



Arrangements for:
Professional Development Award in
Working with Asylum Seekers and
Refugees at SCQF level 7

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1 Introduction

This is the Arrangements Document for the Group Award: PDA Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees, which was validated in June 2008. This document includes: background information on the development of the Group Award, its aims, guidance on access, details of the Group Award structure, and guidance on delivery.

The Professional Development Award (SCQF level 7) Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees is designed for people who are directly involved in working with asylum seekers and refugees. This award will provide individuals with the opportunity to improve on their professional practice, to evidence continuing professional development and to engage in reflective practice.

The PDA Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees was developed in response to the research findings and the content informed by the toolkit produced by the Asylum Seekers Active Partnership (ASAP) Trans-national Partnership.

This PDA and its associated National Progression Award (an introductory level qualification) will form the first qualifications of their kind for workers with asylum seekers and refugees anywhere in Europe to arise out of a trans-national project.

The award follows a structure of mandatory and optional Units designed to meet the occupational requirements of working as a service provider or manager in an asylum seeker/refugee environment.

2 Rationale for the development of the Group Award

The past few years have seen an unprecedented rise in the numbers of asylum seekers entering the United Kingdom. Glasgow City Council entered into a contract with the Home Office to assist the Government in discharging its duty under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. Around 10,000 asylum seekers have been resettled in the City of Glasgow and surrounding area since the year 2000 as a result of this policy.

Despite the fact that asylum seekers and refugees are some of the most vulnerable people in Europe, there was no minimum standard of information, knowledge or understanding required of people working with them.

This qualification is specifically designed for those who provide support, advice and guidance to asylum seekers and refugees, and reflects the terminology adopted by ASAP (Asylum Seekers Active Partnership) Trans-national Partnership, an EU-wide group established to investigate the needs of Asylum Seekers and Refugees.

The target client group for this award will be service providers, case workers, managers, front line staff and others who work directly with asylum seekers and refugees, who are looking to improve on their professional practice, keep up-to-date with asylum/refugee practice developments and develop best practice within their own working environment. The award is likely to be of use to groups such as ESOL tutors, language support workers, housing officers and those in the voluntary sector.

Most candidates will complete the full award. However, the Units are free-standing therefore candidates may undertake the Units individually for purposes of continuing professional development. Also, prospective employees or volunteers may wish to undertake the individual Units as preparation for employment in this sector.

The structure of the award reflects the Outcomes of consultation with employers and service providers working with asylum seekers and refugees

3 Aims of the Group Award

3.1 General aims of the Group Award

The Professional Development Award: Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SCQF level 7) is designed for people who are directly involved in working with asylum seekers and refugees, or who may wish to be involved in this sector. This award offers those working with asylum seekers or refugees the opportunity to improve on their professional practice, to evidence continuing professional development and to engage in reflective practice.

A key aim of the Group Award is to support relevant training and to provide access to appropriate nationally recognised and certificated qualifications for the sector.

3.2 Specific aims of the Group Award

- ◆ To provide a formal qualification for those who provide support, advice and guidance to asylum seekers and refugees
- ◆ To enhance the quality of support, advice and guidance provided for asylum seekers and refugees
- ◆ To develop the skills and experience of those who work with asylum seekers and refugees
- ◆ To develop knowledge and understanding of the issues relating to supporting asylum seekers and refugees.
- ◆ To develop knowledge and understanding of national and international legislation in relation to asylum seekers and refugees
- ◆ To enhance the promotion of equality and diversity in the provision of services to asylum seekers

3.3 Target groups

The target client groups for this award includes service providers, case workers, managers, front line staff and others who work directly with asylum seekers and refugees, and who are looking to improve on their professional practice, wish to keep up-to-date with asylum/refugee practice developments and aim to develop best practice within their own working environment. Service providers could be ESOL tutors, language support workers, housing officers, youth workers or voluntary workers.

In addition, the award is relevant for continuing professional development needs for existing staff. It may also be appropriate for prospective employees who may wish to undertake the mandatory Unit *Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Asylum Law and Process* as preparation for appropriate employment.

3.4 Employment opportunities

Staff groups identified include:

- ◆ Volunteers/advisors/members of management committees
- ◆ Careers Advisors
- ◆ Social work staff — through-care and after-care workers
- ◆ Housing staff and benefits advisors
- ◆ Advice and Guidance staff
- ◆ Voluntary sector staff and carers, including foster carers
- ◆ Citizens Advice Bureau staff
- ◆ Counsellors
- ◆ NHS clinical and administrative staff
- ◆ Home Care Support Staff/Family Liaison Officers

4. Access to Group Award

In stating the access regulations and in consideration of the subsequent selection and admission to the award, presenting centres will need to ensure that each prospective candidate has sufficient academic ability and the appropriate personal qualities to succeed. It is essential that candidates are in an appropriate work or volunteering environment in order that they can meet the Evidence Requirements of the component Units.

Candidates should have good communication skills, both written and oral. These could be evidenced by the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications such as, for example:

- ◆ An ESOL qualification at an appropriate level (SCQF level 5 or above)
- ◆ Other nationally recognised qualifications (eg English/Communication) equivalent to SCQF level 6

or by the completion of a pre-course interview, part of which could take the form of a written assignment.

The skills to undertake this award could also be demonstrated through an employer's reference, or through the process of application and interview.

In addition to proven communication skills candidates should have real work experience, either paid or voluntary, of providing services to asylum seekers and/or refugees.

5 Group Award structure

PDA Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees at SCQF level 7.

This PDA carries 24 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7.

The PDA will be awarded on successful completion of a total of three credits. The candidate will require the two Units from the mandatory section and one Unit from the options section.

5.1 Framework

Mandatory Units

Unit title	Code	SCQF credit points	SCQF level	SQA credit value
Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Asylum Law and Process	F3RY 34	8	7	1
Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Professional Skills Development	F3S2 34	8	7	1

Optional Units

One credit from the following to be achieved:

Unit title	Code	SCQF credit points	SCQF level	SQA credit value
Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Promoting Equality and Diversity	F3S1 34	8	7	1
Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Children and Young People	F3S0 34	8	7	1

5.2 Mapping information

There are no discrete National Occupational Standards or associated SVQs for staff working with asylum seekers and refugees therefore no mapping has been undertaken for this award.

5.3 Articulation, professional recognition and credit transfer

There is no direct articulation from this award to other awards in the SQA framework, as there are no existing specialist qualifications for these staff groups. The Units have been developed specifically for this award and do not overlap with existing SQA provision. Related Units have been written at SCQF level 5 for the associated National Progression Award (NPA), an introductory level award for new support workers, which provides the first of a suite of awards for staff in this sector.

The proposed award is unique to Scotland and is the first of its kind, hence there are no direct articulation opportunities.

However, there are various Higher National Qualifications (HNCs) and SVQs in related areas which could provide progression opportunities for successful candidates. These include:

- ◆ HNC Working with Communities
- ◆ PDA ITALL
- ◆ PDA Working with Individuals with Dyslexia
- ◆ PDAs Advice and Guidance suite
- ◆ PDA Managing Volunteering
- ◆ PDA Housing Law Advice suite
- ◆ HNC Social Care
- ◆ SVQs in Advice and Guidance at levels 2, 3 and 4
- ◆ SVQs in Community Development Work at levels 2, 3 and 4
- ◆ SVQs in Youth Work at levels 2 and 3

There are no discrete National Occupational Standards or associated SVQs for staff working with asylum seekers and refugees, therefore no mapping has been undertaken for this award.

However, there may be some commonality of function to be found in the suites of NOS and SVQs for the following areas to which candidates may wish to progress:

- ◆ Advice and Guidance
- ◆ Coaching and Mentoring
- ◆ Community Development Work
- ◆ Youth Work
- ◆ Health and Social Care
- ◆ Early Education and Childcare

It should be noted that these suites do not contain specific Units on working with asylum seekers and refugees and therefore it is unlikely that direct credit transfer will be possible between the Units of the PDA and individual Units within these suites.

6 Approaches to delivery and assessment

6.1 Content and context

The delivery of this award should focus on the occupational requirements specific to working within the asylum seeker/refugee domain as part of a service provision team. The Units are contextualised to the asylum seeker/refugee environment.

The PDA Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees comprises 2 mandatory credits and 1 optional credit.

The 2 mandatory credits comprise 2 newly developed HN credits in the form of two new HN Units.

The two optional Units are newly developed HN Units.

6.1 Delivery and assessment

Advice on how to assess each Unit is given in detail in the individual Unit Specifications at the section — Evidence Requirements (for each Outcome), and in the Support Notes at the Section — Guidance on the Delivery and Assessment of this Unit. The advice on the possible number of assessments is recommended to centres in order to promote best practice.

There is no prescribed order in which the Units must be delivered. However it is suggested that the *Law and Process* Unit should be taught at an early stage as this equips candidates with an understanding of the legislative and policy framework within which claims for Asylum are processed, and of the legal definitions and entitlements for asylum seekers and refugees. The qualification will normally be delivered through a blended learning format.

The PDA Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees is for people who are currently working, or preparing to work with asylum seekers and refugees. Workshops will supplement e-learning. Instruments of assessment will be designed to meet the Evidence Requirements for each Unit and will include

- ◆ Written assignments
- ◆ Reflective accounts of practice
- ◆ Case studies
- ◆ Structured questions

It is expected that candidates completing the award will collect evidence for the award when working in real work settings. This will normally be the candidate's own workplace or volunteer position.

Specific guidance on content, context and delivery and assessment is given in each of the component Units.

7 General information for centres

The PDA Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SCQF level 7) is a practice-based qualification offering the candidate an opportunity to develop knowledge and skills of the issues faced by asylum seekers and the range of legislation relevant to claims for asylum and refugee status. It is expected that candidates will be in employment working with asylum seekers and refugees or volunteering with these groups and be able to draw evidence from their practice.

In addition to the two mandatory Units, there are two optional Units within the PDA from which candidates must select one. This allows candidates to choose the Unit relevant to their work setting or their area of particular interest, for example working with unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people.

Unit Assessments take a variety of forms including case studies, reports, reflective accounts and structured questions.

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates 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.

Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used within this Group Award 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 and Quality Assurance for Colleges of Further Education* (www.sqa.org.uk).

8 General information for candidates

The PDA Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SCQF level 7) is relevant to you if you are currently working, or preparing to work with, asylum seekers and refugees.

The PDA Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SCQF level 7) is a practice-based qualification offering you opportunities to develop knowledge and skills of the issues faced by asylum seekers and the range of legislation relevant to claims for asylum and refugee status. It is expected that you will either be in employment, working with asylum seekers and refugees, or will be in a volunteering situation with these groups and you should be able to draw evidence from practice in such situations.

In addition to the two mandatory Units, there are two optional Units within the PDA. You must select one. You would normally select the Unit that is more relevant to your work setting or area of particular interest, for example working with unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people.

You will be required to undertake an assessment for each Unit. Unit assessments may include case studies, reports, reflective accounts and structured questions.

9 Glossary of terms

SCQF: This stands for the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework, which is a new way of speaking about qualifications and how they inter-relate. We use SCQF terminology 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: One HN credit is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points. This applies to all HN Units, irrespective of their level.

SCQF levels: The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HN Units will normally be at levels 6–9. Graded Units will be at level 7 and 8.

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

Graded Unit: Graded Units assess candidates' ability to integrate what they have learned whilst working towards the Units of the Group Award. Their purpose is to add value to the Group Award, making it more than the sum of its parts, and to encourage candidates to retain and adapt their skills and knowledge.

Dedicated Unit to cover Core Skills: This is a non-subject Unit that is written to cover one or more particular Core Skills.

Embedded Core Skills: This is where the development of a Core Skill is incorporated into the Unit and where the Unit assessment also covers the requirements of Core Skill assessment at a particular level.

Signposted Core Skills: This refers to the opportunities to develop a particular Core Skill at a specified level that lie out with automatic certification.

Qualification Design Team: The QDT works in conjunction with a Qualification Manager/Development Manager to steer the development of the HNC/HND from its inception/revision through to validation. The group is made up of key stakeholders representing the interests of centres, employers, universities and other relevant organisations.

Consortium-devised HNCs and HNDs are those developments or revisions undertaken by a group of centres in partnership with SQA.

Specialist single centre and specialist collaborative devised HNCs and HNDs are those developments or revisions led by a single centre or small group of centres who provide knowledge and skills in a specialist area. Like consortium-devised HNCs and HNDs, these developments or revisions will also be supported by SQA.

10 Appendices

Appendix 1: Terminology

Appendix 2: Relationship of Units to aims

Appendix 3: Core Skills information

Appendix 1: Terminology

ASAP	Asylum Seekers Active Partnership
ATLAS	Action for Training and Learning for Asylum Seekers
ESF	European Social Fund
NCH	National Children's Homes
NPA	National Progression Award
PDA	Professional Development Award

Appendix 2: Relationship of Units to aims

Unit	Specific aims
Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Asylum Law and Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To provide a formal qualification for those who provide support, advice and guidance to asylum seekers and refugees ◆ To develop knowledge and understanding of national and international legislation in relation to asylum seekers and refugees ◆ To enhance the quality of support advice and guidance provided for asylum seekers and refugees ◆ To develop knowledge and understanding of the issues relating to supporting asylum seekers and refugees
Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Promoting Equality and Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To enhance the promotion of equality and diversity in the provision of services to asylum seekers ◆ To develop knowledge and understanding of the issues relating to supporting asylum seekers and refugees
Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Professional Skills Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To develop the skills and experience of those who work with asylum seekers and refugees ◆ To enhance the quality of support advice and guidance provided for asylum seekers and refugees
Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Children and Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To develop knowledge and understanding of the issues relating to supporting asylum seekers and refugees

Appendix 3: Core Skills information

Entry profile

Candidates wishing to undertake this award should have good communication skills, both written and oral. These could be evidenced either by the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications, eg Intermediate 2 English or a qualification equivalent to SCQF level 5 or by the completion of a pre-course interview part of which could take the form of a written assignment. The skills to undertake this Unit could also be demonstrated through an employer's reference or the process of application and interview.

Developing Core Skills within the award

Candidates will have the opportunity to further develop the following Core Skills:

Communication: Oral Communication — there are ample opportunities in the PDA Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees for candidates to provide evidence of oral communication skills when interacting with others.

Communication: Written Communication — will be developed through candidates producing written work in a variety of formats.

Working with Others — will be developed as candidates are required to work collaboratively with others.

Problem Solving: Analysis — there will be opportunities to develop aspects of *Problem Solving* Core Skills, particularly in analysis and evaluation.

Core Skills exit profile

On completion of the component Units, it is anticipated that candidates will have developed aspects of the Core Skills in *Working with Others*, *Problem Solving* and *Communication* to SCQF level 6 or equivalent.