Unit Support Notes — Scottish Studies: Scotland in Focus (SCQF level 6)

Contents

Introduction

These *Unit Support Notes* are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the *Scottish Studies: Scotland in Focus (SCQF level 6) Unit*. They are intended for teachers and lecturers and should be read in conjunction with:

♦   the Unit Specification
♦   the Award Specification
♦   the Award Support Notes
♦   Assessment support materials

General guidance on the Unit

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

The aim of this Unit is to allow learners to broaden and add depth to their existing knowledge of Scotland in terms of its people, its languages, society, culture, natural and built environment and/or heritage. They will do this by planning and completing an activity with a Scottish focus and reflecting on what they have learned.

If this Unit is being delivered as part of the *Scottish Studies Award* at SCQF level 6, learners will already be studying - or will have studied - in a Scottish context across three different subject areas. They can therefore use this Unit to develop their knowledge of Scotland further, under non-directive supervision, in a number of ways. For example, they could choose a Scottish focus in a subject area, or across subject areas, which they have already studied in a Scottish context. Alternatively, the focus could be in a **new** subject area or areas.

Whether the Unit is being delivered as part of the Award or as a free-standing Unit, learners must be given the opportunity to broaden and add depth to their knowledge in an area that is of interest to them. Therefore, centres must ensure that the focus for the activity will allow learners to broaden and deepen, not simply consolidate, their existing knowledge of Scotland.

Skills, knowledge and understanding

Learners who achieve this Unit will develop skills that are important for successful independent learning. They will learn to:

♦   identify relevant areas of study, detailed sources of information and resources
♦   research sources and select relevant information
♦   use information and resources to achieve identified aims
♦   reflect on their learning
♦   analyse in depth, and communicate effectively and in detail
♦   evaluate processes and the effectiveness of their chosen methods of communication
♦   work independently

This Unit is at SCQF level 6 and learners should therefore work independently. However, teachers and lecturers should give feedback on learners' choices of aims and activities to ensure these are appropriate.

Although the skills learners need to demonstrate are specified, there is no mandatory knowledge or understanding for the Unit. Centres and learners are free to identify any Scottish focus for their activities in light of the resources available and the context in which the Unit is being delivered. The focus for an activity could be on, **for example**:

Scots or Gaelic

♦ discoveries, inventions or innovations of Scottish origin
♦ a specific community/communities
♦ an historical event or development
♦ an aspect of culture, for example, food, traditions, sport, folklore
♦ an issue of historic and/or contemporary importance
♦ industry or commerce
♦ an aspect of life in rural and/or urban Scotland
♦ a Scot of influence at home or abroad
♦ external influences on Scotland and its culture
♦ literature, performing or visual arts, or crafts
♦ influences in the fields of philosophy, sociology or psychology
♦ an aspect of religion/religious belief
♦ places of interest and/or importance
♦ an aspect of the natural or built environment
♦ the Scottish diaspora
♦ immigration
♦ the representation of Scotland and/or the Scots in, for example, film, literature, the media, art and design
♦ facts and fictions about Scotland.

This list is not exhaustive. It provides an illustration of the extensive range of potential areas of study relating to Scotland for this Unit.

Approaches to learning and teaching

Planning activities

Appropriate learning and teaching approaches will depend upon the resources and expertise available in each centre. They will also depend on the prior experiences, strengths and interests of learners. However, in all centres, these approaches must provide opportunities for learners to broaden and add depth to their existing knowledge of Scotland and to develop the skills required to achieve the Unit. Learners will therefore need time, as well as input from their teachers and lecturers, to help them reflect on their existing knowledge of Scotland and identify an appropriate focus for further study. They will also need to develop an understanding of the nature of the skills involved.

Before learners begin to plan their activities, teachers and lecturers should allow for time to help them to understand the skills and knowledge they will need to demonstrate in order to achieve the Unit. This could be through, for example:

♦ teacher or lecturer and learner discussions
♦ the provision of a checklist that learners can review and analyse independently or with others
♦ group or paired discussion of the skills they will need to develop and why these are important.

Teachers and lecturers could also use a variety of techniques to help learners reflect on their existing knowledge of Scotland, for example:

♦ structured paired or group discussions
♦ one-to-one discussion with individual learners
♦ mind-mapping, or another suitable technique, followed by peer and teacher or lecturer feedback, and discussion
♦ structured questions which learners can reflect on individually and then discuss with peers and/or their teachers or lecturers
♦ review of a reflective journal which learners have kept while progressing through the award

Aims and activities

The extent and nature of potential aims and activities will depend upon the resources and expertise available in the centre. However, learners should be given as much freedom as possible to identify their own aims and activity within these constraints. This will be important to ensure that each learner has the opportunity to explore an aspect of Scottish Studies that is of interest to them.

Appropriate activities will also depend on learners' existing strengths and skills. Learners will **need** to use these strengths and skills to communicate their findings effectively. For example, learners who choose to produce an on-line resource will only be able to communicate effectively if they already have the skills required.

The following are examples of appropriate aims and activities. These examples are for illustrative purposes only – learners should be encouraged to identify their own focus, aims and activities and teachers/lecturers should provide feedback at the planning stage to ensure these are appropriate.

Example 1: Learner **A** studied Politics, Geography and Scottish Literature, as part of the Scottish Studies Award at SCQF level 6.

Aims: To investigate the origins and development of the Cairngorm National Park
To investigate the effect of the National Park in terms of employment and tourism in the surrounding area.
Activity: Produce a fieldwork logbook which includes processed and analysed data, photographs and sketches.

Example 2: Learner **B** has studied Music, History and Dance as part of the Scottish Studies Award at SCQF level 6.

Aims: To learn about the origins and development of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland to the present day
To investigate a famous person who studied there.
Activity: Create a podcast which contains archived and present-day materials, using audio visual techniques.

Example 3: Learner **C,** has studied Drama, Scottish Literature and Business as part of the Scottish Studies Award at SCQF level 6.

Aims: To learn about the National Theatre of Scotland through its manifesto
To analyse a range of productions to see if these have fulfilled its manifesto.
Activity: Create a collage mapping performances across a number of years.

Example 4: Learner **D** has studied Media Studies, Modern Studies and Business as part of the Scottish Studies Award at SCQF level 6.

Aims: To compare how tabloid and broadsheet newspapers report on football violence.
To examine a criminal case involving football violence in Scotland.
Activity: Create a performance exploring football violence and how it is portrayed in the media.

Example 5: Learner **E** has studied History, Art and Design and Travel and Tourism as part of the Scottish Studies Award at SCQF level 6.

Aims: To investigate in depth the extent of Robert the Bruce's involvement in the wars of independence.
To analyse the impact of location on the outcomes of his military endeavours.
Activity: Create a scripted tourist guide and route map around places of significance to Robert the Bruce's involvement in the wars of independence.

Example 6: Learner **F** is studying the Scottish Studies: Scotland in Focus (SCQF level 6) Unit on a free standing basis. He is intending to complete an HNC in Business Management at college after leaving school.

> **Aims:** Investigate in depth the many products and services that Scotland exports
> Analyse the trend in exports over the past 300 years.
> **Activity:** Create a documentary charting changing patterns of Scottish exports.

Further examples of potential aims and activities can be found in the Support Notes for the Scottish Studies: Scotland in Focus Unit at SCQF levels 3, 4 and 5. These also help to illustrate potential options which could be adapted for SCQF level 6.

Sources and resources

Learners must identify at least **three** sources of information, and the resources they will need, independently of their teacher or lecturer. However, teachers or lecturers should give feedback on the their choice of aims, activities, sources and resources.

Sources should be detailed and extensive enough to ensure learners must undertake research in order to select detailed information which is relevant to their aims. Appropriate sources of information could include:

♦   relevant websites
♦   fiction or factual/reference books – in hardcopy or electronic format
♦   a person or group
♦   brochures, journals, newspapers or information booklets
♦   seminars or presentations from external speakers
♦   television or radio programmes, DVDs
♦   archive materials
♦   field trips or visits
♦   visual displays
♦   specialist catalogues and/or magazines

Some activities may require only basic resources such as, for example, access to a computer and the materials required to present their findings in hard copy. Other activities may require, for example, access to art or craft materials, space to practise for a performance, or specialist equipment to create a product. The number and type of resources required will therefore depend upon the activities chosen. This should be taken into account when planning the range of potential aims and activities which will be available to learners.

Learners can complete their activities on their own or as part of a group. When they are doing this, teachers and lecturers should monitor progress and can provide feedback, as part of the learning and teaching process.

Approaches to assessment and gathering evidence

Timing and conditions

Assessment will take place throughout the Unit as learners plan and complete their activities, and reflect on their learning. Learners should have access to the information and the resources they have identified. A closed-book assessment is therefore not appropriate for this Unit.

Once they have chosen their aims, activities, sources and resources, learners should work independently under the non-directive supervision of their teacher or lecturer.

Gathering Evidence

The nature of the evidence produced to demonstrate achievement will depend on the aims and activities learners have chosen. Evidence could be:

♦ written, oral or electronically recorded
♦ generated through the creation and delivery of a performance that is supported by an assessor observation checklist
♦ generated through the planning and creation of a product such as, for example, an art work, craft item or model
♦ generated through the planning and carrying out of a practical activity such as a Scottish focused event or field trip.
♦ a combination of the above.

It will be possible to generate evidence for both Outcomes in an integrated way. This is because, for learners who achieve the Unit, the preparation and end product will contain evidence that they have planned and completed their activities, and reflected on their learning. Using the examples of activities given in the *Approaches to learning and teaching* section above:

♦ in example **1**, the fieldwork logbook will provide evidence that the activity has been planned and completed. The contents of the logbook will provide evidence that the learner has identified what they have learned and communicated the findings in question.
♦ in example **3**, the collage will provide evidence that the activity has been planned and completed, and that the learner has communicated some of his or her findings. An electronic or hardcopy annotated workbook, sketchbook or folio used to help develop ideas for the collage would also provide further evidence that the learner has identified and communicated the findings in question.
♦ in example **4**, the performance, confirmed by the assessor, will provide evidence that the activity has been planned and completed, and that the learner has communicated some of his or her findings. Notes, a logbook, blog or journal kept during the development process would also provide further evidence that the learner has identified and communicated the findings in question.

Whichever form the evidence takes, centres must ensure that this evidence is each learner's own work. When learners are working under supervision, teachers or lecturers will be able to observe that this is the case. When learners are working independently, teachers and lecturers could use one-to-one interviews or on-going questioning about progress as ways of authenticating the evidence.

Judging the evidence

When making and verifying assessment decisions, teachers and lecturers must remember that the focus of assessment is on the learner's knowledge of their Scottish focus and on skills which are important for independent learning. All evidence must be judged against the Outcomes, Assessment Standards and Evidence Requirements in the *Scottish Studies: Scotland in Focus (SCQF level 6) Unit Specification*.

The focus of assessment is **not** on subject specific technical skills such as creative writing, technical drawing, using tools or performance skills. However, learners must communicate their learning effectively and in detail. They are unlikely to be able to do this if they do not already have the skills required to express themselves through the medium they are using.

Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Unit Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Unit.

Approaches to assessment should take account of the specific needs of learners. However, centres must ensure that the validity of the assessment is maintained and that all approaches to assessment have the potential to generate evidence of achievement covering both Outcomes and all Assessment Standards.

Administrative information

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History of changes to Unit Support Notes

Unit details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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