



Group Award Specification for the:

**Professional Development Award
(PDA) in Fertility Support: An
Introduction at SCQF level 7**

Group Award Code: GK5C 47

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1 Introduction

This document was previously known as the Arrangements document. The purpose of this document is to:

- ◆ assist centres to implement, deliver and manage the qualification
- ◆ provide a guide for new staff involved in offering the qualification
- ◆ inform course managers teaching staff, assessors, learners, employers and HEIs of the aims and purpose of the qualification
- ◆ provide details of the range of learners the qualification is suitable for and progression opportunities

Effective communication with bereaved clients who have suffered miscarriage is at the heart of the miscarriage support service. It is important to ensure that relevant information, advice and guidance can be provided via a range of methods appropriate to client needs.

The Professional Development Award (PDA) in Fertility Support: an Introduction at SCQF level 7 is the first of two qualifications developed specifically for this purpose.

This award is suitable for a broad range of learners:

- ◆ Those with little or no experience in advice and guidance in any capacity, eg volunteer advisors
- ◆ Those with some experience in advice and guidance but none in the Miscarriage Support field, eg counsellors, nurses and midwives, tutors and teachers, volunteer advisors from other areas (such as Samaritans or the Citizens Advice Bureau)
- ◆ Those with some experience in the Miscarriage Support, Advice and Guidance field who wish to gain a national qualification, perhaps for the purposes of continued personal development, eg experienced volunteer advisors and councilors.

The content of this PDA has been designed to provide learners with the underpinning knowledge, understanding and skills required to work, in a paid or unpaid capacity in this area. Learners will be introduced to two particular aspects; the different types of advice and support that can be offered to clients who have suffered or are at risk of miscarriage, and also the range of media that can be utilised to communicate effectively with clients.

Learners who successfully complete this award will have the opportunity to progress on to the PDA in Providing Advanced Fertility Support at SCQF level 8.

SQA would like to thank Scottish Care and Information on Miscarriage (SCIM) for their support in developing these national awards.

2 Qualification structure

This Group Award is made up of 1.5 SQA Unit credits. It comprises 12 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7.

A mapping of Core Skills development opportunities is available in Section 5.3.

2.1 Structure

Code	Unit title	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SQA credit
H8X0 34	Pregnancy Loss and Bereavement: Supporting Clients Using a Range of Media	7	16	2

3 Aims of the qualification

The principal aim of this qualification is to develop learner's underpinning knowledge and skills in providing support and advice using a range of communication media, to women who have suffered miscarriage.

3.1 General aims of the qualification

- 1 To develop evaluative thinking and the ability to manage and absorb large amounts of information.
- 2 To develop problem-solving skills.
- 3 To develop as self-directed and self-reflective learners.
- 4 To develop the ability to be flexible and to work co-operatively within a team structure.
- 5 To develop transferable skills such as study and research skills, presentation techniques, personal effectiveness.
- 6 To enable progression within the SCQF including progression to HE.
- 7 To provide opportunities for career planning and enhance employment prospects.
- 8 To develop the learner's Core Skills profile.

3.2 Specific aims of the qualification

- 1 To develop the learner's understanding of the context and principles under which the advice and guidance sector provides support to women who have suffered miscarriage.
- 2 To develop the learner's knowledge and specific skills in assessing client needs.
- 3 To enhance learner's ability to effectively support clients via a range of media (face to face, telephony or internet based).
- 4 To provide learners with the opportunity to develop their working practices in line with current accepted professional and ethical standards through experiential learning.
- 5 To encourage the learner to develop as a reflective advice and guidance practitioner.

4 Recommended entry to the qualification

Entry to this qualification is at the discretion of the centre. The following information on prior knowledge, skills, experience or qualifications that provide suitable preparation for this qualification has been provided by the Qualification Design Team as guidance only.

Learners would be expected at a minimum to have communication skills at SCQF level 5 or equivalent.

It would be beneficial if the learner has some previous experience of providing advice and guidance, eg in a voluntary advisor role, however this Unit is designed to provide underpinning knowledge and skills so this is by no means mandatory.

Basic competency in the use of *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* would be advisable, eg Core Skill in *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* at SCQF level 4.

In terms of Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG), previously known as the Disclosure process, organisations offering advice, guidance and support should have a 'protection procedures policy' in place. The employee/volunteer may be asked to sign a policy statement. Also, they may be asked at the time of making application, as part of the recruitment and selection process, to disclose background information, offer a history of any offences, spent or outstanding and agree to a check being made should that be required.

Volunteer Development Scotland is a useful stop for information and advice on the recruitment of new staff and volunteers. www.vds.org.uk

4.1 Core Skills entry profile

The Core Skill entry profile provides a summary of the associated assessment activities that exemplify why a particular level has been recommended for this qualification. The information should be used to identify if additional learning support needs to be put in place for learners whose Core Skills profile is below the recommended entry level or whether learners should be encouraged to do an alternative level or learning programme.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	SCQF level 5	Learners are required to demonstrate their competence in communicating with clients (both verbal and written skills).
Numeracy	SCQF level 4	Numeracy is not directly assessed within this award.
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	SCQF level 4	Learners are required to effectively communicate with clients utilising internet-based communication technologies.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Problem Solving	SCQF level 5	Learners will develop skills in assessing client needs and identifying methods of addressing those needs. They will also be involved in a certain level of research into the sector including the legislation and ethical guidelines.
Working with Others	SCQF level 5	Learners will be required to work effectively with colleagues, peers and clients.

5 Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs

This qualification was designed to meet a specific purpose and what follows are details on how that purpose has been met through mapping of the Units to the aims of the qualification. Through meeting the aims, additional value has been achieved by linking the Unit standards with those defined in National Occupational Standards and/or trade/professional body requirements. In addition, significant opportunities exist for learners to develop the more generic skill, known as Core Skills through doing this qualification.

5.1 Mapping of qualification specific aims to Unit

Code	Unit title	Aims				
		1	2	3	4	5
H8X0 34	Pregnancy Loss and Bereavement: Supporting Clients Using a Range of Media	X	X	X	X	X

Specific aims of the qualification

- 1 To develop the learner's understanding of the context and principles under which the advice and guidance sector provides support to women who have suffered miscarriage.
- 2 To develop the learner's knowledge and specific skills in assessing client needs.
- 3 To enhance learner's ability to effectively support clients via a range of media (face to face, telephony or internet based).
- 4 To provide learners with the opportunity to develop their working practices in line with current accepted professional and ethical standards through experiential learning.
- 5 To encourage the learner to develop as a reflective practitioner.

5.2 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualification

Unit code	Unit title	Communication		Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
		Written	Oral	Using Number	Using Graphical Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively with Others	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
H8X0 34	Pregnancy Loss and Bereavement: Supporting Clients Using a Range of Media	X	X			X	X		X	X	X	X

5.3 Mapping of NOS

The content of the Unit has been produced in line with relevant aspects of the Advice and Guidance National Occupational Standards.

Code	Unit title	SSC Code	NOS
H8X0 34	Pregnancy Loss and Bereavement: Supporting Clients Using a Range of Media	AG1	Establish Communication with clients for advice and guidance
		AG2	Support clients to make use of the advice and guidance service
		AG3	Develop interactions with advice and guidance clients
		AG4	Interact with clients using a range of media
		AG15	Review own contribution to the service
		AG16	Evaluate and develop own contribution to the service

5.4 Assessment Strategy for the qualification

Code	Unit title	Assessment		
		Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3
H8X0 34	Pregnancy Loss and Bereavement: Supporting Clients Using a Range of Media	An investigation based on learner's own organisation (or placement or centre-devised case study as appropriate).	Outcomes 2 and 3 may be assessed together. Learners should evaluate their practice and the overall service provided to the clients via face to face, telephone and internet based communication methods. The evaluation will comprise reflective accounts based on own practice; feedback and peer reviews (including observations of practice) and an identification of areas requiring further development (can be in the form of a personal development plan).	

6 Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment

This qualification may be delivered by a range of SQA Approved Centres, eg, FE Colleges, Workplace-based, Third Sector or Private Training Providers.

As such, delivery will vary depending on the presenting Centre. This may take the following forms:

- ◆ part-time/evening-twilight class
- ◆ face-to-face, classroom-based learning
- ◆ blended learning, ie a blend of classroom and distance/online learning
- ◆ workplace/education-training provider partnership working

Centres should use a learner-centred, participative and practical approach to learning and teaching.

Group learning and role play may be appropriate as it allow learners to share their ideas and experiences with other learners from different backgrounds.

A range of communication skills should be explored. Verbal and written, body-language, listening, summarising, paraphrasing, acknowledgment of the clients thoughts and feelings and checking understanding through questioning are all components of excellent communication.

Interpersonal skills such as empathy, unconditional positive regard (UPR), congruence and offering the client encouragement to talk should also be practiced. Exploration skills and the ability to deal with difficult situations should be developed.

Practical aspects such as record keeping, confidentiality, ethical boundaries and other organisational requirements should be explored, including procedures for client care and mechanisms for raising complaints.

Legislation such as the Data Protection Act, Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) and the Equality Act should be discussed and the relevant aspects pinpointed.

In relation to the provision of information and support to clients, learners should be introduced to an overview of counselling theories with a particular focus on the Person-Centred Approach. The Person-Centred Theory and Approach was developed by Carl Rogers. Rogers liked to share his ideas and make them accessible to people who would not normally see themselves as counsellors. His simplification of this type of therapy attracted many people who need not have had any professional training, make use of the helping relationship. Roger's idea was to open up client therapy to people to enable them to grow and develop in order that they may reach their full potential. The Person-Centred Approach is non-directive and allows the client to set the programme and pace of the support session without direction or guidance from the support worker so is considered appropriate for this context.

A useful resource for teaching the Person-Centred Approach would be published books and articles, eg *The Carl Rogers Reader*. Centres should ensure they provide learners with a range of current and appropriate reference materials.

An ongoing process of monitoring and evaluation allows the service to continually improve its effectiveness in meeting the needs of clients and also allows the learner to evaluate their own performance and identify areas for professional development. Learners should be made aware of a range of appropriate methods for obtaining feedback (both on the service provided and on own performance) and of the value of developing as a reflective practitioner.

It is recommended that Outcome 1 is assessed by means of an investigation and that Outcomes 2 and 3 are assessed together by means of a portfolio of learner evidence gathered from practice.

Where evidence is gathered from practice, learners and centres should ensure that client confidentiality is maintained at all times.

6.1 Recognition of Prior Learning

SQA recognises that learners gain knowledge and skills acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts.

In some instances, a full Group Award may be achieved through the recognition of prior learning. However, it is unlikely that a learner would have the appropriate prior learning and experience to meet all the requirements of a full Group Award.

The recognition of prior learning may **not** be used as a method of assessing in the following types of Units and assessments:

- ◆ HN Graded Units
- ◆ Course and/or external assessments
- ◆ Other integrative assessment Units (which may or not be graded)
- ◆ Certain types of assessment instruments where the standard may be compromised by not using the same assessment method outlined in the Unit
- ◆ Where there is an existing requirement for a licence to practice
- ◆ Where there are specific health and safety requirements
- ◆ Where there are regulatory, professional or other statutory requirements
- ◆ Where otherwise specified in an Assessment Strategy

More information and guidance on the *Recognition of Prior Learning* (RPL) may be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk.

The following sub-sections outline how existing SQA Unit(s) may contribute to this Group Award. Additionally, they also outline how this Group Award may be recognised for professional and articulation purposes.

6.3 Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment.

6.4 Support materials

A list of existing ASPs is available to view on SQA's website.

6.5 Resource requirements

Centres will be required to have the use of a range of communication technology equipment, including telephones, computers (or laptops or tablets) with internet connection.

7 General information for centres

Equality and inclusion

The Unit specifications making up this Group Award have been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners will be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used within this/these qualification(s) should be internally verified, using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

External verification will be carried out by SQA to ensure that internal assessment is within the national guidelines for these qualifications.

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in *SQA's Guide to Assessment* (www.sqa.org.uk/GuideToAssessment).

8 General glossary of terms

Embedded Core Skills: is where the assessment evidence for the Unit also includes full evidence for complete Core Skill or Core Skill components. A learner successfully completing the Unit will be automatically certificated for the Core Skill. (This depends on the Unit having been successfully audited and validated for Core Skills certification.)

Finish date: The end of a Group Award's lapsing period is known as the finish date. After the finish date, the Group Award will no longer be live and the following applies:

- ◆ learners may not be entered for the Group Award
- ◆ the Group Award will continue to exist only as an archive record on the Awards Processing System (APS)

Lapsing date: When a Group Award is entered into its lapsing period, the following will apply:

- ◆ the Group Award will be deleted from the relevant catalogue
- ◆ the Group Award specification will remain until the qualification reaches its finish date at which point it will be removed from SQA's website and archived
- ◆ no new centres may be approved to offer the Group Award
- ◆ centres should only enter learners whom they expect to complete the Group Award during the defined lapsing period

SQA credit value: The credit value allocated to a Unit gives an indication of the contribution the Unit makes to an SQA Group Award. An SQA credit value of 1 given to an SQA Unit represents approximately 40 hours of programmed learning, teaching and assessment.

SCQF: The Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) provides the national common framework for describing all relevant programmes of learning and qualifications in Scotland. SCQF terminology is used throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF visit the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk.

SCQF credit points: SCQF credit points provide a means of describing and comparing the amount of learning that is required to complete a qualification at a given level of the Framework. One National Unit credit is equivalent to 6 SCQF credit points. One National Unit credit at Advanced Higher and one Higher National Unit credit (irrespective of level) is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points.

SCQF levels: The level a qualification is assigned within the framework is an indication of how hard it is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HNCs and HNDs are available at SCQF levels 7 and 8 respectively. Higher National Units will normally be at levels 6–9 and Graded Units will be at level 7 and 8. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2–6 and will normally be made up of National Units which are available from SCQF levels 2–7.

Subject Unit: Subject Units contain vocational/subject content and are designed to test a specific set of knowledge and skills.

Signposted Core Skills: refers to opportunities to develop Core Skills arise in learning and teaching but are not automatically certificated.

9 General information for learners

This section will help you decide whether this is the qualification for you by explaining what the qualification is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the qualification and opportunities for further learning and employment.

This award has been designed to provide you with the underpinning skills and knowledge required to use a range of media to appropriately support clients affected by pregnancy loss and bereavement.

The award is suitable for those who work or wish to work in a paid or voluntary capacity, providing support and advice to women who have suffered miscarriage.

You will also develop your skills in reflection and evaluation as you will review the effectiveness of the communication methods utilised to meet client needs.

Learners who successfully complete this award will have the opportunity to progress on to the PDA in Providing Advanced Fertility Support at SCQF level 8.

You will complete three Outcomes as follows:

- ◆ Investigate the range of communication media available for delivering services to clients
- ◆ Select and utilise appropriate media to support clients affected by pregnancy loss and bereavement
- ◆ Evaluate the service given to the client and identify areas for future improvement

You'll be asked to investigate the different methods and communication media available to support and advise clients effectively. You will learn about the legislation and professional guidance that ensures good practice when dealing with clients.

You will develop as a reflective practitioner and have the opportunity to evaluate your practice and the overall service provided to the clients via face to face, telephone and internet based communication methods.

During this Award you will have opportunities to develop your Core Skills in *Communication, Working with Others* and *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6, *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* at SCQF level 5, as well as your transferable skills, eg in time-management, record keeping, negotiation, and personal presentation.