



COMMUNICATION
SCQF Level 6
40 Hour Unit (F3GB 12)

CORE SKILLS UNIT

What are Core Skills?

Core Skills are skills and abilities that everyone uses in their family and personal life, at work, in public, in the community, and in education and training.

The Core Skills are:

- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Numeracy
- ◆ Information and Communication Technology
- ◆ Problem Solving
- ◆ Working with Others

They are important because they help you to be effective in almost everything you do. That's also why employers value them.

Improving your Core Skills helps you cope with today's quickly changing world. It will make you more confident, help you to learn more easily, and improve your career prospects.

What is this Core Skills Unit about?

This Unit is about using your reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in complex situations in your personal life, at work, and in education.

What should I know or be able to do before I start?

You may have achieved the Core Skills Unit in Communication at SCQF level 5. Alternatively, you may be able to show that you have similar experience, for example writing essays or reports; reading detailed instructions, articles or leaflets; giving a presentation to others; listening to and acting on detailed instructions.

What do I need to do?

When you are reading:

- ◆ Identify and summarise all the important ideas, key points, and supporting detail in a complex piece of non-fiction writing (for example, extracting, summarising, and explaining fully how detailed information relates to and supports key points).
- ◆ Evaluate fully how well a complex piece of writing meets its purpose and the needs of its intended readers, giving evidence for your answer (for example, has it achieved the writer's aim, does it contain all the information a reader would need, does it present all aspects of a complex issue, and has the author used style, structure, graphics, layout, tone and language that are appropriate to the subject matter and the intended readership?)

When you are writing:

- ◆ Choose a format for your piece of writing that is appropriate to the readers and the subject matter (for example, a report, a project proposal, or an article).
- ◆ Choose layout, structure, vocabulary, and graphics (if appropriate) that make your piece of writing clear, suit your topic, and are appropriate for your readers.
- ◆ Gather and select relevant information or ideas and present them with supporting detail, in a logical and effective order, linking related information or ideas (for example, beginning/introduction, middle/main body with sub-sections, and end/conclusion).

- ◆ Vary your sentence structure, paragraphing, and vocabulary to suit the purpose of your writing and your intended readers (for example, use paragraphing and structural subdivisions to make clear distinctions between facts, opinions, arguments, and conclusions).
- ◆ Emphasise the main points in your piece of writing.
- ◆ Use spelling, grammar, and punctuation consistently and accurately (for example, complex structure of sentences, clauses, tenses of verbs, commas, question marks, dashes, brackets, colons, semi-colons, italics, and paragraphing).
- ◆ Vary language for effect, using a dictionary or thesaurus when you need to.
- ◆ Use a writing style that takes account of purpose and readership (for example, giving examples to clarify certain points and avoiding jargon words in communications intended for non-specialists).

When you are speaking and listening:

- ◆ Express complex ideas clearly in speech (for example, by choosing language that fits the topic and the situation, and which your listeners understand; speaking clearly and loudly enough; varying speed and tone; pausing at appropriate points).
- ◆ Structure what you say to take account of your own purpose and the audience (for example, presenting the information/ideas, with some supporting detail, in a logical order; linking related information or ideas; making a presentation with a beginning/overview, a middle section with information in logical sequence and sub-sections, and a conclusion/summary of main points; making a sustained and structured contribution to a complex discussion).
- ◆ Emphasise the main points in what you say (for example, through your tone, gestures, and volume of speaking).
- ◆ Support what you say with images, where appropriate (for example, computer visuals, multi-media tools, and models).
- ◆ Integrate the use of body language and verbal communication for maximum impact and clarity when speaking (for example, eye contact, posture, and gesture).
- ◆ Listen carefully to any questions from listeners and respond accordingly (for example, by repeating information, rephrasing what you have said, giving extra information, summarising, asking questions of listeners, and reflecting on or synthesising the points of view expressed).

- ◆ Adapt your speaking style to take account of the situation and audience (for example, by giving examples to clarify certain points and by avoiding or explaining jargon words in communications for non-specialists).
- ◆ Listen carefully to what others say, taking account of their contribution, and respond accordingly (for example, by responding to their point of view, explaining your point of view, repeating information, giving extra information, analysing, summarising, synthesising, rephrasing what has been said, asking questions to clarify anything you do not understand, and exploring subjects in greater depth).

How do I get this Unit?

You will need to show that you have all the skills in the Unit.

Reading

You will be asked to read an extended piece of non-fiction writing. You might then show that you understand the piece of writing by writing a short report, or by your tutor asking you questions and making notes or a recording of what you have said.

Writing

You will produce a document (or a series of related documents) totalling at least 700 words that presents, analyses, and evaluates a substantial body of information, and/or develops an opinion in relation to an issue that is explored in depth. If you produce a series of related documents, one of these must contain no fewer than 500 words. Your document(s) can be hand written or word processed.

Speaking and listening

You will play a significant part in a discussion or give a short talk to one or more people on a complex topic. Your tutor will observe you and make notes or a recording.

You should also keep a brief record explaining the situation (for example, who was present, what was being discussed, and what was the purpose of the discussion). Your record might include any plan that you developed for your presentation/discussion.

What might this involve?

The Unit can be achieved in many ways. Examples of activities you might do are:

- ◆ Summarise and evaluate a substantial research report from a professional journal.
- ◆ Analyse and evaluate the annual report of a community partnership, infer the readership and purpose, and comment on the effectiveness of the presentation.
- ◆ Draft a proposal to local councillors detailing the resources required and recommended actions to be taken to set up a local pre-school playgroup.
- ◆ Produce a well-structured report on a complex laboratory investigation undertaken as part of your college course, drawing detailed conclusions from the research evidence.
- ◆ Make a significant contribution to a discussion on a controversial issue, backing up your beliefs/values/opinions with supporting evidence.
- ◆ Make a formal presentation on a health-related topic, collating and analysing information, and presenting conclusions on findings.

What can I do next?

You could think about doing other Core Skill Units in:

- ◆ Numeracy
- ◆ Information and Communication Technology
- ◆ Problem Solving
- ◆ Working with Others

Your tutor can advise you about this.

Guidance for tutors

Learners at SCQF level 6 are expected to be able to communicate with others at an advanced level and complete complex activities independently. The work undertaken in assessments may be complex and will require previous knowledge or experience of formal documents and situations.

Reading

Reading materials may deal with topics and vocabulary that are abstract and may be unfamiliar to learners. Information, ideas, and meaning will be at a sophisticated level (often characterised by the number and relationship of ideas, by density of detail, or by abstraction). The text may use complex/specialist vocabulary and make substantial use of sentences that are internally complex. The structure of the text will allow for exemplification and analysis. The text may include images (for example, diagrams, maps, charts, tables, and photographs) as well as words. The text will normally have more than one purpose, for example to inform, report, and evaluate; to discuss and persuade; to express a reaction; to share an experience; to draw conclusions and recommend.

Learners must prove that they can do the whole of the activity at one time. They should not gather evidence from different situations for different parts of the activity.

Writing

Learners must produce a document (or a series of related documents) totalling at least 700 words that presents, analyses, and evaluates a substantial body of information and/or develops an opinion in relation to an issue that is explored in depth. If a portfolio of related pieces is used, it should include a substantive piece of no fewer than 500 words.

Speaking and listening

The oral communication must be one spoken interaction between the learner and one or more people. This may be either a discussion (lasting a minimum of five minutes) or the learner may give a short presentation lasting a minimum of four minutes, with additional time for questions. A discussion must have a clear purpose, be on a relevant topic, allow for identification and exploration of complex issues, and reach a conclusion. The learner must make a significant contribution.

Further guidance is available in the accompanying Assessment Support Pack.

Disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Credit value

6 SCQF credit points (1 SQA credit) at SCQF level 6



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