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Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide additional advice and guidance on approaches to learning and teaching programmes in the National Literacy Unit at SCQF level 3.

These are intended for teachers and lecturers and should be read in conjunction with the:

- ◆ Literacy (National 3) Unit Specification
- ◆ Literacy (National 3) Unit Support Notes

And where the National Literacy Unit is part of the National 3 Course in English:

- ◆ National 3 English Course Specification
- ◆ National 3 English Course Support Notes

Additional support for oral communication

In this package, the aim is to offer additional support to teacher/lecturers by clarifying what we understand to be usual practice in aspects of learning and teaching. This is not designed to be something extra for learners to undertake.

This package aims to enhance the support for Literacy (National 3) Unit in its coverage of Core Skills Communication at SCQF Level 3. The learning and teaching approaches mentioned here are not exhaustive and are for guidance only.

The skills that are being clarified and exemplified are:

- ◆ oral communication skills in a variety of forms relevant for learning, life and work.

Learners will develop the ability to produce and respond to simple oral communication. At this level, learners may need some support, reassurance and prompting.

Learners should be able to:

- ◆ convey simple information, opinions, or ideas
- ◆ attempt to sequence and link information, opinions, or ideas
- ◆ use an appropriate range of spoken language structures
- ◆ take account of situation and audience during delivery
- ◆ respond to others, taking account of their contributions

Responsibility of all

All practitioners have responsibility for the development of learners' literacy. How this takes place will vary depending on the context or subject area. All Centres should have strategies in place to ensure there is a shared understanding of professional roles, how learners progress in literacy and of sound approaches to literacy teaching and learning.

Approaches to learning and teaching oral communication skills

The purpose of this section is to provide general advice and guidance on approaches to learning and teaching oral communication skills within Literacy (National 3) Unit.

It is likely that the Literacy (National 3) Unit will be used in school, college, community and vocational settings. The advice and guidance in this section covers these sectors and practitioners will use their professional judgement in designing learning programmes for the Unit so that it is appropriate, relevant and motivating for learners.

Examples of contexts for the development of literacy skills might include subject activities, work experience, cross-curricular activities, work/leisure activities, daily routine, interests/hobbies, local issues, study/learning activities and work based learning.

Practitioners should provide opportunities for personalisation and choice to ensure that learning is relevant and motivating. For example:

- ◆ asking adult learners to choose oral texts which are relevant to their lives
- ◆ encouraging learners' own choice of oral presentation topics
- ◆ adopting a flexible approach to group discussion/presentations
- ◆ giving individual feedback with suggestions and next steps
- ◆ generating naturally occurring evidence when individual learners are ready

Texts

Oral based texts can be used as the focus for generating evidence of oral communication skills. These texts are most likely to be non-fiction, ie functional or transactional in nature.

Functional texts are texts which are used in everyday life, for example, in school, at home or in the workplace. These texts have a clear purpose, for example, to instruct or to explain.

Transactional texts, often spoken, are texts used to communicate between people. They are also used in everyday life to give information, for example, to describe something that has happened or to persuade someone.

Some examples of oral-based texts in different formats are the following:

| Text Types | Examples |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Texts | audio-books, webcasts, spoken versions of written texts, discussions, speeches, debates, talks or presentations, telephone conversation, role plays, interviews, verbal instructions, transactions, dialogue with peers or with a teacher/tutor |
| Media texts | informational films, factual radio programmes, TV programmes eg documentaries, broadcast news, spoken word-based advertisements |
| Multimodal texts (texts which contain a number of elements which 'come together' to create meaning) | webcasts, web conferencing, audio clips web pages, audio blogs, wikis |

Where appropriate, and to provide pace and challenge for learners, more complex texts and activities should be introduced and developed.

Learners will be encouraged to communicate clearly and will be given opportunities to practise their oral communication skills in order to build confidence. Self-evaluation and supportive peer evaluation will support learners in building confidence and identifying areas for improvement.

Teachers /tutors should select contexts that will be meaningful and relevant for learners. Using group discussion as a means of learning will support learners in developing oral communication skills.

It is important that learners develop the ability to use language, content and structure which are appropriate to audience and purpose. Modelling can support learners to develop an awareness of appropriateness.

Learners may need support in talking, especially where learners lack confidence, and consideration should be given to such aspects as choice of subject for discussion, room layout, group size, gender and age of the learners and group dynamics. Allowing personalisation and choice in terms of topic, context and audience will support learners.

Examples

Three learning and teaching ideas¹ related to oral communication are given below, one free standing, one from across learning, and one in a vocational context.

| Learning context | Suggested oral communication activities | Suggested learning and teaching focus |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Standalone unit | presenting a simple informative talk on a topic and then responding to questions from the audience | Use of visual aids Roles/turn-taking within group discussion |
| | comparing views about a simple oral text, such as a short television news broadcast, with another learner and preparing a summary to present to an individual or group | Focus on intonation and pace Use of visual aids |
| | following a conversation, making relevant contributions and asking questions to clarify meaning | Using appropriate structure Roles/turn-taking within group discussion |
| Across-learning situation | listening and responding to feedback during peer activities | Roles/turn-taking within group discussion |
| | role playing to explore issues, ideas, emotions in PSE class | Roles/turn-taking within group discussion |
| | describing a school activity to a member of the community | Use of visual aids Focus on intonation and pace |
| Vocational context | responding to simple suggestions made to change something | Use of appropriate register |
| | passing on a simple message for an absent colleague | Focus on intonation and pace |
| | making an estimate based on a simple discussion with a customer | Roles/turn-taking within group discussion |
| | giving directions to a visitor as to how to reach a particular place, or area, that is not immediately obvious | Using appropriate structure |
| | making a brief telephone call to ask for information | Roles/turn-taking within group discussion |
| | discussing the progress of a task or project with others, taking turns in contributing | Using appropriate structure |
| | listening to a customer's complaints in a role play and responding appropriately | Use of appropriate register Roles/turn-taking within group discussion |
| | listening to a presentation about a work placement and listing what would be expected of learner during the placement | Using appropriate structure |

¹ For more examples see the talking and listening sections of the Unit Support Notes for Literacy (National 3) Unit

Learning context: Standalone

Instructions to practitioner

News broadcast

Learner activity

Compare views about a simple oral text, such as a short television news broadcast, with another learner and prepare a summary to present to an individual or group.

Suggested learning and teaching focus

Preparatory activities such as an initial discussion may support learners to engage with what they are hearing. Learners should be able to identify the ideas within the oral communication.

Teachers or lecturers may want to review the following:

Note taking skills — learners should:

- ◆ consider the audience and purpose of text
- ◆ select and use relevant information for the activity
- ◆ try to organise examples from the text

Selecting information

- ◆ repeating, reflecting, paraphrasing
- ◆ highlighting key information
- ◆ summarising
- ◆ listing ideas and details
- ◆ selecting particular words/phrases/ideas

Group discussion skills

- ◆ review how to respond to others appropriately. For example, a learner may repeat information, or ask or answer questions.
- ◆ review appropriate non-verbal conventions such as making appropriate eye contact or gestures and pausing at appropriate times would be useful.
- ◆ provide suggestions for how a learner may contribute to a group such as analysing, supporting, summarising, or challenging what others say.
- ◆ learners should be made aware of the conventions of group discussion such as turn-taking.

Speaking skills

- ◆ learners should ensure that their contributions are mostly audible and clear and indicate an attempt to organise spoken communication.
- ◆ a review of non-verbal conventions, such as eye contact or gestures, as appropriate to audience and purpose may be helpful.
- ◆ review strategies to help learners to engage with both topic and audience.

Vocabulary and sentence structures will allow the learner's meaning to be conveyed.

Learning context: Standalone

Instructions to learner

News broadcast

Learner activity

This activity involves developing your oral communication skills. You will have the opportunity to view a news broadcast. During the course of the activity you will make notes, discuss your views of the news broadcast, and then present your views to the class.

Task 1 – Viewing the news broadcast

You have a news broadcast to analyse and make notes on. Consider the purpose and target audience as well as the techniques employed by the broadcast. You might find it helpful to make notes under the following headings:

- ◆ what is being presented? What issues are covered in the programme? (writing/content)
- ◆ what is the purpose of the news broadcast?
- ◆ who is it aimed at? You might think about what age group, people who know about this topic already/ people who know nothing about it already?
- ◆ how is the message presented? Was the presenter serious or not? In all the items in the broadcast?
- ◆ think about the how they used one of these – did it help or not?
 - use of pictures, video, sound, text
 - use of characters and their stories
 - use of facts and statistics
 - use of words or phrases
- ◆ does the news broadcast work?

(Teacher or lecturer may wish to put a brief summary of the news broadcast here.)

Task 2 – Discuss news broadcast with partner

Having viewed and made some notes on the news broadcast you will have the opportunity to compare your views with a partner. Compare your notes on the news broadcast.

With your partner, consider the following points:

- ◆ the content and techniques used in the broadcast. What are the main points being made? What supporting details does it use?
- ◆ how are the main ideas put across? Remember to use the notes you have made and refer to specific details and features (such as pictures, video, sound, etc) from the news broadcast.
- ◆ how convincing or informative is the broadcast? What is successful or unsuccessful about it?

Task 3 – Present a summary of your views of news broadcast

Now give a brief summary of your views of the news broadcast to the class. Remember to use examples from the broadcast to support your opinion and when answering questions from the audience.

Learning context: Across-learning situation

Instructions to practitioner

School activity

Learner activity

Describe a school activity to a member of the community.

Suggested learning and teaching focus:

Preparatory activities such as an initial discussion may support learners to engage with what they are hearing. Learners should be able to identify the ideas within the oral communication.

Teachers or lecturers may want to review the following:

Note taking skills — learners should:

- ◆ consider the audience and purpose of text
- ◆ select and use relevant information for the activity
- ◆ try to organise examples from the text

Selecting information

- ◆ highlighting key information
- ◆ summarising
- ◆ listing ideas and details
- ◆ selecting particular words/phrases/ideas

Speaking skills

- ◆ learners should ensure that their contributions are mostly audible and clear and indicate an attempt to organise spoken communication.
- ◆ a review of non-verbal conventions, such as eye contact or gestures, as appropriate to audience and purpose may be helpful.
- ◆ a review of strategies may help learners to engage with both topic and audience.
- ◆ vocabulary and sentence structures will allow the learner's meaning to be conveyed.

Listening skills

- ◆ learners should review how to respond to others appropriately. For example, a learner may repeat information, or ask or answer questions.

Learning context: Across-learning situation

Instructions to learner

School activity

Learner activity

This activity involves developing your oral communication skills. You will have the opportunity to describe a school activity to a member of the community. During the course of the activity you will make notes and organise your notes on the activity, describe the activity to the member of the community, and then answer questions.

Task 1 – Making and organising notes on the activity

You have a school activity (such as work placements, college visits, etc) to analyse and make notes on.

You might find it helpful to make notes under the following headings:

- ◆ what is the purpose of the activity?
- ◆ when does it take place?
- ◆ who does it involve?
- ◆ what does it involve?
- ◆ description of what happens during the activity.
- ◆ what do you like about it?
- ◆ what do you think would make it better?

Task 2 – Describing the activity to the member of the community

Now give a description of the activity to the member of the community. You should use your notes to help you describe the activity. You can use examples to explain what you liked/did not like it about it.

Task 3 – Answering questions

Remember to use examples and descriptive details to support your opinion when answering questions from the audience.

Learning context: Vocational

Instructions to practitioner

Customer complaint

Learner activity

Listen to a customer's complaint in a role play and respond appropriately.

Suggested learning and teaching focus:

Preparatory activities such as an initial discussion may support learners to engage with what they are hearing. Learners should be able to identify the ideas within the oral communication.

Teachers or lecturers may want to review the following:

Note taking skills — learners should:

- ◆ consider the audience and purpose of text
- ◆ select and use relevant information for the activity
- ◆ try to organise examples from the text

Selecting information

- ◆ repeating, reflecting, paraphrasing
- ◆ highlighting key information
- ◆ questioning/answering
- ◆ summarising
- ◆ listing ideas and details

Speaking skills

- ◆ learners should ensure that their contributions are mostly audible and clear and indicate an attempt to organise spoken communication
- ◆ a review of non-verbal conventions, such as eye contact or gestures, as appropriate to audience and purpose may be helpful
- ◆ a review of strategies may help learners to engage with both topic and audience
- ◆ vocabulary and sentence structures will allow the learner's meaning to be conveyed

Listening skills

- ◆ learners should review how to respond to others appropriately. For example, a learner may repeat information, or ask or answer questions.

Learning context: Vocational

Instructions to learner

Customer complaint

Learner activity

This activity involves developing your oral communication skills. You will have the opportunity to listen to a customer's complaint in a role play and respond appropriately.

Task

A customer has arrived at your business and has a complaint about a service or a product your business has provided. You must listen to the complaint, make a note of the problem, and if possible, provide a solution to the problem.

You might want to consider the following points:

- ◆ try to remain positive
- ◆ show the customer that you are listening to them and understanding them
- ◆ make a brief note of the complaint for company records
- ◆ apologise for the problem even if the customer may turn out to be wrong
- ◆ provide a solution to the problem or make it up to the customer in some way
- ◆ show you appreciate their business. Free coupon?

Appendix 1: Progression in oral communication skills

The following table show skills progression in oral communication at SCQF Level 3, Level 4 and Level 5.

| SCQF 3 | SCQF 4 | SCQF 5 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>General skill Produce and respond to simple oral communication</p> | <p>General skill Produce and respond to straightforward oral communication</p> | <p>General skill Produce and respond to oral communication</p> |
| <p>Specific skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ convey simple information, opinions, or ideas ◆ attempt to sequence and link information, opinions, or ideas ◆ use an appropriate range of spoken language structures ◆ take account of situation and audience during delivery ◆ respond to others, taking account of their contributions | <p>Specific skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ convey appropriate information, opinions, and/or ideas ◆ sequence and link information, opinions, and ideas ◆ use appropriate vocabulary in an appropriate range of spoken language structures ◆ take account of situation and audience during delivery ◆ respond to others, taking account of their contributions | <p>Specific skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ convey all essential information, opinions, or ideas with supporting detail accurately and coherently ◆ show skill in sequencing and linking information, opinions, and/or ideas ◆ use vocabulary and a range of spoken language structures appropriate to purpose and audience ◆ take account of situation and audience during delivery ◆ respond to others, taking account of their contributions |

In Literacy at SCQF Level 3, learners will develop simple oral communication which:

- ◆ enables them to take part in a simple interaction with one or more people — this will usually be a discussion on a simple topic
- ◆ conveys information, opinions, or ideas at a simple level
- ◆ sequences and links information clearly and in order — eg giving directions in the correct order
- ◆ uses simple vocabulary in an appropriate register. Vocabulary and sentence structures will allow the speaker's meaning to be conveyed
- ◆ speaks loudly enough for listeners to hear
- ◆ uses appropriate non-verbal conventions — eg making appropriate eye contact or gestures, pausing at appropriate times

- ◆ responds to others appropriately — eg by repeating information, or asking or answering questions

In Literacy at SCQF Level 4, learners will develop straightforward oral communication which:

- ◆ enables them to take part in a straightforward interaction with one or more people — this will usually be a discussion on a straightforward topic, although candidates may also deliver a short talk with questions and answers
- ◆ conveys several items of information, opinions, or ideas
- ◆ sequences and links information clearly and in order when presenting — eg giving instructions in the correct order; giving a short talk with a recognisable beginning and end, and basic linkage
- ◆ uses vocabulary, register, and sentence structures which are mainly appropriate to purpose and audience. There should be some attempt to vary these as appropriate — eg rephrasing a point in simpler terms to aid the understanding of others
- ◆ speaks loudly enough for listeners to hear, and try to vary pace and tone
- ◆ uses appropriate non-verbal conventions — eg making appropriate eye contact, posture or gestures, pausing at appropriate points
- ◆ takes account of the contributions of others — eg by listening and responding to points of view, answering questions, asking questions to clarify, or expanding points briefly if necessary

In Literacy at SCQF Level 5, learners will develop oral communication which:

- ◆ enables them to take part in a spoken interaction with one or more people — this may be a discussion which has a clear purpose, is on a relevant topic, and allows for exploration and the reaching of a consensus. The learner must make a significant contribution.
- ◆ Alternatively, the learner can deliver a presentation which includes significant interaction with the audience. The presentation may be supported by images — eg illustrations, handouts, models or images using IT or multimedia tools
- ◆ conveys all essential information or ideas — eg by developing an argument containing several sets of information, or by giving a demonstration, or by exploring an issue in some detail
- ◆ sequences and links to present information clearly and in order — eg a presentation, giving an overview in the introduction, presenting information in a logical sequence, and giving a conclusion summarising the main points
- ◆ uses vocabulary, register and sentence structures which are appropriate to a clear purpose and audience. These should be varied as necessary. Some formal language may be used — eg use of specialist vocabulary
- ◆ speaks loudly enough for listeners to hear and adjusts pace and modulation to meet the needs of the audience
- ◆ makes appropriate use of eye contact, posture, and gesture
- ◆ takes account of the contributions of others — eg by listening and responding to points of view, answering questions, asking questions to clarify or explore in greater depth, summarising or expanding on points made

Appendix 2: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications on SQA’s website: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14976.html>
- ◆ Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work
- ◆ Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment
- ◆ [Course Specifications](#)
- ◆ [Design Principles for National Courses](#)
- ◆ [Guide to Assessment \(June 2008\)](#)
- ◆ [Overview of Qualification Reports](#)
- ◆ *Overview of Qualification Reports*
- ◆ *Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas*
- ◆ *Research Report 4 — Less is More: Good Practice in Reducing Assessment Time*
- ◆ *Coursework Authenticity — a Guide for Teachers and Lecturers*
- ◆ 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](#)
- ◆ SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools
- ◆ SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education
- ◆ SQA e-assessment web page: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/5606.html

Administrative information

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History of changes to Advanced Higher draft Course/Unit Support Notes

| Course details | Version | Description of change | Authorised by | Date |
|----------------|---------|-----------------------|---------------|------|
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