



National Unit Specification

General information

Unit title: Communication (SCQF level 5)

Unit code: J4E4 45

Superclass: KB

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Unit purpose

This unit provides opportunities to develop skills in reading, writing, talking and listening. It may be delivered as a free-standing unit, developing communication skills for a wide range of contexts. It will be particularly appropriate for learners who need to interpret, evaluate and use detailed written and spoken communication for learning, life and work. The unit may be combined with *Introduction to Literature* (SCQF level 5) (J4G8 45) to provide a programme of study. On successful completion of the unit learners may progress to study *Communication* (SCQF level 6) (FA1W 12).

Outcomes

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

- 1 Demonstrate an understanding of detailed written communication.
- 2 Produce detailed written communication.
- 3 Demonstrate an understanding of detailed spoken communication.
- 4 Deliver and participate in detailed spoken communication.

Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 5:
(6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5)

National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

Unit title: Communication (SCQF level 5)

Recommended entry to the unit

Access to this unit is at the discretion of the centre. Learners should, however, have competence in communication skills at SCQF level 4 or equivalent. This could be demonstrated by achievement of one of the following:

- ◆ *Communication* (Core Skill) (SCQF level 4)
- ◆ National 4 English
- ◆ National 4 Literacy
- ◆ or equivalent qualifications and/or experience

Core Skills

Achievement of this unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skill: *Communication* at SCQF level 5

There are also opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills which are highlighted in the support notes for this unit specification.

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.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable assessment. 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>).

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.

National Unit Specification: Statement of standards

Unit title: Communication (SCQF level 5)

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.

Outcome 1

Demonstrate an understanding of detailed written communication.

Performance criteria

- (a) Explain the purpose of a communication.
- (b) Explain significant information, ideas and supporting detail.
- (c) Identify the writer's point of view.
- (d) Evaluate the effectiveness of a communication in meeting its purpose.

Outcome 2

Produce detailed written communication.

Performance criteria

- (a) Present detailed ideas and/or information accurately and effectively.
- (b) Use a structure appropriate to purpose.
- (c) Use conventions appropriate to purpose and audience.
- (d) Use sufficiently accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Outcome 3

Demonstrate an understanding of detailed spoken communication.

Performance criteria

- (a) Explain the purpose of a communication.
- (b) Explain significant information, ideas and supporting detail.
- (c) Identify the speaker(s) point of view.
- (d) Evaluate the effectiveness of a communication in meeting its purpose.

Outcome 4

Deliver and participate in detailed spoken communication.

Performance criteria

- (a) Present detailed ideas and/or information.
- (b) Use a structure appropriate to purpose.
- (c) Use language and style appropriate to purpose and audience.
- (d) Use aspects of non-verbal communication.
- (e) Respond to the contribution of others.

National Unit Specification: Statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Communication (SCQF level 5)

Evidence requirements for this unit

Evidence is required to demonstrate that learners have achieved all outcomes and performance criteria. All evidence will be gathered under open-book conditions at appropriate points in delivery using a system where arrangements have been made to ensure authenticity.

Assessment may be carried out:

- ◆ outcome by outcome
- ◆ two or more outcomes together

Outcome 1 — Written and/or oral evidence

Learners will respond to questions on one unseen non-fiction text that conveys detailed information and/or ideas.

Outcome 2 — Written evidence

Learners will produce one written text of at least 500 words that presents detailed ideas and/or information.

Outcome 3 — Written and/or oral evidence

Learners will respond to questions on one detailed spoken communication that demonstrates understanding of the purpose, content and point of view.

Outcome 4 — Oral evidence

Learners will participate actively in one detailed spoken activity by preparing for and sustaining an input of at least three minutes and responding to the contribution of others.



National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Communication (SCQF level 5)

Unit support notes are offered as guidance and 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

This unit may be delivered as part of a programme of study or undertaken as a free-standing unit. The unit may be combined with *Introduction to Literature* (SCQF level 5) (J4G8 45) to provide a programme of study. There are opportunities for integration across both units.

The purpose of this unit is to provide learners with opportunities to develop skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking. They will understand, evaluate, and use detailed, structured communication in a variety of written and spoken forms. It is suitable for a wide range of learners who want to enhance their communication skills to support vocational or personal development needs. Content and context will vary but the focus should be on flexibility and relevance, dealing with topics and using language that should be mainly familiar to the learner through a general awareness of vocational or current issues. Integration of assessment tasks with other written or spoken work for a programme of study may be practical.

On achievement of the unit learners will be able to understand, evaluate and use, detailed, structured communication for a range of purposes. They will have knowledge and skills to enable progression to further study, training or employment.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

Teaching and learning approaches to delivery should reflect the identified needs of learners.

There is no preferred order of teaching and assessing. Outcomes may be approached discretely, in any order, or oral and written tasks may be combined thematically to allow a holistic approach to skills development. Formative work to practise skills with time allowed for drafting and redrafting of materials should be considered.

As many opportunities as are practical should be provided for learners to use and evaluate detailed written and spoken communication for personal, social and vocational purposes. Group work to discuss and exchange information will provide practical experience of participative working with others.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Communication (SCQF level 5)

Learners could:

- ◆ Read and discuss a variety of written texts including extracts from textbooks, journals, newspapers and online articles.
- ◆ Produce a range of structured written forms, for example, reports, essays, annotated diagrams.
- ◆ Listen to spoken communication with different purposes, such as working in a group, listening to a speaker or an online discussion or presentation.
- ◆ Use a range of forms of spoken communication such as working in a group, taking part in a mock interview or delivering a presentation.

Support materials can provide useful advice, reference sources and clear examples of acceptable responses. The use of digital technology for investigating and presenting written and spoken communication is good practice.

The teacher or lecturer may support the learner in topic selection, planning and management of tasks. Reasonable assistance may be given in general terms to a group or class (eg choice of topic, advice on finding information, choice of texts/resources, etc) or may be given to learners on an individual basis.

As the unit is delivered learners should be encouraged to develop skills such as:

- ◆ selecting and investigating information sources
- ◆ problem solving
- ◆ note-taking
- ◆ time and self-management

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this unit

Evidence can be generated using different types 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.

Assessment of learners should take place only after appropriate learning and skills development. Evidence will be gathered under open-book conditions with arrangements in place to assure authenticity. Beyond practical considerations there are no time restrictions on assessment tasks. Assessment approaches should be sufficiently flexible to allow for adaptation to the needs and situations of the learners. Tasks will deal with topics and use language and forms which learners are likely to be familiar with through a general awareness of vocational or current issues.

There may be the potential for some integration with assessment tasks for other units requiring the production of one or more written documents and/or spoken communication.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Tasks to provide evidence for summative assessment must be completed by the learner unaided, but it would be acceptable for the teacher or lecturer to draw attention to any general area of weakness in relation to particular performance criteria or to clarify requirements for the task.

Retention of drafts, notes of any feedback provided, tracking records, e-mails or log records can assist with authentication and provide helpful information for internal and external verification.

Outcome 1

Texts selected should be relevant to the vocational and/or personal needs of learners. Topics, language, structure and presentation should be of a type generally familiar to learners. Other aspects of style that may reflect purpose and intended audience would include format, layout and any graphic materials.

Texts should be detailed, of approximately 750–900 words. Newspapers, journals or websites/blogs/other online sources might be appropriate. Formative reading of texts on a similar topic will develop knowledge as well as an analytical approach to reading. There could be links with investigative work for written and spoken communication in outcomes 2 and 4.

- ◆ Structured questions may direct learners to significant information, ideas and supporting detail in the text. Questions could also ask for specific comment, as appropriate, on conventions that may indicate purpose, including use of language and layout/format.
- ◆ Writer's point of view — some comment could be made on, for example, word choice, key phrases, layout and/or structure and how these contribute to your understanding of the writer's stance.
- ◆ Evaluation — a clear evaluative focus on effectiveness should relate to purpose but not repeat earlier points made. Comment, with reference to the text, might consider perceived strengths (or aspects that might be improved) and such elements as balance, layout, structure and/or impact on readers, including the personal response of the learner. Around 150–200 words should provide a sufficient response for the evaluation.

Learners must use their own words to explain and show understanding of ideas.

Oral evidence should be recorded. Supervision of first draft responses is good practice. Dictionaries and/or spell checkers may be used.

Outcome 2

The written communication produced as evidence should involve topics and formats that are relevant to the present or future needs of learners.

Learners have to present a written communication in a structured format. The remit could draw on a practical/vocational situation and task instructions could include details of structure and headings as required in, for example, a report, an essay or a review. Graphic materials, such as pictures, charts or diagrams, may support the text. There may be opportunities to integrate work with other written tasks in a programme of study.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Communication (SCQF level 5)

Use of technology is not mandatory but learners should understand its value in the effective sourcing, storing and presenting of accurate, current information. Use of dictionaries and/or spell checkers can support the correct use of spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

The learner's writing must be produced under some supervision and control. This means that, although learners may complete part of the work outwith the learning and teaching situation, teachers and lecturers must put in place processes for monitoring progress to ensure that the work is the learner's own, and that plagiarism has not taken place.

Outcome 3

The topics, format and language used in listening texts should be relevant to learners and likely to be familiar to them through their general awareness of vocational and current issues. A longer text may provide background and context to support understanding, but assessment should focus on a short piece or extract, featuring the contribution of a single speaker or part of a discussion or interview. News items, health and safety talks, reviews, selection interviews or an example of the type of spoken communication to be delivered by learners in outcome 4 might be relevant. Language and register used will affect whether purpose and audience needs are met. Verbal cues will identify aspects of content. Non-verbal communication could reinforce, complement or contradict verbal messages.

Structured questions may direct learners to significant information, ideas and supporting detail. Questions could also ask for specific comment on structure, style and format as appropriate.

- ◆ Point of view of speaker(s) — comment could be made on, for example, the impact of verbal communication, register, word choice, key phrases and how these reveal attitudes and affect interaction with the audience.
- ◆ Non-verbal communication could include nodding, shaking of head, gestures, hand movements, eye contact, varied pace, stress and intonation, etc.
- ◆ Evaluation — a clear evaluative focus on effectiveness should relate to purpose but not repeat earlier points made. Comment, with reference to the text, might consider perceived strengths (or aspects that might be improved) and such elements as how convincing or balanced the content was, the type of communication and the stance of the speakers. The personal reaction of the learner could be addressed. Around 150–200 words should provide a sufficient response for evaluation.

Learners must use their own words to explain and show understanding of ideas.

Learners should be given more than one opportunity to make notes, as appropriate.

Oral evidence should be recorded.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Communication (SCQF level 5)

Outcome 4

There may be opportunities to link or integrate assessment with other work for the unit or other assignments in a programme of study. Interaction could be in a group or in a one-to-one situation, in person, or using digital media.

An initial discussion between the teacher or lecturer and learner should take place to agree a topic and clarify purpose, expected format and structure. Planning and preparation will ensure contributions are detailed with relevant ideas, opinions and information.

Materials to support delivery (handouts, presentation software, digital recording) may be selected by the learner but they are not essential, and they need not be original.

Each learner must talk for at least three minutes, although sustained input need not be continuous. Some prompting or questioning by the teacher or lecturer can support learners during a discussion or presentation. Non-verbal communication, including use of eye contact, posture, and gesture, should be appropriate to the learners.

If practical, some recording of oral work may be useful. It can allow feedback to learners and support internal and external verification procedures. A detailed checklist should be used as evidence of attainment and be retained for verification purposes.

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

The Core Skill of *Communication* at SCQF level 5 is embedded in this unit. When a learner achieves the unit, their Core Skills profile will also be updated to include this Core Skill.

Skills in *Problem Solving* — Critical Thinking, Planning, Organising, Reviewing and Evaluating — will be developed naturally as decisions are made on presentation techniques and technology to support writing and speaking.

Oral work will also provide practical opportunities to enhance skills in working with others. Learners will understand and infer the needs of others and use techniques to progress communication in group and one to one situations.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Communication (SCQF level 5)

The practical focus of the unit should encourage independent working and enhance skills valued by employers including:

- ◆ working independently
- ◆ using initiative
- ◆ problem solving, presenting ideas and solutions, making decisions
- ◆ working to meet deadlines

There could also be opportunities to develop knowledge and skills in Sustainability and Citizenship.

Sustainability

Digital media may be used for teacher or lecturer/learner communication and submission of work. Working practices could be reviewed to ensure environmental sensitivity and waste reduction.

Citizenship

Awareness of cultural sensitivities, diversity and international culture is likely to underpin many of the topics selected as a focus for contextualised work.

History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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Unit template: June 2017

General information for learners

Unit title: Communication (SCQF level 5)

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.

The unit will provide you with opportunities to develop your skills in reading, writing, talking and listening. You will learn how to understand, evaluate, and use communication in a variety of written and spoken forms. Topics will be relevant to your study or vocational interests.

Assessment

Outcome 1 — Demonstrate an understanding of detailed written communication.

You will read a text on a familiar topic, examining not just content, but also language and presentation. You will answer questions to show your ability to identify and understand key points and to evaluate the effectiveness of the text in terms of its purpose and intended reader.

Outcome 2 — Produce detailed written communication.

You will produce a structured piece of detailed writing such as a report, proposal or essay. Your spelling and punctuation should be accurate.

Outcome 3 — Demonstrate an understanding of detailed spoken communication.

You will watch, listen to and answer detailed questions on a spoken communication such as a presentation or a discussion that includes factual content and a point of view. You will evaluate its effectiveness in terms of meeting its purpose.

Outcome 4 — Deliver and participate in detailed spoken communication.

You will plan and prepare your own oral presentation or make a significant contribution to a discussion. You will present detailed information, answer questions and work with others.

Assessments will take place under open-book conditions. You can use dictionaries, reference notes and software, and you can draft and redraft your own work. There will be an opportunity to be re-assessed if you do not achieve the outcomes in the first instance.

Core Skills

The Core Skill of *Communication* at SCQF level 5 is embedded in this unit. This means that when you achieve this unit, your Core Skills profile will be updated to include this Core Skill.

Opportunities also exist to develop aspects of the Core Skills of *Problem Solving* and *Working with Others*.

The unit should give you other important employability skills including:

- ◆ working independently
- ◆ using initiative
- ◆ problem solving, presenting ideas and solutions, making decisions
- ◆ working to meet deadlines

You will develop awareness and understanding of sustainability and citizenship. The skills developed in this unit are essential both to you as a learner and to you in your working life.