National 3 English Course Support Notes

Contents

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the National 3 English Course. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering the Course and its Units. They should be read in conjunction with the:

♦ National 3 English *Course Specification*
♦ English: Understanding Language (National 3) *Unit Specification*
♦ English: Producing Language (National 3) *Unit Specification*

General guidance on the Course

Aims

The Course offers learners opportunities to develop and extend a wide range of skills. In particular, the Course aims to enable learners to develop the ability to:

♦ listen and talk, read, and write, as appropriate to purpose, audience and context
♦ understand, analyse and evaluate texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience in the contexts of literature, language and media
♦ create and produce texts, as appropriate to purpose, audience and context
♦ apply knowledge of language

Progression into this Course

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

♦ National 2 English and Communication Course or component Units

In terms of prior learning and experience, relevant experiences and outcomes may also provide an appropriate basis for doing this Course. Further information on relevant experiences and outcomes will be given in the *Course Support Notes*.

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.

♦ listening and talking, reading, and writing skills, as appropriate to purpose and audience
♦ understanding, analysing and evaluating simple texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience in the contexts of literature, language and media
♦ creating and producing simple texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience in familiar contexts
♦ using knowledge of language

Skills, knowledge and understanding to be included in the Course will be appropriate to the SCQF level of the Course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level (www.sqa.org.uk/scqf).

Learners should also possess:

♦ a basic critical terminology for discussing prose, poetry, drama and speech with regard to genre and conventions

♦ a basic critical terminology for discussing the products of the mass media
♦ a basic understanding of what facilitates/prevents effective communication

Learners should be able to apply this knowledge in their own use of language and in understanding and responding to the language of others.

Progression from this Course

Progression from this Course includes opportunities for progression to:

♦ National 4 English Course
♦ Literacy (National 4) Unit
♦ National Certificates
♦ further education

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 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 in order to enrich the learning experience. This is for centres to manage.

In the case of the National 3 English Course, there are important issues to address. While the National 3 English Course fits into a hierarchy with the National 4 English Course at the level above it, there is a key structural difference between them.

The National 3 English Course has a three-Unit structure, comprising the two core Units and the *Literacy* Unit. The National 4 English Course has a four-Unit structure, comprising the two core Units, an Added Value Unit Assignment and the *Literacy* Unit.

National 3	National 4	National 5	Higher
Understanding Language	Analysis and Evaluation	Analysis and Evaluation	Analysis and Evaluation
Producing Language	Creation and Production	Creation and Production	Creation and Production
Literacy	Literacy		
	Added Value Unit Assignment	Course assessment	Course assessment

This means that, while National 3 English and National 4 English are *broadly* in hierarchy, careful planning will be required in the case of:

♦ groups where learners follow Courses which lead to both National 3 English and National 4 English qualifications
♦ learners who start the National 4 English Course and are then judged better suited to the National 3 English Course
♦ learners who start the National 3 English Course and are then judged better suited to the National 4 English Course

Learners in a bi-level group may follow the same tasks and texts, with the tasks differing in depth, difficulty and volume. Care will need to be taken to ensure that learners following a National 3 English Course in a bi-level group will have experience of different texts in a subsequent National 4 English Course.

Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

Learners should be given the opportunity to build on prior learning and to increase their knowledge about English.

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

Learners are expected to develop broad generic skills as an integral part of their learning experience. The *Course Specification* lists the skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work that learners should develop through this Course. These are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and must be built into the Course where there are appropriate opportunities. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Course.

1   Literacy

1.1   Reading
1.2   Writing
1.3   Listening and talking

5   Thinking skills

5.3   Applying
5.4   Analysing and evaluating

The table below provides some suggested opportunities of how these skills can be further developed within the Course.

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work	Approaches for learning and teaching
1 Literacy	**1.1 Reading** This may be usefully developed by activities that involve fiction and information texts, and develop reading skills through modelled use of skimming, scanning and discussion to help learners engage with texts and identify the ideas within them. Activities to support learners in identifying the ideas within texts include:

	♦ asking and answering questions ♦ comparing and contrasting ♦ sorting and sequencing ♦ summarising and predicting ♦ text completion Learners will also benefit from activities focusing on the audience and purpose of texts. **1.2 Writing** Learners should be encouraged to plan their writing by creating mind maps and through peer discussion where they consider the genre, audience and purpose for their writing. Learners' writing will benefit from: ♦ discussing structure and layout ♦ building up sentences, by linking ♦ paragraphing and use of topic sentences ♦ developing vocabulary ♦ developing technical skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling ♦ using writing frames and scaffolding **1.3 Listening and talking** Wherever appropriate learners should be encouraged to use their language skills in real language situations. These situations, particularly drawn from life and work, may involve activities such as: ♦ asking and answering questions ♦ listening for and making comparisons/contrasts ♦ summarising and predicting
5 Thinking skills	**5.3 Applying** Applying is the ability to use existing information to solve a problem in a different context, and to plan, organise and complete a task that reflects what may be required by life or work situations. In order to do this in a supported way at this level, learners' should be given the chance to work at language tasks which are carefully stepped and sequenced, allowing them to work with what they know and to apply it to different situations. **5.4 Analysing and evaluating** Wherever possible, learners should be given the opportunity to practise developing these skills in real communicative contexts. A range of kinds of texts is vital to developing analysing and revaluating skills in listening and reading in order to develop learners'

	awareness of such aspects as: ♦ gist and effect on audience ♦ distinguishing fact and opinion ♦ discussing simple examples of bias and balance

Combining assessment across Units

The nature and structure of the National 3 English Course lends itself to the integration of assessment of the two Units: *English: Understanding Language* and *English: Producing Language*. Lessons or groups of lessons can integrate the two Units by using *Understanding Language* as a stimulus for *Producing Language*. In the same way, learners seeking to produce language can use texts studied in the *Understanding Language* Unit as a source or model for their writing or talking.

The following examples illustrate ways of combining assessment across the three Units.

Using film and television media as text
Assessment and Course design should make the most of opportunities to bring together all four Outcomes in the learning experiences being undertaken by the learner. Using a media text such as a short film, a class could read the film as a text, identifying purpose, audience and language. The learner could then go on to discuss the film in a small group and by communicating their thoughts on the film, would be engaged in satisfying *Producing Language* Outcome 2. If they then went on to gather their thoughts in Writing, they would satisfy Outcome 1 of both *Producing Language* and *Understanding Language***.**

Using local and topical issues as a stimulus to production
At National 3 learners may engage in activities that tap into the world around them for stimulus and as a context for their reading, writing, talking and listening. A local environmental concern could be used for Reading the various points of view (*Understanding Language* Outcome 1), and Listening (Outcome 2) to people expressing their thoughts about the issue. This can be analysed and responded to in terms of its effectiveness, language and purpose, and has scope for involving aspects of the local community in a real experience of the use of language.

In such real contexts the building blocks of effective communication may be learned where their use can been seen as having a direct impact on the learner's ability to put across their ideas and thoughts.

The learner's response could involve their own written and spoken opinion on the subject to satisfy Outcomes in both Units.

Two examples of a media/language study

Example 1:
Learners study a review of a TV programme from a newspaper, magazine or website as a text to understand and respond to. Learners' responses may take the form of a review, either written or oral, achieving both *Understanding Language* Outcome 1 and *Producing Language* Outcome 2.

Example of assessment evidence arising from activities:

Task/activity	Reading assessment opportunities	Listening assessment opportunities	Writing assessment opportunities	Talking assessment opportunities
Learners review a TV programme	Learners read a review as a model for the activity	Learners listen to and watch a TV programme and make notes	Learners produce a piece of discursive writing in the form of a review	Learners present their review/contribute to group discussion of it

Example 2:
Learners study two newspaper reports of the same event **or** two websites conveying differing opinions.

Learners evaluate these contrasting views. They then write a newspaper report **or** create a web page.

Examples of assessment evidence arising from activities:

Task/activity	Reading assessment opportunities	Listening assessment opportunities	Writing assessment opportunities	Talking assessment opportunities
Learners read texts followed by a group discussion and writing	Learners analyse and evaluate by answering questions on the texts	Learners listen and respond in a group discussion	Learners write a short piece in an agreed style (report or web page)	Learners contribute to a group discussion

In both these media/language study examples, the Outcomes of the *Literacy* Unit may also be overtaken as the writing involved is functional and the reading is of information text.

Literacy (National 3) Unit
Literacy (National 3) Outcomes may be overtaken at the same time as those of other Units of the Course.

For further detail about this Unit, please consult the corresponding section of the Literacy *Unit Support Notes.*

Equality and inclusion

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

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 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.

Appendix 1: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

♦ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications are available on SQA's website at: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa//14977.html.
♦ *Building the Curriculum 3: A framework for learning and teaching*
♦ 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
♦ *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*

Administrative information

Published: April 2012 (version 1.0)

Superclass: to be advised

History of changes to Course Support Notes

Unit details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the *English: Producing Language* (National 3) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

♦ the *Unit Specification*
♦ the *Course Specification*
♦ the *Course Support Notes*
♦ appropriate assessment support materials

If the *Unit Support Notes* have been developed for a Unit which is not part of a Course, then it is only necessary to read them in conjunction with the *Unit Specification*.

General guidance on the Unit

Aims

The general aim of this Unit is to provide learners with the opportunity to develop writing and talking skills in familiar contexts. Learners develop the skills needed to create and produce simple language in both written and oral forms.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

♦ produce simple written texts
♦ take part in simple spoken interactions

Progression into this Unit

Entry to this course is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills and knowledge required by the following (or by equivalent experience):

♦ National 2 English and Communication Course or component Units

In terms of prior learning and experience, relevant experiences and outcomes may also provide an appropriate basis for this Unit.

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the National 3 English *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

Progression from the *English: Producing Language* (National 3) Unit includes opportunities for vertical and lateral progression to:

♦ English: Creation and Production (National 4) Unit
♦ English: Understanding Language (National 3) Unit
♦ English: Literacy (National 3 or National 4) Unit
♦ further education, employment and/or training

Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

This section highlights types of text learners may use in this Unit.

Writing

♦ simple written texts in a variety of genres
♦ a simple website (hobby, environmental, local interest, historical, scientific etc)
♦ a simple non-fiction essay expressing an opinion or conveying information on paper or digitally
♦ a blog
♦ a simple persuasive text expressing a clear point of view
♦ a simple advert
♦ biographical and autobiographical anecdotal episodes

Talking

♦ class discussion
♦ simple presentation
♦ story-telling
♦ presenting ideas or an assignment to members of the school or local community
♦ short informative broadcasts, documentaries recorded digitally or filmed
♦ hot-seating or role play as part of a response to a text
♦ simple spoken opinions (either recorded, broadcast, streamed or live) by individuals with a distinct experience, or by a variety of individuals with differing opinions

Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality legislation and other 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 that any alternative approach to assessment will, in fact, generate the necessary evidence of achievement.

Administrative information

Published: April 2012 (version 1.0)

Superclass: to be advised

History of changes to Unit Support Notes

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

Unit Support Notes — English: Understanding Language (National 3)

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the *English: Understanding Language* (National 3) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

♦ the *Unit Specification*
♦ the *Course Specification*
♦ the *Course Support Notes*
♦ appropriate assessment support materials

If the *Unit Support Notes* have been developed for a Unit which is not part of a Course, then it is only necessary to read them in conjunction with the *Unit Specification*.

General guidance on the Unit

Aims

The general aim of this Unit is to provide learners with the opportunity to develop reading and listening skills in the contexts of literature, language and media. Learners develop the skills needed to understand, analyse and evaluate simple texts.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

♦ understand, analyse and evaluate simple written texts
♦ understand, analyse and evaluate simple spoken language

Progression into this Unit

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

♦ National 2 English and Communication Course or component Units

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the National 3 English *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

Progression from the *English: Understanding Language* (National 3) Unit includes opportunities for vertical and lateral progression to:

♦ English: Analysis and Evaluation (National 4) Unit
♦ English: Producing Language (National 3) Unit
♦ English: Literacy (National 3 or National 4) Unit
♦ further education, employment and/or training

Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

This section highlights types of text learners may use in this Unit.

Reading
The learner reads, analyses and evaluates written, printed or digital texts that contain a point of view, a main idea and are structured appropriately for their purpose, such as:

♦ simple literary texts from a variety of genres
♦ suitable subject-specific internet sites (environmental, local interest, scientific etc)
♦ informative or investigative journalism from newspapers and magazines
♦ blogs
♦ advertisements
♦ single-issue websites
♦ biographies or autobiographies

Listening
The learner listens to, analyses and evaluates spoken language that contains verbal clues to convey simple meaning, such as:

♦ short informative broadcasts, news- or feature-based
♦ simple spoken opinions (either recorded, broadcast, streamed or live) by individuals with a distinct experience, or by a variety of individuals with differing opinions
♦ story-tellers
♦ class discussion, interaction or presentation
♦ song lyrics
♦ interactions with members of the school or local community
♦ extracts from a film or documentary where a character or a real individual conveys an experience or a reaction to an event
♦ simple broadcast items such as news or sport

Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality legislation and other 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 that any alternative approaches to assessment will, in fact, generate the necessary evidence of achievement.

Administrative information

Published: April 2012 (version 1.0)

Superclass: to be advised

History of changes to Unit Support Notes

Unit details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2012

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

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