



Higher National Unit Specification

General information

Unit title: Understanding Loss and the Process of Grief

Unit code: DH3W 34

Superclass: PP

Publication date: August 2004

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 02

Unit purpose: To enable learners to evaluate a variety of theoretical models of grief, identify helping strategies to support individuals, families and carers in the process of grief and identify individual and cultural needs.

Outcomes

On successful completion of the Unit the learner will be able to:

1. Evaluate theoretical models and explain the process of loss and grief
2. Identify a range of helping strategies to individuals and significant others in a range of settings in the event of a bereavement
3. Describe the individual and cultural needs associated with the religious and cultural differences in society.

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7)

Recommended entry to the Unit

Learners should have good communication skills, both written and oral. These can be evidenced either by the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications for example Higher 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. In addition to proven communication skills learners should have preferably undertaken some real work experience, paid or voluntary, in a care setting.

Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

Unit title: Understanding Loss and the Process of Grief

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes for this Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

Context for delivery

If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard. A list of existing ASPs is available to download from SQA's website (<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46233.2769.html>).

Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

Unit title: Understanding Loss and the Process of Grief

Equality and inclusion

This Unit Specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should 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.

Higher National Unit Specification: Statement of standards

Unit title: Understanding Loss and the Process of Grief

Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Learners should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Evaluate theoretical models and explain the process of loss and grief.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Types of loss which may trigger grief
- ◆ Current theories of grief

Outcome 2

Identify a range of helping strategies to individuals and significant others in a range of settings, in the event of a bereavement

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Legal and other procedures to be followed in event of a bereavement within a range of care settings
- ◆ Agencies to which the individual can be referred for further support
- ◆ Emotional support for individuals and significant others who have experienced loss
- ◆ The impact of loss and grief on social care staff

Outcome 3

Describe the individual and cultural needs associated with the religious and cultural differences in society

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Historical and cultural traditions surrounding grief and bereavement
- ◆ Rites and practices of faiths and religious responses to death
- ◆ Current secular non-religious responses to death

Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Outcome 1

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills across all Outcomes by showing that they can:

Demonstrate an understanding of a range of losses: losses associated with death; and losses not associated with death which may trigger grief in individuals. Learners must demonstrate an understanding of relevant theories.

Learners must provide evidence, which identifies a minimum of four occasions of loss – two not associated with death and two associated with death.

Learners should apply a range of theoretical approaches, which cover complex and uncomplicated experiences of loss.

Outcome 2

Learners will need evidence, which identifies a range of legal and other procedures, which require to be carried out following a death in a range of care settings.

Learners will need evidence to demonstrate an understanding of what is meant by emotional support in practice.

Learners must demonstrate an understanding of a range of agencies from the statutory and voluntary sectors, which may offer additional practical, financial, and emotional support which meet the needs of the individual and significant others.

Outcome 3

Learners should demonstrate an understanding of the historical and cultural traditions surrounding grief and bereavement.

Learners should demonstrate an understanding of a range of rites and practices of both recognised religions and faiths.

Learners should also provide evidence, which demonstrates an understanding of non-religious responses to death.



Higher National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Understanding Loss and the Process of Grief

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

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

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit:

The unit is primarily intended to provide learners with an understanding of a range of theoretical perspectives and helping strategies which can provide support for individuals receiving care, families and carers in the process of grief.

Within this process learners will identify a range of individual and cultural needs. Tutors should be aware of learners' own life experience, which may include recent bereavement.

Outcome 1

This outcome examines a range of situations in which loss may occur. It is important to stress that loss is not only associated with death as individuals may experience loss in relation to the loss of a pet, a limb, their health, as a result of rape, loss of a partner through separation or divorce, loss in relation to family breakdown, loss in relation to moving into residential care and loss in relation to children being looked after by care agencies.

Attention should be paid to the range of ways in which individuals may experience death. Learners should be aware of the impact of anticipated and unexpected death, violent death, suicide, miscarriage, abortion, and stillbirth.

Learners should be aware of the different manifestations of behaviour following loss for example challenging behaviour, anger and depression.

A range of theories of grief should be examined and can include the work of: Hayes, Bowlby, Raphael Wordon, Elizabeth Kubler-Ross and Colin Murray Parkes.

Outcome 2

This outcome looks at procedures which are required following a death or other loss. Here, learners can be made aware of the role of, for example, the doctor, funeral director, social

workers, police and lawyers following a death or other loss. Learners should also be made aware of procedures which may apply to a range of care settings e.g. residential care, sheltered housing, hospital care where relatives need to be informed.

Learners should have a clear understanding of the range of agencies which may offer support to individuals and significant others. This support may be in the form of financial, practical, emotional or religious support. Agencies examined may be statutory or voluntary. Providing emotional support to individuals and significant others should be approached essentially from the premise of the use of effective communication skills; listening, appropriate body language, empathy and unconditional positive regard. Due regard should be given when supporting people who have difficulty in understanding and/or communicating because of conditions such as a learning disability and dementia or where children are involved.

Outcome 3

Learners should examine the historical and cultural traditions surrounding grief and bereavement and comparisons made to the present day. They should understand that death was understood simply as a normal part of everyday life. People mostly died at home, and their body remained there until the funeral; members of the family would prepare the body.

Rituals such as stopping clocks, turning mirrors, placing pennies on the eyes of the deceased were commonplace. Death today has become a more sanitised process, the majority of people die in hospital or in a hospice and it is the funeral director who takes the deceased to a funeral parlour and prepares the body.

Learners should be aware of the importance of the rites and practices of a range of faiths and religions following a death. An examination of a range of world faiths should be undertaken; Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, as should other religious movements such as Jehovah Witnesses, Mormons and Scientologists. Learners should also be aware of New Age faiths. They should also understand the role of the Samaritans, religious groups and specialist support groups who deal with specific issues such as the experience of the loss of a child.

It is important that learners should also have some understanding of the current secular and non-religious responses to death. The Humanist Society may provide personnel to lead the funeral. Individuals or families may have specific requests for procedures after death for example donating their body to medical science, specific methods of burial which involve environmental considerations using cardboard or willow coffins, specific requests regarding the funeral arrangements such as family members or friends conducting the funeral ceremony and the choice of particular modern, non-religious music.

Where learners are able to write about real work or life situations then this may also provide evidence for SVQ units.

Links to SVQ Units: This Unit may provide some of the underpinning knowledge for the following SVQ Units

H5SJ 04 (SCDHSC0350) — 8 SCQF Credits at SCQF level 7

Support the spiritual wellbeing of individuals

H5T0 04 (SCDHSC0384) — 8 SCQF Credits at SCQF level 7

Support individuals through bereavement

H5T1 04 (SCDHSC0385) — 10 SCQF Credits at SCQF level 7

Support individuals at the end of life

Higher National Unit: Support Notes

Unit title: Understanding Loss and the Process of Grief

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

If this unit is delivered as part of a group award it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes.

This unit is one of the Option Units for the HNC Social Services and will normally be delivered and assessed as part of that group award.

The unit can also be delivered and assessed on a stand-alone basis and can be used for continuous professional development by learners working in an area of care practice where they may encounter loss and or death as part of their normal work role.

Centres should note that it might be helpful to make use of guest speakers from a variety of organisations involved in the bereavement processes to enrich the candidate's learning experience.

The assessment for this unit may also be used to provide evidence for the SVQ Units identified as part of the SVQ 3 Social Services and Healthcare or as an SVQ unit used as continuous professional development.

H5SJ 04 (SCDHSC0350) — 8 SCQF Credits at SCQF level 7

Support the spiritual wellbeing of individuals

H5T0 04 (SCDHSC0384) — 8 SCQF Credits at SCQF level 7

Support individuals through bereavement

H5T1 04 (SCDHSC0385) — 10 SCQF Credits at SCQF level 7

Support individuals at the end of life

Higher National Unit: Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Understanding Loss and the Process of Grief

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of instruments of assessment. The following are suggestions only there may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

Outcome 1

Evidence for this outcome may be through a written assignment maximum of 1000 words

Outcome 2

Evidence for emotional support for individuals and significant others may be gathered using methods such as role-play or a case study for learners who may have no personal experience of bereavement.

Outcome 3

A written assignment or oral presentation may be appropriate for this outcome.

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.

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

Communication: Convey complex ideas in a well-structured and coherent form through assignments. Learners will use a range of forms of communication effectively in both familiar and new contexts.

Oral communication can be demonstrated through class-based discussions and presentations. Written communication can be via written assessments and/or reflective accounts of their practice which show interaction between the worker and individuals receiving care.

Information Technology: The use of standard applications to obtain and process information and data as required. While this is not a mandatory requirement for the unit learners should be encouraged to develop these skills by using technology to present their assignments for the unit.

Working with Others: Consideration should be given to the responsibility of self and others to understand the situation of people experiencing loss and or bereavement. This work should include individuals receiving care, families, team-members and collaboration with other agencies.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Support notes revised to reflect changes in the sector.	21/05/15

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General information for learners

Unit title: Understanding Loss and the Process of Grief

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

This unit is designed to enable you to understand the different types of losses which may be experienced and understand more fully how this may affect individuals and significant others. You will examine a range of theories of grief, which will help you to understand the process of grief both from the perspective of those who are experiencing bereavement and from people who are terminally ill.

You will find out about the procedures following a death and the agencies who provide financial, practical and emotional support and you will also learn how to provide emotional support for individuals receiving care and significant others.

You will examine historical perspectives of how death was understood and dealt with you can then compare this experience with how we deal with death today.

You will find out about the rites and practices of a range of faiths and religious responses to death and non-religious responses.

You will write about the areas outlined above using written assignments and case studies. You could engage in some role-play to assess your ability to offer emotional support to someone bereaved.

The experience of loss in relation to death may be something you have experienced either in your personal life or in a work situation. This unit allows you to reflect on some issues that may affect you or others around you. If you have not had this experience, the unit may allow you a better understanding of the subject and enable you to work more effectively with others who are experiencing bereavement.