

## **GK89 15 HNC Social Services**

### **GR8V 15 HNC Social Services (theory only)**

Since the beginning of the 2020–21 academic session, SQA and the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) have been monitoring learners' access to work placements under COVID-19 restrictions.

Given the increasing difficulties for learners seeking work placements, we have developed alternative arrangements for the HNC Social Services. Please see:

[February 2021 Update for HNC Social Services and HNC Childhood Practice](#)

on our [HNC Social Services](#) web page.

This provides information about assessment requirements which have been agreed with the regulatory body/professional association.

There are three options for someone taking the HNC:

#### **Route 1 — certification as usual**

The normal, traditional route through which learners achieve nine HN units and three SVQ units and are awarded the group award GK89 15.

#### **Route 2 — certification of nine HN units only, supported by SQA case studies**

Where placements are not possible, candidates can use their awards towards SSSC registration.

This route will lead to certification of GK89 15 when the SVQ units are completed. This should be within two years to ensure the currency of the skills and knowledge. SQA certificates for completed units will not be required for SSSC registration, but will be required to evidence completion of the full award.

Please note, learners will not automatically be certificated for units that they complete. For learners who do not expect to complete the practical units later, centres should withdraw their entries for GK89 15 and any units they will not complete. This will allow these learners to be certificated for the units they have completed. For learners who plan on completing the three practical SVQ units later, centres should leave their entries open for GK89 15 and the practical units. This means that these learners will be certificated for the group award when they complete these units.

#### **Route 3 — theory-only certification**

Route 3 has been created to help learners who intend to progress their learning. The new theory-only group award is: **GR8V 15 HNC Social Services (theory only)**. The theory-only framework has been created without the three SVQ units. In their place are three additional theory-only optional units to help ensure the overall award constitutes a 12-unit HNC.

For GR8V 15 the additional theory-only units are:

DE3R 34	Personal Development Planning
DH3P 34	Protection of Individuals from Harm and Abuse
HF2A 34	Understanding Personal and Professional Development

Learners will automatically be certificated for the theory-only group award when they complete it. For learners who plan on completing the three practical SVQ units later, centres should leave open their entries for GK89 15 and the practical units. This means that these learners will be certificated for the group award when they complete these units.

### **Certificates for learners who are moving on**

Centres should ensure that learners who are progressing their learning are registered for GK89 15 **and** GR8V 15 (the theory-only group award). If there are learners who do not expect to complete the practical units later, centres should withdraw their entries for GK89 15 and any units they will not complete. This will allow these learners to be certificated for the units that they have completed.

### **Registering with the SSSC under Route 3**

Anyone can register with the SSSC and, if they do not hold the appropriate qualification, they will be registered with the condition that they achieve an appropriate benchmark qualification within five years.

The theory-only frameworks, on their own, are not benchmark qualifications because they do not meet SSSC's criteria and principles since there is no observed and assessed practice — which is evidenced through the SVQ units. Learners taking this route can still apply for SSSC registration, however, they will be set a condition to complete an appropriate qualification within 5 years. For the mandatory practical SVQ units of GK89 15 to be current, SQA recommends that they are completed within two years.

### **Theory-only pricing**

The theory-only group awards have been priced at zero cost until 1 September 2021 to allow centres time to register all relevant candidates. If you have queries regarding the pricing of the theory-only routes, please contact [salesledger@sqa.org.uk](mailto:salesledger@sqa.org.uk).

SQA is aware that individual colleges have articulation agreements with specific higher education institutions where learners' complete units outside the existing HNC framework. These existing pathways and arrangements should continue and will be at the discretion of the delivering centre and the receiving institution.

We appreciate these are very difficult times for our stakeholders and learners and we hope these options provide the support needed to complete an HNC in Social Services.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at [qualification.development@sqa.org.uk](mailto:qualification.development@sqa.org.uk).