National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT   Word Processing (Intermediate 1)

NUMBER   DC9P 10

COURSE   PC Passport

SUMMARY

This unit is designed to enable candidates to develop basic word processing skills. Candidates will learn to create, save and print a simple document (such as a letter). Candidates will also acquire simple skills relating to computer hardware and software.

OUTCOMES

1   Use a computer system to perform basic tasks related to word processing.
2   Construct a simple document for a specific purpose.
3   Output a document in a range of formats.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

No previous knowledge or experience of computer hardware or computer software is required.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Intermediate 1 (6 SCOTCAT points at SCQF level 4*)

SCOTCAT points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCOTCAT points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.

Administrative Information

Superclass: CD

Publication date: August 2003

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 01

National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

CORE SKILLS

This unit contributes to IT Core Skills Intermediate 1 level.

Information on the automatic certification of any core skills in this unit is published in *Automatic Certification of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, publication code BA0906).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT   Word Processing (Intermediate 1)

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1
Use a computer system to perform basic tasks related to word processing.

Performance criteria
a) The use of computer hardware is effective.
b) The use of the operating system is effective.
c) The use of help facilities is effective.
d) Common text formats are accurately identified.
e) Basic terminology relating to hardware, software and word processing is understood and used correctly.

Note on range for the outcome
Tasks: Navigating folders; saving files; printing files; cut, copy and paste; load and terminate word processing program.

Evidence requirements
Performance evidence that the candidate can use a computer system to the standards defined by performance criteria (a) to (c). This will be in the form of an observation checklist or other means of recording candidate performance (such as a video recording).

Evidence of knowledge and understanding will consist of 6 objective questions relating to performance criteria (d) and (e), and underpinning knowledge relating to performance criteria (a) to (c). Candidates are required to produce at least 4 correct answers.

OUTCOME 2
Construct a simple document for a specific purpose.

Performance criteria
a) The document is created effectively using the basic features of the software.
b) The document is fit-for-purpose in terms of content and layout.
c) The presentation of the document is clear and consistent with its contents.
d) The document is free from spelling errors.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Note on range for the outcome
Purpose: personal.
Document: free text; letter; menu.
Features of software: editing features (including undo); formatting features (including text and paragraph formats); spell correction.

Evidence requirements
Performance evidence that the candidate can create a simple document to the standards defined by performance criteria (a) to (d). Candidates must create a minimum of two documents: one must be a letter and the other must be a free text or a menu.

Evidence of knowledge and understanding will consist of 6 objective questions relating to the underpinning knowledge relevant to performance criteria (a) to (d). Candidates are required to produce at least 4 correct answers.

OUTCOME 3
Output a document in a range of formats.

Performance criteria
a)   Output device is correctly prepared to receive document.
b)   Document is previewed prior to output to ensure accuracy of output.
c)   Output options are correctly selected.

Note on range for the outcome
Formats: paper.
Output device: printer.
Output options: page set-up; printer set-up.

Evidence requirements
Performance evidence that the candidate can output a document to the standards defined by performance criteria (a) to (c). Candidates must output a minimum of two documents: one must be a letter and the other must be a free text or a menu.

Evidence of knowledge and understanding will consist of 3 objective questions relating to the underpinning knowledge relevant to performance criterion (c). Candidates are required to produce at least 2 correct answers.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Word Processing (Intermediate 1)

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE UNIT
The assessment of knowledge and understanding can be combined into a single instrument of assessment consisting of 15 objective questions relating to outcomes 1, 2 and 3. The distribution of questions should adhere to the evidence requirements for each outcome:

Outcome 1   6 questions
Outcome 2   6 questions
Outcome 3   3 questions.

The combined pass mark for this assessment is 10 correct answers (out of 15 questions). If a single instrument of assessment is used, it is not necessary to satisfy the pass mark for each outcome. Candidates will be deemed to have achieved all outcomes (with respect to their knowledge and understanding) if their combined score is at least 10 out of 15. However, for the purposes of re-assessment, the individual thresholds for each outcome will be followed.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT   Word Processing (Intermediate 1)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

This unit may be delivered as a stand-alone unit or in combination with other units as part of the PC Passport award at Intermediate 1 level.

This unit is one of a series of units entitled *Word Processing*. Similar units exist at Intermediate 2 and Higher levels.

Corresponding the Outcome 1-3

The term "word processing" is used to indicate the use of full-featured word processing applications which go beyond a mere text editor and provide full formatting and layout facilities.

Outcome 1

This outcome relates to the basic tasks candidates must be able to perform in order to make general use of a word processing application. The emphasis is on "basic". The required tasks are defined in the range. The performance criteria define the standards which should be applied to candidate activity.

Performance criterion (a) requires the candidate to use hardware effectively. At this level there is no requirement that s/he carries out these tasks efficiently – so the speed of completion is not a consideration. However, candidates are required to complete the defined tasks without assistance.

The issue of typing skills is an interesting one. This is not a typing course and since speed of completion is not a consideration there is no requirement for them to meet a target like 30 words per minute. On the other hand it would be beneficial to introduce to students the concepts such as home keys and the existence of typing tutors and even to make some use of one. First and foremost in this regard is the need to give them a healthy diet of short typing tasks which will force them into keyboard familiarisation and get them to use modifier keys. Mouse skills or an alternative such as touchpad or pen or a disability aid are also important.

Performance criterion (b) requires candidates to use an operating system effectively. The use of the OS should be no more than that required to carry out the basic tasks defined in the range. For example, candidates are required to use the operating system to load and exit a word processing application. . The operating system tasks set for candidates should also be routine and non-complex; for example, moving from one folder to another is sufficient to demonstrate that the candidate can "navigate folders". Once again, there is no requirement for candidates to use the OS efficiently.

Performance criterion (c) relates to the help facility of a Word processing application.

Performance criterion (d) requires candidates to recognise common text formats including font, font style (bold/italic), point size justification and bullet points.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Word Processing (Intermediate 1)

Performance criterion (e) relates to basic terminology. Even at this level, candidates are expected to develop a basic technical vocabulary relating to computer hardware, computer software and word processing; however, only the most common terms are required to be known by the candidate.

Outcome 2
This outcome relates to creating a word processing document. The type of information that candidates are expected to deal with should be simple and familiar, and relate to their personal and vocational interests. The performance criteria define the standards which should be applied to candidate activity.

Performance criterion (a) requires candidates to type in text as requested for a basic document using the basic features of the software at their own pace and using any input device available that suits them. Usually this would be a standard keyboard but it could use handwriting recognition, speech recognition or a specially adapted keyboard. Important points to bear in mind would be to know at this stage what sort of portfolio it is destined for and save and/or print accordingly.

Performance criterion (b) requires candidates to follow the instructions for the exercise in such a way that the final resulting document matches the instructions sufficiently to be described as fit-for-purpose.

Performance criterion (c) requires that the document is consistent with its contents. For example that a letter to a prospective employer would adopt a formal tone and avoid outlandish graphics.

Performance criterion (d) requires that the document is free from spelling errors. At this level there is no requirement to explore the finer points of grammar or thesaurus use but if the spell checker flags up a mistake then they must be able to run it and correct the fault.

Outcome 3
This outcome relates to previewing and printing the Word processing document.

Performance criterion (a) requires candidates to know which device he is printing to and check that the printer is ready eg no paper jam light, no out of paper message, no low ink/toner. On the other hand if there is a low ink or toner message then they would not be expected to replace the consumable.

Performance criterion (b) relates to previewing to avoid output being clipped or spread across sheets in a way that would spoil the document. This then involves being able to call up, use and if needs be close preview mode.

Performance criterion (c) requires candidates to open the print dialog box and check that they have the correct printer name matching the physical device located to satisfy criterion (a), page range and number of copies.

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GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT
A practical, hands-on approach to learning should be adopted. The emphasis should be on learning-by-doing. Terminology and underpinning knowledge should be introduced in a practical context.

The actual distribution of time between outcomes is at the discretion of the centre. However, the following distribution is suggested:

Outcome 1   13 hours
Outcome 2   15 hours
Outcome 3   12 hours

Throughout this unit, candidate activities should relate to their personal or vocational interests. For example candidates should be offered exercises involving letters, menus or free text that pertains to their own world – like writing a thank you note to a generous relative, and seek where possible on a topic of genuine interest to the candidate.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT
It is recommended that centres combine the assessment of knowledge and understanding into a single objective question paper. Re-assessment should be undertaken by re-assessing the specific outcomes which have not been passed.

Evidence of practical competence should be stored in a portfolio. At the completion of this unit the portfolio should contain a range of evidence, drawn from the evidence requirements for each outcome. This will include an observation checklist (Outcome 1), copies of documents (Outcomes 2&3).

This material may be stored in paper or electronic format. Centres may choose to store candidate evidence in an electronic portfolio (e-portfolio).

SPECIAL NEEDS
This unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering special alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, publication code AA0645).