowledge and understanding developed in this Unit could therefore support progression into other curriculum areas, into National Certificate Group Awards and into further study, employment and training.

# Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

A wide variety of learning and teaching approaches can be used to deliver this Unit. This section of the Unit Support Notes provides advice and guidance and examples of some approaches that could be used.

At all times, teachers/lecturers should provide opportunities for personalisation and choice through, for example careful selection of contexts to ensure that learning is relevant and motivating. Learners will be motivated within English and Communication: Creating Texts (National 2) by, for example, making personal choices about texts and topics or by choosing how to present their writing.

Learners will benefit from developing the ability to create different types of texts for different purposes as follows:

## **Imaginative writing**

Learners can develop skills in creating imaginative fiction texts. Creating simple stories, poems and drama scripts will support learners to explore language in an imaginative way and to describe characters (for example in a short story or character sketch) and situations (for example in an imagined dialogue between two characters). Drama scripts allow learners to create dialogue between characters and to explore relationships between characters. Poetry gives learners the opportunity to 'play' with language and to explore rhythm and rhyme.

## **Personal writing**

Many learners enjoy describing experiences such as holidays or past events. Through reflecting on experiences, learners can develop the ability to express feelings, attitudes and opinions. They will also use adjectives, verbs and adverbs to describe and reflect on experiences and use verb tenses to talk about past, present and future events. Learners can also consider the structure of the writing, for example, simple chronological order.

## **Functional writing**

Learners can develop skills in conveying information through creating functional texts such as invitations, e-mails, letters, news articles, recipes, leaflets and simple reports. Learners will develop the ability to use appropriate structures for the functional texts they create, for example, lists, headings, titles, simple layouts and formats, beginning and endings, sections. Modelling different types of functional texts will develop learners' awareness of layout and organisation, for example, the format and layout of a simple news article or how to begin and end a letter.

Advice on tools for language for different types of text is contained in Appendix 2.



Preparatory activities such as discussion or mind-mapping will support learners to develop their writing. Learners should be encouraged to plan their writing, for example by creating simple mind maps or through discussion or by using a simple writing frame. In planning and preparing for writing, learners will consider the genre, audience and purpose for their writing.

They will develop the ability to select and use appropriate language to convey ideas and to choose an appropriate structure. Learners will benefit from developing their writing through, for example:

- ◆ discussing structure and layout
- ◆ building up sentences, for example by linking words together
- ◆ developing vocabulary
- ◆ developing technical skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling
- ◆ creative writing, for example poetry, brief character descriptions
- ◆ use of writing frames/scaffolding

Learners could develop skills in structuring simple sentences using appropriate punctuation and in writing grammatically.

Learners should be supported to spell words accurately, using a range of strategies and resources to do so. Commonly available support, such as an electronic spell checker and other technical support, is acceptable for on-screen writing.

Learners will benefit from learning and teaching activities which support the writing process, for example:

- ◆ using storyboards
- ◆ using templates/frames
- ◆ sequencing/re-ordering activities
- ◆ using sentence starters
- ◆ generating ideas, for example, by using mind maps
- ◆ opportunities to talk about and share writing
- ◆ using word banks
- ◆ revising/editing

Learners will create simple word-based texts. Examples of simple word-based texts might include:

blogs, simple stories or poems, wikis, instructions, letters, forms, e-mails, invitations, short newspaper and magazine articles, simple reports, advertisements, leaflets, timetables, simple reflections, simple explanations/opinions, simple experiences, simple play scripts
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Learners will use simple language, for example, simple words, phrases, expressions and sentences. Learners will develop the ability to build up texts, for example, learners could access word/phrase banks to help them link words and sentences together. Scaffolding and writing frames will support learners in structuring the texts they create.

Learners will benefit from activities focusing on the purpose of texts. Learners should consider what the text is for or why they are creating a text. This will help to motivate learners.

Some examples of purpose are given below:

<b>Text type</b>	<b>Main purpose</b>
Instructions	To explain or instruct
Invitations	To invite
Advertisements	To persuade
Signs/posters	To explain
Simple story	To entertain
E-mail	To explain
Newspaper article	To inform or explain

Evidence for assessment purposes will be gathered on a naturally occurring, on-going basis, rather than from more formal assessment methods.

Naturally occurring evidence can be gathered in a variety of ways. Examples might include:

- ◆ creating word-based texts in a real life context, for example for events
- ◆ identifying opportunities to 'capture' evidence of writing within extra-curricular activities (both within the centre and within the wider community)
- ◆ integrating assessment across curriculum areas (for example many other Units can provide a context for consolidation and/or assessment of writing)

Centres are encouraged to develop criteria for success to share with learners which focus on small, well-defined steps in learning to understand language. In this way, the learner is more likely to achieve success in the Unit and in any subsequent learning.

It is likely that learners will produce evidence for all Assessment Standards within one text.

The following tables show how the assessment standards can be applied to imaginative, personal and functional texts.

Examples of three types of text are given below:

### Imaginative writing – applying the Assessment Standards

Type of text	Assessment Standards	Questions/prompts
Simple character description (learner invents a character for a story)	1.1 Using appropriate language for purpose	Is the character described, eg using adjectives to describe appearance, behaviour, speech? Does the language make sense?
	1.2 Using appropriate structure for purpose	Is the description organised, eg simple chronological order?
	1.3 Using basic tools for language, as appropriate to purpose	Does the language make sense? Has the learner used basic punctuation such as capital letters or full stops? Has the learner used basic grammar and expression?

### Personal writing – applying the Assessment Standards

Type of text	Assessment Standards	Questions/prompts
Describing a day out (including information/facts about the day out and feelings/thoughts after the day out)	1.1 Using appropriate language for purpose	Has the learner included key points? Has the learner used appropriate language to describe/reflect, eg adjectives, past tense? Does the language make sense?
	1.2 Using appropriate structure for purpose	Is the description organised, eg simple chronological order or narrative followed by evaluation?
	1.3 Using basic tools for language, as appropriate to purpose	Does the writing make sense? Has the learner used basic punctuation such as capital letters or full stops? Has the learner used basic grammar and expression?

## Functional writing – applying the Assessment Standards

Type of text	Assessment Standards	Questions/prompts
Simple letter of complaint (learner writes to council about litter around the community)	1.1 Using appropriate language for purpose	Does the letter contain the key points eg key information about the complaint? Does the writing make sense?
	1.2 Using appropriate structure for purpose	Is the letter laid out appropriately, eg address, date, salutation, ending? Has the learner used an appropriate order eg stating purpose, explaining, requesting?
	1.3 Using basic tools for language, as appropriate to purpose	Does the writing make sense? Has the learner used basic punctuation such as capital letters or full stops? Has the learner used basic grammar and expression?

It is important that teachers/lecturers keep accurate records of the evidence required to meet assessment standards. This will support learners by:

- ◆ informing them of their progress in creating texts and identifying next steps
- ◆ identifying where further consolidation is required
- ◆ providing feedback on the effectiveness of teaching
- ◆ ensuring that the Unit requirements are fulfilled

Opportunities for extension, remediation and consolidation of skills and knowledge should be built into this Course; how this is organised will depend on the teacher/lecturer, the needs of the learners and the teaching approach used.

Achievement is on a pass/fail basis. Learners who fail to achieve all the Assessment Standards within the Outcomes need only be re-assessed on those Assessment Standards not achieved. Re-assessment should only follow after further work or remediation.

Further advice on assessment and reassessment is contained within the *National Assessment Resource*.

## **Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work**

Information about developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work in this Unit is given in the relevant *Course Support Notes*.

# Equality and inclusion

Inclusive approaches and methods which might be used to support individual learners in English and Communication: Creating Texts (National 2) Unit include:

- ◆ Braille
- ◆ alpha smarts
- ◆ laptops
- ◆ electronic spellcheckers
- ◆ speech to text software
- ◆ text to speech software
- ◆ voice recorders
- ◆ adapted texts/materials
- ◆ PECS
- ◆ assistive technologies such as speech recognition programmes
- ◆ differentiated resources such as writing frames

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Unit Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Unit.

Alternative approaches to Unit assessment to take account of the specific needs of learners can be used. However, the centre must be satisfied that the integrity of the assessment is maintained and where the alternative approach to assessment will, in fact, generate the necessary evidence of achievement.

# Appendix 1: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications on SQA’s website: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14976.html>
- ◆ [\*Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Course Specifications\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Design Principles for National Courses\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Guide to Assessment \(June 2008\)\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Overview of Qualification Reports\*](#)
- ◆ *Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas*
- ◆ *Research Report 4 — Less is More: Good Practice in Reducing Assessment Time*
- ◆ *Coursework Authenticity — a Guide for Teachers and Lecturers*
- ◆ [\*SCQF Handbook: User Guide\*](#) (published 2009) and SCQF level descriptors (to be reviewed during 2011 to 2012): [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/4595.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/4595.html)
- ◆ [\*SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool\*](#)
- ◆ SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools
- ◆ SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education
- ◆ SQA e-assessment web page: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/5606.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/5606.html)

## Appendix 2: Guidance on tools for language

Learners will use a variety of basic tools for language, depending on the type of text and on the audience and purpose for the text.

The following table contains suggested tools for language for use when learners create imaginative, personal and functional texts.

Type of text	Suggested tools for language
imaginative texts	full stops, capital letters, question marks, exclamation marks as appropriate
	simple word and text order
	simple expression
	very simple imagery
	rhyme, repetition
	simple layout, eg play script
functional texts, eg instructions, forms, leaflets	capital letters
	simple layout, eg headings, sections
	simple command words
functional texts, eg news items, simple reports and explanations	full stops, capital letters, question marks, exclamation marks
	simple word and text order
	simple expression
	full stops, capital letters, question marks, exclamation marks as appropriate
	simple tenses, eg past tense for past events
personal texts	simple word and text order
	simple expression, eg how to express opinions, feelings, attitudes



## Appendix 3: Suggested web resources

The following tables show suggested web resources for teachers/lecturers. Some web resources may also be suitable for learners; these are marked in bold.

<b>Title/organisation</b>	<b>Brief description</b>
HMIE Journey to Excellence	Literacy Resources and Case Studies involving best practice
Scottish Information Literacy Project	Ideas and research on literacy
<b>Creative Scotland</b>	<b>Website incorporates Scottish screen resources</b>
An Adult Literacy and Numeracy Curriculum Framework for Scotland	Adult literacy resources and advice
<b>Scotland on Screen</b>	<b>Archive film clips for use with learners</b>
Education Scotland	Resources and advice on games based learning including Literacy
<b>'The Daily What' Online Newspaper</b>	<b>A newspaper resource for pupils linked to Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes</b>
Association for Scottish Literary Studies	Scottish literature website offering guidance and resources
National Assessment Resource	NAR assessment exemplars for literacy and English at all levels
<b>David Wray writing frames</b>	<b>Templates for learners in a variety of genres</b>
<b>Voki</b>	<b>Software which supports the creation of speaking avatars</b>
<b>Piclits</b>	<b>An online tool for creating stories with pictures</b>
<b>Pixton</b>	<b>An online tool for creating comic strips</b>

Reading Strategies	Site provides reading strategies to support learners
Learning and Teaching Scotland Literacy	Support and advice on literacy as a responsibility for all
Active Learning Strategies for Literacy	Active learning ideas for literacy across the curriculum
Knowledge of Language	Advice on Knowledge of Language skills for practitioners, parents and pupils

# Administrative information

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**Published:** April 2012 (version 1.0)

**Superclass:** to be advised

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## History of changes to Unit Support Notes

Unit details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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## Unit Support Notes — English and Communication: Listening and Talking (National 2)



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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this document for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

# Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the English and Communication: Listening and Talking (National 2) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- ◆ English and Communication: Listening and Talking (National 2) *Unit Specification*
- ◆ National 2 English and Communication *Course Specification*
- ◆ National 2 English and Communication *Course Support Notes*
- ◆ appropriate assessment support materials

# General guidance on the Unit

## Aims

The general aim of this Unit is to help learners to develop their skills in talking individually or in discussion. Learners will also develop their ability to respond to spoken communication.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

- ◆ Listen and respond to simple spoken ideas, opinions or information
- ◆ Communicate simple ideas, opinions or information

## Progression into this Unit

Entry to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre.

Prior to undertaking this Unit, learners would benefit from having an awareness of communication skills and a basic knowledge of language.

By building on the early and first level experiences and outcomes for Literacy and English, this qualification will provide learners with opportunities to consolidate and further extend their communication and language skills.

This qualification may be suitable for learners who have successfully completed qualifications in English, Communication or related areas at SCQF level 1.

## **Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit**

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the National 2 English and Communication *Course Support Notes*.

If this Unit is being delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

## **Progression from this Unit**

Learners may progress from the English and Communication: Listening and Talking (National 2) Unit to related Units at National 2 or National 3 as below:

- ◆ Core Skills: Communication (SCQF level 2 or level 3)
- ◆ English (National 3) Course or relevant component Units

Communication has applications in many other subject areas as well as life and work. The skills, knowledge and understanding developed in this Unit could therefore support progression into other curriculum areas, into National Certificate Group Awards and into further study, employment and training.

# Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

There are a wide variety of learning and teaching approaches which can be used to deliver this Unit. This section of the *Unit Support Notes* provides advice and guidance and examples of some approaches that could be used.

Teachers/lecturers will provide opportunities for personalisation and choice to ensure that learning is relevant and motivating. Learners will be motivated within English and Communication: Listening and Talking (National 2) by, for example:

- ◆ choosing contexts and topics for talking and listening
- ◆ giving choices about setting where appropriate, for example, choosing to talk to the teacher, a visitor, the class, another learner, a helper or a small group
- ◆ giving choices about listening where appropriate, for example, choosing to respond orally or in writing to something the learner has listened to
- ◆ individual feedback to learners about their talking and listening
- ◆ creating learners' own learning targets for their talking and listening skills
- ◆ providing differentiated materials and approaches for talking and listening

Practitioners should familiarise themselves with the Outcomes and share these and the Assessment Standards with learners. Centres are encouraged to develop criteria for success which focus on small, well-defined steps in learning.

## Listening to spoken texts

Learners will respond in different ways to show that they have understood a variety of spoken texts. At SCQF level 2, learners should be able to identify the purpose of spoken texts, for example by listening to advertisements to identify how they persuade the listener to buy the product.

Learners will be motivated by listening to spoken texts which are familiar and relevant to their everyday lives. Suggested examples of spoken texts are listed below:

- ◆ Talks
- ◆ Stories, poems, plays
- ◆ Instructions
- ◆ Information
- ◆ Webcasts
- ◆ TV/radio programmes
- ◆ News items
- ◆ Audio materials/clips

Learners will benefit from activities which encourage understanding of what they listen to, for example, making notes or asking questions.



### **Listening within conversations/interactions/discussions**

Learners will be motivated by listening within transactions which are familiar and relevant to their everyday lives. Suggested examples of transactions are listed below:

- ◆ Group/peer discussions
- ◆ Talking about fiction in pairs/small groups
- ◆ Dialogues with peers or with a teacher/lecturer/helper
- ◆ Mock interviews and role plays
- ◆ Internet voice calls/phone calls

It is important that learners are aware of and can identify the purpose of transactions, for example, listening for information from another speaker.

Learners should be encouraged to develop awareness of the non-verbal conventions of transactions. For example, learners should be aware of the conventions of group discussion such as turn-taking and eye contact or the conventions of a phone call or interview.

### **Talking individually**

Learners will be motivated by talking in contexts which are familiar and which are meaningful and relevant to their everyday lives. Learners should be given opportunities to practise their talking skills in order to build confidence.

Individual talks can be formal or informal and can include:

- ◆ Talking about individual experience or to give information or to reflect
- ◆ Talking about fiction
- ◆ Multimedia or digital talks
- ◆ Creating podcasts

It is important that learners develop the ability to use language, content and structure which are appropriate to audience and purpose. Modelling will support learners to identify features of talking and to develop an awareness of, for example, appropriate register and tone.

In formal talks, learners should plan/prepare, using a structure which is appropriate to the purpose, for example, deciding on appropriate ways to begin and end an individual talk or how to invite questions from the audience at the end of the talk.

Non-verbal conventions include eye contact, intonation, facial expression, gesture, body language and pace. Showing learners examples of effective use of non-verbal conventions will help them to develop an understanding of awareness of audience.

### **Talking within conversations/interactions/discussions**

Learners may need support in talking in groups and consideration should be given to aspects such as room layout and group size. Allowing personalisation and choice in terms of topic and context will support learners.

Learners will participate in conversations/discussions by contributing and responding. Learners should convey the purpose of what they are saying either implicitly or explicitly, for example, by asking questions to find out information or by responding in a way which shows they understand the purpose of the interview.

Suggested examples of transactional talking contexts are listed below:

- ◆ Discussing school/college issues in a small group/class
- ◆ Interviewing the Head teacher/Principal about an event
- ◆ Imagined role plays such as customer/waiter or parent/child
- ◆ Conversations with the teacher/tutor about learning
- ◆ Greeting/giving information to visitors to school/college

Teacher/lecturers and lecturers are encouraged to select the most appropriate assessment methods, taking into account the needs of their learners and the requirements of the Unit. Evidence for assessment purposes will be gathered on a naturally occurring, on-going basis, rather than from more formal assessment methods.

Naturally occurring evidence can be gathered in a variety of ways. Examples might include:

- ◆ observation of listening and talking (using an observation checklist, video recording, photography or equivalent)
- ◆ oral questioning during and on completion of a language activity (a recording or transcript as evidence)
- ◆ learning and teaching activities which provide naturally occurring opportunities for assessment (for example discussing fiction choices)
- ◆ identifying opportunities to 'capture' evidence within extra-curricular activities (both within the centre and within the wider community)
- ◆ integrating assessment across curriculum areas (for example many other Units can provide a context for consolidation and/or assessment of listening and talking)

Evidence of a learner's achievements gathered for assessment standards purposes must be retained and stored appropriately for moderation purposes.

Further advice on assessment and re-assessment is contained within the *National Assessment Resource*.

It is likely that both Assessment Standards will be evidenced on one occasion, for example, after listening to a spoken text or within a group discussion. It is likely that learners will produce evidence of both Assessment Standards within one listening context.

### Generating evidence for listening

When generating listening evidence, questions/prompts/activities should be appropriate to the listening context. Suggested questions/prompts/activities which might generate assessment evidence are contained in the following table:

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Assessment Standards</b>	<b>Context — listening to a spoken text, for example listening to a story read aloud</b>	<b>Context — listening for information , for example listening to a factual podcast</b>	<b>Context — listening in an interaction, for example an interview with a visiting writer</b>
1 Listen and respond to simple spoken ideas, opinions or information	1.1. identifying the purpose of the spoken ideas, opinions or information	Was the story enjoyable? Did you find the story funny/sad/frightening?	What is the podcast for? What is the purpose of the podcast? Is the podcast explaining/persuading/inviting/informing?	What was the interview for? What was the purpose of the interview? What did you want to find out in the interview?
	1.2 identifying the main ideas, opinions or information	Activity – make a story board of the story which shows the main things that happened in the story	What is/are the main or important idea(s)? What is the podcast about? Who is the podcast about? What does the speaker think about the topic? What does the podcast tell you?	What did the visitor tell you? What did the visitor say about . . . ? What were the visitor's ideas? OR Create a poster about the writer including his/her opinions/reasons for writing/facts about him/her

### Generating evidence for talking

Suggested examples of evidence for different types of Talking are contained in the following table

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Assessment Standards</b>	<b>Evidence — individual talk about a residential experience</b>	<b>Evidence — interview with a teacher to find out opinions</b>	<b>Evidence — discussion about choice of poem</b>
2. communicate simple ideas, opinions or information	2.1 conveying the purpose of the communication	Learner explains what the talk is for/about	Learner explains to the teacher what the interview is for	Learner participates in discussion about choice of poem (purpose is implied)
	2.2 explaining the main ideas, opinions or information	Learner explains what happened and reflects on the experience	Learner asks questions to find out teacher's opinions	Learner contributes opinions about which poem to choose

### Integrated approaches to assessing English and Communication: Listening and Talking

Assessing both Listening and Talking skills within one context can reduce the amount of assessment.

Suggested examples of integrated approaches are contained in the table below. All the Assessment Standards should be satisfied if the evidence is to be used for both listening and talking.

<b>Suggested contexts</b>	<b>Assessment Standards for Listening and Talking</b>
<p>Learners contribute and respond in conversations with the teacher about their homes/families</p> <p>Learners contribute and respond in role plays as characters from a story</p> <p>Learners contribute and respond in a small group discussion about musical tastes, asking each other's opinions</p> <p>Learners talk about a film they have watched and then respond to questions</p>	<p>Contributions/responses:</p> <p>1.1 identify the purpose of spoken ideas, opinions or information</p> <p>1.2 identify the main ideas, opinions or information</p> <p>2.1 convey the purpose of the communication</p> <p>2.2 explain the main ideas, opinions or information</p>

## **Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work**

Information about developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work in this Unit is given in the relevant *Course Support Notes*.

# Equality and inclusion

Inclusive approaches and methods which might be used to support individual learners in English and Communication: Listening and Talking (National 2) Unit include:

- ◆ speech to text software
- ◆ text to speech software
- ◆ voice recorders
- ◆ adapted texts/materials
- ◆ PECS
- ◆ assistive technologies such as speech recognition programmes

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Unit Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Unit.

Alternative approaches to Unit assessment to take account of the specific needs of learners can be used. However, the centre must be satisfied that the integrity of the assessment is maintained and where the alternative approach to assessment will, in fact, generate the necessary evidence of achievement.

# Appendix 1: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications on SQA’s website: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14976.html>
- ◆ [\*Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Course Specifications\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Design Principles for National Courses\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Guide to Assessment \(June 2008\)\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Overview of Qualification Reports\*](#)
- ◆ *Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas*
- ◆ *Research Report 4 — Less is More: Good Practice in Reducing Assessment Time*
- ◆ *Coursework Authenticity — a Guide for Teachers and Lecturers*
- ◆ [\*SCQF Handbook: User Guide\*](#) (published 2009) and SCQF level descriptors (to be reviewed during 2011 to 2012): [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/4595.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/4595.html)
- ◆ [\*SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool\*](#)
- ◆ SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools
- ◆ SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education
- ◆ SQA e-assessment web page: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/5606.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/5606.html)



## Appendix 2: Suggested web resources

The following tables show suggested web resources for teachers/lecturers. Some web resources may also be suitable for learners; these are marked in bold.

Title/organisation	Brief description
HMIE Journey to Excellence	Literacy Resources and Case Studies involving best practice
Scottish Information Literacy Project	Ideas and research on literacy
Creative Scotland	Website incorporates Scottish screen resources
An Adult Literacy and Numeracy Curriculum Framework for Scotland	Adult literacy resources and advice
Scotland on Screen	Archive film clips for use with learners
Education Scotland	Resources and advice on games based learning including Literacy
<b>'The Daily What' Online Newspaper</b>	<b>A newspaper resource for pupils linked to Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes</b>
Association for Scottish Literary Studies	Scottish literature website offering guidance and resources
National Assessment Resource	NAR assessment exemplars for literacy and English at all levels
<b>David Wray writing frames</b>	<b>Templates for learners in a variety of genres</b>

<b>Voki</b>	<b>Software which supports the creation of speaking avatars</b>
<b>Piclits</b>	<b>an online tool for creating stories with pictures</b>
<b>Pixton</b>	<b>an online tool for creating comic strips</b>
Reading Strategies	Site provides reading strategies to support learner
Learning and Teaching Scotland Literacy	Support and advice on literacy as a responsibility for all
Active Learning Strategies for Literacy	active learning ideas for literacy across the curriculum
Knowledge of Language	Advice on Knowledge of Language skills for practitioners, parents and pupils

# Administrative information

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**Superclass:** to be advised

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## History of changes to Unit Support Notes

Unit details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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