



COMMUNICATION
Listening
SCQF Level 3
10 Hour Unit (F3GM 09)

CORE SKILLS UNIT

ASSESSMENT SUPPORT PACK

Part 1: Information for tutors

What is involved?

This Unit is one of a group of four:

- ◆ Listening
- ◆ Speaking
- ◆ Reading
- ◆ Writing

Together these deliver the complete Communication Core Skill at SCQF level 3. This Unit is about using listening skills in everyday personal, workplace, social, and educational situations. The focus of the Unit is on transferable communication skills. It is designed for delivery in schools, colleges, workplaces, community, and other learning environments.

The learner will be expected to work only with simple spoken information. The work will be simple and routine, using everyday language familiar to the learner.

Learner motivation can be maximised by making the listening activities as relevant as possible. The activities should consist of an appropriate mix from personal, workplace, social, and educational examples. Also, integration of the communication activities with those of other SQA Units being undertaken should be explored. For example, when a learner is undertaking vocational or subject-specific Units, motivation for Communication can be increased if the learner can see the direct relevance of the task.

Assessment and evidence

Learners at SCQF level 3 are required to respond only to simple language in familiar situations. They may need some support to carry out the activities.

For this listening Unit you should choose simple oral communication lasting around two minutes. The topic should be one that is familiar to learners, using everyday language.

You should try to identify naturally occurring opportunities for assessment where possible. For learners who are also working towards vocational or subject-specific Units, opportunities for assessment of communication skills could arise while completing vocational or subject-specific tasks that provide evidence for both Units. Some of the exemplars in this pack could be used or contextualised for this purpose.

The assessment process is likely to involve one or more of the following:

- ◆ oral questioning
- ◆ written/oral responses
- ◆ observation

When assessing by observation, you must keep a detailed checklist. Similarly, if you use oral questioning, you must keep a record of both the questions and learner responses. All evidence, whether produced by the learner or a record made by yourself, must be retained, signed, and dated by you.

Planning

You should work out where opportunities for meeting the standards are likely to arise. You should discuss this assessment process with learners so that they clearly understand what is expected of them.

Guidance on the Unit

What learners need to know or be able to do

The Unit states that learners will:

- ◆ describe the main ideas or points from what was said
- ◆ understand the way speakers use their voices to help listeners understand easily (eg tone, pace, and volume)
- ◆ show understanding by taking action, summarising, or asking question(s)

Listening skills can be developed and assessed in a number of ways that can be adapted to the personal situation of the learner, eg whether they are attending school or college, in paid or voluntary work, or engaged in community or social activities. The exemplar assessments contained in Part 2 give some contexts that could be used.

Identifying ideas and feelings

The learner will be expected to identify the main points of the spoken communication by paying attention: not only by listening to the general sense of what is being said, but also by understanding some of the basic spoken conventions.

For example, prominence can be given to significant words or phrases by their order, placement in relation to other words, and repetition.

Use of the voice to promote understanding

Tone of voice can be used to convey the mood of what is being said, eg a low, monotonous tone may be used when delivering rather unpleasant news, while a light, cheerful tone would be appropriate for more pleasant topics. Learners should be aware that the stress placed on important words and phrases is a significant aid to understanding.

Body language

Body language is a valuable clue to the mood and intention of the speaker. It is the unspoken supplement to the spoken words, and the listener should be aware of this. The main indicators are posture, eye contact, facial expression, and gesture. There is a range of gestures that enhances the spoken message, eg opening the hands in a welcoming gesture, and nodding or shaking the head. Some gestures are more akin to formal signs, eg putting the hand up in a response to a question or pointing when giving directions.

Asking questions

It is important for learners to understand that listening is not a passive activity and that asking pertinent questions or making non-verbal response is often essential to complete their understanding of what has been said.

Summarising

Asking the learners to summarise what has been said is one way of checking understanding, though sometimes it can be more appropriate to apply a practical test, eg to follow instructions or directions.

Learners are not expected to slavishly write or orally repeat a formal summary, rather to say (or otherwise indicate) what their personal response has been to the topic discussed or the information given.

At this level, the learner should be able to give a simple and straightforward response to some of the main points.

Gathering evidence

It may be appropriate for you to gather written evidence produced by the learner while carrying out the practical activities. However, written evidence is not essential for this Unit and is inappropriate if it disadvantages the learner.

You may wish, instead, to observe the learner carrying out a task and question them on its completion. This requires you to create and complete record sheets comprising a checklist, questions asked, and learner responses. It might also be useful to make a recording of the actual interaction. Alternatively you can use, or adapt, the planning sheet and assessment checklist supplied in Part 3.

From the learner's point of view, it is useful to have the means of keeping all the work of this Unit together. You can help here by creating and providing a workbook that includes all the evidence-gathering items. An alternative would be to provide worksheets that can be made into a portfolio or e-portfolio.

If you choose to integrate the Communication work with that of other Units being undertaken by the learner, it may be possible to assess this work as part of a larger single activity. In this case you must keep separate records of assessment decisions for this Unit.

Evidence may be gathered in a variety of ways. Some typical activities might be:

- ◆ listening to advice from another learner and acting on this
- ◆ listening and responding to instructions from a tutor
- ◆ listening to a TV news item and summarising its main points
- ◆ gaining clarification from a senior colleague on some aspect of work
- ◆ participating in a discussion with some fellow students

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

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.

Part 2: Assessment guidance

You can use the exemplar assessments given in this section in several ways:

- ◆ to help identify the type and amount of evidence that the learner needs to produce
- ◆ to help identify the level of complexity in evidence required for this Core Skill at this level
- ◆ to help you create a contextualised assessment related to the learner's own situation

Exemplar assessments

Task: Use listening skills in personal, workplace, social, or educational situations that involve simple communication with one or more people.

Example context 1: Listening and acting on advice

Context: The speaker (who might be a learner in school or college, someone attending an outreach learning centre, a colleague, or a friend) gives advice on how to strike a balance between study and personal life.

Issues that might be included:

- ◆ the demands of family and social life
- ◆ the need to learn and train for future job prospects
- ◆ how to cope with course work and study time
- ◆ what to do and whom to approach if problems occur

Assessment: The learner should be asked to respond to the following questions, in writing or orally:

- ◆ What were the main suggestions the speaker made?
- ◆ How did they emphasise the most important points? Did they, for example:
 - speak louder at some points?
 - repeat important advice?
 - emphasise or stress some words or phrases?
 - use gestures or facial expressions?
- ◆ How did you show you understood the advice? Did you, for example:
 - ask questions?
 - repeat key points?
 - agree/disagree?
 - share some of your own experience?
 - use body language (eg nodding, smiling, etc)?

Alternatively, listening skills may be evidenced through an observer checklist and/or recording.

Example context 2: Listening and responding to instructions

Context: The speaker delivers an instruction session on what to do in case of an emergency evacuation of the building. This could be a school, college, learning or community centre, or workplace.

This could include:

- ◆ identifying alarm systems
- ◆ how to use fire-fighting equipment
- ◆ directions to safe emergency exit routes and assembly points
- ◆ procedures to follow in case of fire or smoke hazard

Assessment: The instruction session can be followed by a practical drill to test understanding, and/or the learner should answer the following questions, in writing or orally:

- ◆ What is the alarm system in this building?
- ◆ What fire-fighting equipment is there in the building and where?
- ◆ Where are the emergency exits and assembly points?
- ◆ What should you do if there is a fire or other emergency?
- ◆ How did the speaker help you understand clearly? Did they, for example:
 - repeat some parts?
 - emphasise what was most important by stressing those words or speaking louder?
 - use body language for emphasis (eg pointing, nodding, etc)?
 - pause to let you ask questions?

Alternatively, listening skills may be evidenced through an observer checklist and/or recording.

Example context 3: Listening to a TV broadcast and summarising the main points

Context: Tutor provides a recording of a major news item or extract from a documentary.

Topics likely to engage learner interest might include:

- ◆ a report on a high profile football match
- ◆ media coverage of the lifestyle choices of an A-list celebrity
- ◆ plans for Britain/Scotland to host an international sports event

As there is no opportunity for direct questioning or feedback when using a recorded speech, the tutor should allow time for questions and clarification before learners begin their assessment.

Assessment: The learner should answer the following questions, in writing or orally:

- ◆ What were the main points in the broadcast?
- ◆ How did the speaker emphasise important ideas? Did they, for example:
 - repeat some words?
 - emphasise what was most important by stressing those words or speaking louder?
 - use body language for emphasis (eg pointing, nodding, etc)?
 - pause to let the audience take in the facts?
 - show diagrams or pictures?
 - invite people to phone in or leave views by e-mail/blog?

Alternatively, listening skills may be evidenced through an observer checklist and/or recording.

Example context 4: Seeking clarification

Context: The learner seeks clarification from a senior colleague on a work-related issue.

Possible topics might include:

- ◆ how to carry out a routine task, eg greeting customers and tidying a stockroom
- ◆ staff rotas and holiday arrangements
- ◆ aspects of health and safety procedures

Assessment: The learner should be encouraged to make the approach to a colleague. The conversation should be observed or recorded. The learner should then answer the following questions, either in writing or orally:

- ◆ What did your colleague talk to you about?
- ◆ What main points did he or she make to you?
- ◆ How did your colleague emphasise what was most important? Did they, for example:
 - repeat some words?
 - emphasise what was most important by stressing those words or speaking louder?
 - use body language for emphasis (eg pointing, nodding, etc)?
 - pause to let you ask questions?
 - give you some printed information?

Alternatively, listening skills may be evidenced through an observer checklist and/or recording.

Example context 5: Participating in a discussion

Context: The members of the discussion group could be learners in school or college, people attending an outreach or learning centre, workmates, or friends. Issues for discussion might be:

- ◆ the difficulties of bringing up a family on a limited budget
- ◆ whether 'reality shows' are rigged
- ◆ whether it is better to have vocational training or go to university

Assessment: The learner will be included in the discussion, which should be observed and/or recorded. The learner should then answer the following questions orally or in writing:

- ◆ What was the discussion about?
- ◆ What were some of the main points people made?
- ◆ What did people agree about?
- ◆ What (if anything) did people disagree about?
- ◆ How did people emphasise what they felt most strongly about? Did they:
 - repeat some words?
 - stress those words or speak louder?
 - use body language for emphasis (eg pointing, nodding, etc)?
 - pause to let you ask questions?
 - give you some printed information?

Alternatively, listening skills may be evidenced through an observer checklist and/or recording.

Notes for assessment

The learner must succeed in all skills in any one task to achieve this Unit.

Part 3: Exemplar recording documentation

This section provides forms that can be used for planning and recording learners' results.

Planning sheet

You can use this to help learners plan and/or provide supplementary evidence.

Assessment checklist

You can use this to record achievement for the task. The checklist identifies the skills that learners must demonstrate.

Planning sheet

Task: Use listening skills in personal, workplace, social, or educational situations that involve simple communication with one or more people.

Use this sheet to help you prepare for assessment.

Learner:	
What sort of communication did you listen to? Who was speaking? What was the topic(s)?	
Can you summarise the main points that were covered? (If someone was explaining to you how to do something, you can also show you understood by performing the task.)	
How did the speaker(s) use their voice(s) or body language to help you understand more easily? Did they: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ repeat some words?◆ stress those words or speak louder?◆ use body language for emphasis (eg pointing and nodding)?◆ pause to invite questions?◆ ask your opinion?◆ give information in other ways, eg pictures?	

Tutor signature..... Date.....

Assessment checklist: Listening

Task: Use listening skills in personal, workplace, social, or educational situations that involve simple communication with one or more people.

Learner:		
Description of listening task:		
Skills	Tutor feedback	Achieved (Yes/No)
Describes main ideas or points from a simple oral communication.		
Knows how speakers use their voices and/or non-verbal communication to help listeners understand easily (eg tone, pace, volume, and body language).		
Shows understanding by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ taking action◆ non-verbal response◆ summarising or asking questions		
Tutor signature:		Date:

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION



Core Skills

This Unit is part of a suite of four Units that when completed give automatic certification of the Core Skill of Communication at SCQF level 3. The other Units in this suite are:

Communication: Speaking at SCQF level 3

Communication: Writing at SCQF level 3

Communication: Reading at SCQF level 3

Credit value

1.5 SCQF credit points (0.25 SQA credits) at SCQF level 3

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Helpdesk: 0845 279 1000
Fax: 0845 213 5000
E-mail: customer@sqa.org.uk
Website: www.sqa.org.uk

Optima Building	Ironmills Road
58 Robertson Street	Dalkeith
Glasgow	Midlothian
G2 8DQ	EH22 1LE

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