



Group Award Specification for:

**Professional Development Award (PDA) in Scrutiny
and Improvement Practice (Social Services)**

Group Award Code: GM1G 50

Validation date: January 2017

Date of original publication: March 2017

Version: 02, September 2023

Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Qualification structure.....	4
	2.1 Structure.....	4
3	Aims of the qualification	4
	3.1 General aims of the qualification	5
	3.2 Specific aims of the qualification.....	5
	3.3 Graded unit	6
4	Recommended entry to the qualification.....	6
	4.1 Core Skills entry profile.....	6
5	Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs	8
	5.1 Mapping of qualification aims to units	9
	5.2 Mapping of National Occupational Standards (NOS) and/or trade body standards	9
	5.3 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualification	11
	5.4 Assessment Strategy for the qualification	12
6	Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment.....	14
	6.1 Sequencing/integration of units	14
	6.2 Recognition of Prior Learning	15
	6.3 Opportunities for e-assessment.....	15
	6.4 Support materials	15
	6.5 Resource requirements	16
7	General information for centres	16
8	Glossary of terms	17
9	General information for learners	20

1 Introduction

This document was previously known as the Arrangements document. The purpose of this document is to:

- ◆ assist centres to implement, deliver and manage, and assess the qualification
- ◆ provide a guide for staff involved in offering the qualification
- ◆ inform course managers, practice teachers, learners, employers and HEIs of the aims and purpose of the qualification
- ◆ provide detail of the range of learners for whom the qualification is relevant.

The PDA Scrutiny and Improvement Practice (Social Services) at SCQF level 10 has been designed specifically to meet the *Inspection of Health and Social Care Standards*, which form part of the National Occupational Standards (NOS). Social Care Social Work Improvement Scotland, now known as the Care Inspectorate, was established under the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010. It is the independent scrutiny and improvement body responsible for regulation and inspection of care and support services, scrutiny of criminal justice social work services and joint inspections with other scrutiny partners of services for adults and children.

The Care Inspectorate employs and authorises staff to inspect social care and social work services and requires them to undertake an award. 'Authorised Officers' include Inspectors, Strategic Inspectors, Professional Advisors, Chief Inspectors and Team Managers. Their backgrounds include teaching, nursing, social work and social care, medicine, pharmacy, early years and allied health care.

Authorised Officers are registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) or have another professional registration. Those registered with the SSSC and who do not already hold an appropriate qualification have a condition on their registration requiring that they achieve an award that is approved by the SSSC. The previous award for registration with the SSSC was the Regulation of Care Award (Scotland). However, due to the changing landscape of regulation and scrutiny a new award is needed.

- ◆ The title of the award reflects its purpose as a qualification for Authorised Officers involved in the scrutiny and improvement of social services.
- ◆ There are around 150 Authorised Officers who must undertake the award. Delivery is currently estimated over a three to five year period with a minimum of 20 and maximum of 50 Care Inspectorate Authorised Officers undertaking the award per year. Additional numbers needing to undertake the award in future years is likely, although not in such high volumes.
- ◆ Achievement of the PDA at SCQF level 10 will provide evidence of competence for registration with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

The PDA Scrutiny and Improvement Practice (Social Services) recognises the diversity of staff and the level of work required of Authorised Officers. It further supports the Scottish Government's commitment to promoting and supporting the involvement of individuals who use and provide services.

The award will be subject to joint approval by both SQA and SSSC. Programmes leading to registration by the SSSC must have the ability to meet the NOS Inspection of Health and Social Care Standards and assess their achievement of those Standards.

- ◆ NOS form the basis of qualifications and training programmes and describe the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to do a particular job to a nationally recognised level of competence.
- ◆ NOS are developed by employers, people who use services and other key stakeholders to define the key functions in a job role.
- ◆ NOS are benchmarks of good practice.

This award has been developed in line with these requirements and the contextualisation of the PDA is achieved through the knowledge, skills and learning Outcomes contained within the units.

The Care Inspectorate in Scotland have a range of expectations. The Care Inspectorate expect their staff to deliver these expectations in terms of improving outcomes for people who use social services. These expectations have been included in the development of this award. These include:

- ◆ Regulating and inspecting care and support services to ensure that people experience high quality, safe and compassionate care.
- ◆ Protecting and promoting the rights of people using care services and their carers, including those whose rights are restricted under *Adults with Incapacity* legislation, in their role as corporate parents or with those who have different and diverse ways to communicate.
- ◆ Expecting all providers to continuously improve and taking action to demand improvement where quality of care is poor, targeting finite resources on poorly performing services.
- ◆ Signposting good practice and innovation by offering a range of resources to support improvement through their regulatory, inspection and improvement activities.
- ◆ Reporting publicly on their findings to provide assurance and protection on the quality of care and help people make confident and informed decisions.
- ◆ Making independent and fair judgements based on risk using the rigour of their intelligence, evidence and professional expertise.
- ◆ Undertaking joint inspection of services for children and adults across community planning partnerships and holding chief officers responsible for working together effectively to promote the rights and meet the needs and choices of people living in local communities.
- ◆ Collaborating and co-operating with other scrutiny and delivery partners to deliver public value in scrutiny and improvement activities.
- ◆ Registering care services that meet the standards set out in legislation, national health and care standards, current best practice and requirements to deliver high quality, safe and compassionate care.
- ◆ Investigating complaints about care providers and the Care Inspectorate.
- ◆ Working with people who use services and their carers and the public to listen and ensure that their views and experiences inform all scrutiny and improvement activities.
- ◆ Exercising legal powers to take action where acceptable standards are not met and acting quickly to provide protection and assurance for people using services and their carers.

During the development of this qualification, SQA have consulted with the SSSC and employers and user/carers in both the voluntary and private sector who are affected by the work of the Care Inspectorate. Practitioners at all levels have also been involved in the development of the award. As a result, the PDA has been designed to offer learners the opportunity to gain knowledge and skills, which will enable them to:

- ◆ meet the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Inspection of Health and Social Care.
- ◆ meet the requirements for registration with Scottish Social Services Council.
- ◆ support the aspirations and vision of the Care Inspectorate.
- ◆ allow learners to gain new knowledge and consolidate skills to achieve the competence and confidence to deliver high quality scrutiny and improvement through the development and critical analysis of practice.
- ◆ evidence high-level certificated Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Authorised Officers in the Care Inspectorate.

The framework makes the award suitable for full and part time learners requiring to further develop and improve their knowledge and skills within scrutiny and improvement services. All learners will have the opportunity to further develop their Core Skills throughout the award, the specifics of which are contained in the individual unit descriptors.

Evidence of practice competence is of primary importance in awards which are registerable with the SSSC. In this instance, practice is assessed throughout the units and particularly in the *Craft of Scrutiny* and graded unit. It is envisaged that the award will equip learners with the skills, knowledge and understanding to develop their practice competence in scrutiny and improvement and to provide people who use services with the best possible outcomes.

2 Qualification structure

This group award is made up of 8 SQA credits and comprises 64 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 10. A mapping of Core Skills development opportunities is available in Section 5.1.

2.1 Structure

All units identified below are mandatory

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SQA credit
HH7P	37	Frameworks for Scrutiny Practice	10	16	2
HH7N	37	The Craft of Scrutiny	10	16	2
HH7R	37	Supporting Improvement	10	16	2
HJ3E	37	Scrutiny and Improvement Practice: Graded Unit	10	16	2

Each of the units contained in the above structure are mandatory and have been designed to meet specific aspects of the Inspection of Health and Social Care Standards and the expectations of the Care Inspectorate in Scotland.

The graded unit as a practical assignment has been included in this award. It is designed to ensure the centrality of practice to the award. It has also been included to allow ongoing development of competence.

3 Aims of the qualification

The principal aim of the PDA in Scrutiny and Improvement Practice (Social Services) at SCQF level 10 is to provide a qualification that will enable learners to demonstrate that they have the knowledge, skills and values needed to ensure positive outcomes for people using services. As such, those undertaking this qualification will be required to:

- ♦ demonstrate the ability to apply the knowledge and insights gained from analysis of key legislation, models and concepts in inspection, regulation, scrutiny and improvement to their own professional practice.
- ♦ critically evaluate their contribution in promoting human rights, protection, participation, empowerment, equality and diversity of people using services through the scrutiny and improvement process.
- ♦ apply and critically evaluate the use of appropriate skills to enable the effective leadership and direction of scrutiny activity and implementation of improvement practice which contributes to better outcomes for people using services.

3.1 General aims of the qualification

The broad knowledge and skills addressed through completion of the award include:

- 1 To enable learners to demonstrate an understanding of the values and principles which underpin scrutiny and improvement practice.
- 2 To enable learners to integrate values, skills and knowledge effectively across a range of different types of scrutiny and improvement activity.
- 3 To enable learners to develop skills appropriate for working with a range of people who operate and use services with the aim of improving outcomes.
- 4 To enable learners to have a rights-based focus in their practice.
- 5 To prepare learners for future developments in the delivery of scrutiny and improvement services in Scotland.
- 6 To enable learners to reflect on, critically evaluate and enhance their practice and to be critically reflective practitioners.
- 7 To develop research skills.
- 8 To enable learners to engage in continuing professional development.
- 9 To encourage learners to enhance their personal effectiveness.
- 10 To further enhance problem solving skills.
- 11 To develop transferable skills including Core Skills.
- 12 To enable progression within SCQF including progression to HE.
- 13 To provide opportunities for career planning and enhancing learners' employment prospects.

3.2 Specific aims of the qualification

Specific aims of the award are that learners should:

- 1 Demonstrate their knowledge of scrutiny frameworks and the legislative basis for their work.
- 2 Critically reflect on how their own values and beliefs impact on their practice in supporting services to improve.
- 3 Critically analyse the wider geopolitical aspects which affect scrutiny and improvement, as well as the inter-relationship between scrutiny, inspection, regulation, audit and improvement.
- 4 Critically analyse the application of theories and methodologies that apply to the activities of scrutiny and improvement.
- 5 Demonstrate their knowledge of the different roles and the application of skills required in the range of scrutiny and improvement activity.
- 6 Critically analyse the concepts of role of risk and responsiveness in scrutiny and improvement.
- 7 Critically analyse the role of human rights, relationships and leadership in their practice.
- 8 Critically evaluate improvement models and apply them to scrutiny practice.
- 9 Demonstrate integration of theory and practice in supporting services to improve.

3.3 Graded unit

The unit is designed to reflect knowledge and skills related to the NOS Inspection of Health and Social Care Standards in Scotland.

During the process of the development of the award, it was clear that practice was central to the demonstration of competence. The process of undertaking a practice-based graded unit was agreed as the most appropriate way to do this. Also the graded unit would help to identify best practice. These examples could be drawn into the work of the Care Inspectorate and therefore help them to develop new and more relevant methodologies for practice. By grading the unit, it was also felt that this would give a good indication if the learner needed further CPD or, alternatively, if they were ready to undertake qualifications at a higher level on the SCQF.

The graded unit selected is a practical assignment. This is because it provides evidence that the learner has carried out a piece of practice over time in which they work to identify and implement improvement. Within this practical assignment, learners examine their work roles and responsibilities using current research models and methods within scrutiny and improvement. Learners will be required to:

- 1 demonstrate the ability to plan and carry out scrutiny activity.
- 2 identify an area for improvement which emerges from the scrutiny activity.
- 3 demonstrate how the learner works with services or relevant others to communicate the need for improvement related to the scrutiny activity.
- 4 carry out and critically evaluating research into the area of improvement.
- 5 develop and implement a plan of action outlining the rationale and process of how the learner will support and lead aspects of the improvement.
- 6 critically examine how they deal with tensions and conflict within their role.
- 7 critically evaluating the outcomes of the improvement and the learner's role in this.
- 8 demonstrate integration of theory and practice.

4 Recommended entry to the qualification

Entry to this qualification is at the discretion of the centre. The following information on prior knowledge, skills, experience or qualifications that provide suitable preparation for this qualification has been provided by the Qualification Design Team.

Learners should have well developed communication and inter-personal skills. They should be able to demonstrate their ability to critically review and consolidate knowledge, skills, practices and thinking in their areas of practice. This may be demonstrated by relevant professional qualifications at SCQF level 9 (or equivalent), or above with relevant experience in a social services or other related setting. Acceptance of relevant equivalent qualifications and experience will be at the discretion of the centre.

4.1 Core Skills entry profile

The Core Skill entry profile provides a summary of the associated assessment activities that exemplify why a particular level has been recommended for this qualification. The information should be used to identify if additional learning support needs to be put in place for learners whose Core Skills profile is below the recommended entry level or whether learners should be encouraged to do an alternative level or learning programme.

Learners will have the opportunity to develop the following Core Skills in each of the award units:

Communication: Written communications will be developed through learners producing written work in a variety of formats; oral communication will be developed through discussion, debate, presentations and evidence of engagement with other professionals and key people.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT): Learners will build upon their *ICT* skills through research and the use of different forms of media to present information and assignments and also through engagement with online and web-based learning

Problem Solving: Learners will have the opportunity to develop problem solving skills through the presentation of their written and oral assignments, peer review, and relating their findings to their own area of practice.

Working with Others: This Core Skill will be developed as learners will be required to work collaboratively with colleagues, user/carers, providers of services and other stakeholders in the preparation and research for their assessments.

Numeracy: Learners will build upon their numeracy skills by analysing numeric and statistical information in relation to inspections. Learners will also interpret graphical and tabular data.

Learners will naturally use and develop aspects of all four Core Skills as they work through the units making up the qualification through teaching and learning approaches which require to be mapped in the next section.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	6	Written assessments, group discussion, peer review, presentations graded unit practical assignment.
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	6	Written assessments, projects, peer review, research, use of social media.
Problem Solving	6	Group discussion, written assessments, graded unit practical assignment.
Working with Others	6	Working with groups, exploration of different roles, presentations, graded unit practical assignment.
Numeracy	6	Analysis of numeric and statistical information. Interpretation of graphical and tabular data.

5 Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs

This qualification was designed to meet a specific purpose and what follows are details on how that purpose has been met through mapping of the units to the aims of the qualification. Through meeting the aims, additional value has been achieved by linking the unit standards with those defined in the Inspection of Health and Social Care Standards. In addition, significant opportunities exist for learners to further develop the more generic skills, known as Core Skills through doing this qualification.

5.1 Mapping of qualification aims to units

Code	Unit title	General aims													Specific aims								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
HH7P 37	Frameworks for Scrutiny Practice	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x						
HH7N 37	The Craft of Scrutiny	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x	x	x			
HH7R 37	Supporting Improvement	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x							x	x	
HJ3E 37	Scrutiny and Improvement Practice : Graded Unit	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x									x

5.2 Mapping of National Occupational Standards (NOS) and/or trade body standards

The following information demonstrates where each of the units can be mapped to the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Inspection of Health and Social Care.

Code	Unit title	PA1	PD1	PB1	PC2	PE1	PG1	PF1	PC4	PC5	PD3	PC1	PC3	PC5	PE3	PD2
HH7P 37	Frameworks for Scrutiny Practice	x		x	x	x	x	x								
HH7N 37	The Craft of Scrutiny	x	x	x	x				x	x		x	x	x	x	x
HH7R 37	Supporting Improvement				x	x	x	x	x	x	x					
HJ3E 37	Scrutiny and Improvement Practice : Graded Unit	x	*	*	*	*	x	x	x	x	*	*	*	*	*	*

*Depending on the activity chosen for the graded unit practical assignment, there may be further opportunities to meet the NOS in these areas. There are seven key areas of the standards that cover all scrutiny and improvement activity. While learners may only be assessed against the key areas that relate to their current practice, the learning from the assessment processes are transferable across the range of NOS. However, if there are key areas that learners are not involved directly in, but wish to explore further, they may choose to consider these during their course. For example, if a learner is an inspector of regulated care services that learner may wish to understand more about the registration process or how strategic inspections are undertaken.

The main functions of the NOS are divided into seven key areas with associated standards, as per the following table:

Key Areas	NOS Inspection of Health and Social Care Standards
A <i>Provide information, advice and guidance on regulation and registration</i>	SCDINSPA1 Provide information, advice and guidance about inspection activities
B <i>Assess applications for registration of services</i>	SCDINSPB1 Manage suitability for registration through evaluation of application
C <i>Inspect services</i>	SCDINSPC1 Plan inspection of service
	SCDINSPC2 Work with service providers to carry out self-assessment
	SCDINSPC3 Inspect services
	SCDINSPC4 Manage challenges to inspection findings
	SCDINSPC5 Manage personal caseload as an inspector
D <i>Manage concerns and complaints</i>	SCDINSPD1 Evaluate information of concern received about provider services
	SCDINSPD2 Plan investigation of service
	SCDINSPD3 Contribute to investigation of service failures
E <i>Secure compliance through enforcement</i>	SCDINSPE1 Promote compliance through use of regulatory framework
	SCDINSPE2 Support compliance through legal procedures
	SCDINSPE3 Act to secure the health, safety and wellbeing of individuals
F <i>Work in partnership with others</i>	SCDINSPF1 Engage with people who use services and their carers in inspection activities
	SCDINSPF2 Work in partnership to carry out joint inspections
G <i>Promote excellence</i>	SCDINSPG1 Contribute to the improvement of services

5.3 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualification

At SCQF level 10, there is an expectation that learners will have achieved level 6 in their Core Skills; however there are still opportunities for Core Skills to be developed and consolidated in their work on the units of the PDA. These are outlined below:

Unit code	Unit title	Communication			Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
		Written (Reading)	Written (Writing)	Oral	Using Number	Using Graphical Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively with Others	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
HH7P 37	Frameworks for Scrutiny Practice	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
HH7N 37	The Craft of Scrutiny	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
HH7R 37	Supporting Improvement	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
HJ3E 37	Scrutiny and Improvement Practice: Graded Unit	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

5.4 Assessment Strategy for the qualification

The unit assessment has been designed for each unit to be taken on its own or as part of the group award.

Centers are advised to use a project based assessment where possible as this enables integration across units through reflection of their learner's work practice.

Unit	All Outcomes
Frameworks for Scrutiny Practice	For this unit, assessment will be in the form of two essays, illustrated by examples from the learner's area of practice. The first essay will be a critical and analytical overview of the contribution scrutiny makes to improving outcomes, safety and assurance for the public. Learners should also show that they have developed a critical understanding of relevant legislation, standards, policy and guidance and their use in scrutiny and improvement practice in their area of practice (2,000 words). The second essay will be a critical investigation of the wider geopolitical aspects within scrutiny and improvement practice. Learners will critically examine the meaning of care values. They will also critically reflect upon meanings and dilemmas in making decisions and applying professional judgement when managing risk to improve outcomes for people using services in their area of practice (2,000 words).
The Craft of Scrutiny	For this unit, the first assessment will be a piece of work exploring a chosen practice area of one role that is different to the learner's current role. Consideration of how this area of practice within the role could or should impact on the learner's role should be explored. The assessment should focus on how the chosen area in the role works collectively and/or separately with the learner's role to support improved Outcomes for people using or accessing services. The assignment can be in the form of either a short written report (1,500 words), or a short presentation (10 minutes) to a relevant audience, which will be observed by the tutor or filmed by the learner and reviewed by the tutor. The second assessment will be a direct observation of practice. The practice activity could be, for example, an inspection, registration, complaint or enforcement activity. The observation will focus on the range of communication strategies used to enhance relationships, how the learner involves stakeholders, how they use feedback as a tool for improvement, how they deal with conflict, and how they analyse and deal with risk in the scrutiny activity. The assessment will be in the form of a portfolio evidencing reflective analysis of practice and how the learner has achieved the required outcomes.

Unit	All Outcomes
Supporting Improvement	<p>For this unit, the first assessment will be a direct observation by the tutor, supported by a reflective professional discussion reflects upon and considers what has been learnt and any future developments planned. This assessment will be integrated with the same inspection, registration, complaint or enforcement activity undertaken in the unit entitled <i>The Craft of Scrutiny</i>. The assessment will also involve the assessor looking at examples of work products which provide evidence of how the learner synthesises and presents information. The assessment will be in the form of a report by the tutor with any supporting evidence from the candidate on how the learner achieved the evidence requirements.</p> <p>The second assessment focusses on applying a rights-based approach, and will be a critical analysis of improvement theories and quality concepts, and how the voice of the user/carer is heard, illustrated by examples from the learner's practice (2,000 words)</p>
Scrutiny and Improvement Practice (Social Services): Graded Unit	<p>Assessment is in the form of a practical assignment over time in which learners develop a piece of practice in which they contribute to implementing improvement in a service. There are three sections: Planning, Developing and Evaluation. Each section may be up to 1,500 words in length.</p>

6 Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment

The PDA units will provide underpinning knowledge and skills required to meet the standards outlined in the NOS for Inspectors of Services. Guidance on the appropriate teaching and learning material and connections to the NOS are to be found in the support notes for the individual PDA units.

There is flexibility in the order in which the PDA units can be delivered; however, it is recommended that centres delivering the award consider opportunities for integration in both learning and assessment.

The principle of 'integrated or holistic assessment' is fundamental to the award. The work learners undertake for a particular unit may not solely link with this unit alone and similarly, any one task undertaken in scrutiny and improvement practice will provide evidence of skills and knowledge for more than one of the PDA units.

While each PDA unit has very specific evidence requirements and assessment guidance, we strongly recommend that where overlaps between units occur, an assessment from one unit should be deemed to meet some or all the evidence requirements from other linked units. Otherwise, learners will be over-assessed.

The purpose of the graded unit is to assess the learner's ability to retain and integrate the values, skills and knowledge gained in the mandatory units; to assess that the learner has met the principal aims of the group award; and to grade learner achievement.

6.1 Sequencing/integration of units

As stated previously, there is flexibility in the order in which the PDA units can be delivered. It is recommended, however, that the delivery should be as follows, as the units were designed to follow a typical scrutiny journey.

- 1 Frameworks for Scrutiny Practice
- 2 The Craft of Scrutiny
- 3 Supporting Improvement

The graded unit is not a taught unit, but will be threaded through the teaching and assessment of the last two units. The reason for this is that these units were written to look at the stages of scrutiny and improvement activity. It was recognised that the first unit would have to provide the legislative, political and value focus as it forms the foundation for practice at this level. The remaining three units focus on how the scrutiny activity is implemented, what can be learned from scrutiny activity to inform improvement and how improvement is supported and managed by the learner in their practice.

6.2 Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of Prior Learning will be at the discretion of the centre delivering the PDA.

SQA recognises that learners gain knowledge and skills acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts.

In some instances, a full group award may be achieved through the recognition of prior learning. However, it is unlikely that a learner would have the appropriate prior learning and experience to meet all the requirements of a full group award.

The recognition of prior learning may **not** be used as a method of assessing in the following types of units and assessments:

- ◆ HN Graded units
- ◆ Course and/or external assessments
- ◆ Other integrative assessment units (which may or not be graded)
- ◆ Certain types of assessment instruments where the standard may be compromised by not using the same assessment method outlined in the unit
- ◆ Where there is an existing requirement for a licence to practice
- ◆ Where there are specific health and safety requirements
- ◆ Where there are regulatory, professional or other statutory requirements
- ◆ Where otherwise specified in an assessment strategy

More information and guidance on the *Recognition of Prior Learning* (RPL) may be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk.

6.2.1 Professional recognition

This award is subject to approval by the Scottish Social Services Council and is recognised as a practitioner qualification for registration. It is designed to meet SSSC requirements for those working as 'Authorised Officers' within the Care Inspectorate.

6.3 Opportunities for e-assessment

It is possible part of the taught programme could be delivered by e-learning. The units can also be delivered on a face to face basis. The nature of the qualification does mean that some parts of the units are not suitable to be delivered through distance/e-learning as aspects of the focus within the units is based on team and collaborative working practices and direct work with services. However, there is scope to use on-line portfolio building tools as a means for learners to gather evidence for some assessments; this will be at the discretion of the centre.

6.4 Support materials

Centres are expected to develop support materials for learners, based on the unit statement of standards and support notes. The support notes for the units of this PDA are extensive and should provide a good starting point for the development of appropriate support materials.

6.5 Resource requirements

Tutor/assessors should undertake the teaching, facilitate learning and carry out assessment processes for the PDA. Internal Verifiers should check the assessment process. It is recommended that tutor/assessors and IVs are an Authorised Officer and hold a practice qualification recognised by the SSSC, are registered with the SSSC or other appropriate professional body.

It is also essential that tutor/assessors and IVs have at least three years scrutiny and improvement experience and subject knowledge of all scrutiny activities, including registration, complaint, inspection, strategic inspection and enforcement practices. It is essential that they have a qualification relevant to inspecting social services at SCQF level 10 or above.

Some examples of relevant qualifications may be an honours degree in social work or nursing, a post-graduate Masters qualification in a health or social care specialism or in care management, or a doctorate where the topic of the thesis has a social services focus. They should also have experience of being a tutor and/or assessor and hold, or are working towards, a relevant qualification in this area. This would include, for example a post graduate certificate in teaching or PDA in practice teaching. It is essential that IVs hold, or are working towards an SQA internal verifier qualification. It is essential that tutor/assessors and IVs are active in undertaking continuous professional development.

Approval to offer the PDA will be required from both the SQA and the Scottish Social Services Council. These are separate processes which necessitate separate approval applications.

7 General information for centres

Equality and inclusion

The unit specifications making up this group award have been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners will 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.

Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used within this/these qualification(s) 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* (www.sqa.org.uk/GuideToAssessment).

8 Glossary of terms

Embedded Core Skills: is where the assessment evidence for the unit also includes full evidence for complete Core Skill or Core Skill components. A learner successfully completing the unit will be automatically certificated for the Core Skill. (This depends on the unit having been successfully audited and validated for Core Skills certification.)

Finish date: The end of a group award's lapsing period is known as the finish date. After the finish date, the group award will no longer be live and the following applies:

- ◆ learners may not be entered for the group award
- ◆ the Group Award will continue to exist only as an archive record on the Awards Processing System (APS)

Graded unit: Graded units assess learners' ability to integrate what they have learned while 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 learners to retain and adapt their skills and knowledge.

Lapsing date: When a group award is entered into its lapsing period, the following will apply:

- ◆ the group award will be deleted from the relevant catalogue
- ◆ the group award specification will remain until the qualification reaches its finish date at which point it will be removed from SQA's website and archived
- ◆ no new centres may be approved to offer the group award
- ◆ centres should only enter learners whom they expect to complete the group award during the defined lapsing period

SQA credit value: The credit value allocated to a unit gives an indication of the contribution the unit makes to an SQA Group Award. An SQA credit value of 1 given to an SQA unit represents approximately 40 hours of programmed learning, teaching and assessment.

SCQF: The Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) provides the national common framework for describing all relevant programmes of learning and qualifications in Scotland. SCQF terminology is used 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: SCQF credit points provide a means of describing and comparing the amount of learning that is required to complete a qualification at a given level of the Framework. One National unit credit is equivalent to 6 SCQF credit points. One National unit credit at Advanced Higher and one Higher National unit credit (irrespective of level) is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points.

SCQF levels: The level a qualification is assigned within the framework is an indication of how hard it is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HNCs and HNDs are available at SCQF levels 7 and 8 respectively. Higher National units will normally be at levels 6–9 and graded units will be at level 7 and 8. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2–6 and will normally be made up of National units which are available from SCQF levels 2–7.

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

Signposted Core Skills: refers to opportunities to develop Core Skills arise in learning and teaching but are not automatically certificated.

History of changes

It is anticipated that changes will take place during the life of the qualification and this section will record these changes. This document is the latest version and incorporates the changes summarised below. Centres are advised to check SQA's APS Navigator to confirm they are using the up to date qualification structure.

NOTE: Where a unit is revised by another unit:

- ◆ No new centres may be approved to offer the unit which has been revised.
- ◆ Centres should only enter learners for the unit which has been revised where they are expected to complete the unit before its finish date.

Version Number	Description	Date
02	Change to Unit title: HJ3E 37 - <i>Scrutiny and Improvement Practice (Social Services): Graded Unit</i> changed to <i>Scrutiny and Improvement Practice: Graded Unit</i> .	18/09/2023

Acknowledgement

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Care Inspectorate staff, SSSC, service users and carers have made to the development of this qualification.

9 General information for learners

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

The principal aim of the PDA in Scrutiny and Improvement Practice (Social Services) at SCQF level 10 is to provide a qualification that will enable you to demonstrate that you have the knowledge, skills and values needed ensure positive outcomes for people using services. In undertaking the award, you will be required to:

- ◆ demonstrate the ability to apply the knowledge and insights gained from analysis of key legislation, models and concepts in inspection, regulation, scrutiny and improvement to their own professional practice.
- ◆ critically evaluate their contribution in promoting protection, participation, empowerment, equality and diversity of people using services through the scrutiny and improvement process.
- ◆ apply and critically evaluate the use of appropriate skills to enable the effective direction of scrutiny activity and implementation of improvement practice which contributes to better outcomes for people using services.

This PDA at SCQF level 10 offers you the opportunity to gain knowledge and skills, which will enable you to practice in a variety of roles within the Care Inspectorate. The Scottish Social Services Council has approved this award as a registerable qualification for 'Authorised Officers' in the Care Inspectorate.

This PDA consists of four units. These are:

Frameworks for Scrutiny Practice (16 credits)

The Craft of Scrutiny (16 credits)

Supporting Improvement (16 credits)

Scrutiny and Improvement Practice: Graded Unit (16 credits)

To access this qualification you should have well-developed communication and interpersonal skills. You should be able to demonstrate your ability to critically review and consolidate knowledge, skills, practices and thinking in your area of practice. This may be demonstrated by relevant professional qualifications at SCQF level 9 (or equivalent), or above with relevant experience in a social services or other related setting. Acceptance of relevant equivalent qualifications and experience will be at the discretion of the centre.

Specific aims of the award provide learners you with opportunities to:

- 1 Demonstrate their knowledge of scrutiny frameworks and the legislative basis for their work.
- 2 Critically reflect on how their own values and beliefs impact on their practice in supporting services to improve.
- 3 Critically analyse the wider geopolitical aspects which affect scrutiny and improvement, as well as the inter-relationship between scrutiny, inspection, regulation, audit and improvement.
- 4 Critically analyse the application of theories and methodologies that apply to the activities of scrutiny and improvement.
- 5 Demonstrate their knowledge of the different roles and the application of skills required in the range of scrutiny and improvement activity.

- 6 Critically analyse the concepts of role of risk and responsiveness in scrutiny and improvement.
- 7 Critically analyse the role of human rights, relationships and leadership in their practice.
- 8 Critically evaluate improvement models and apply them to scrutiny practice.
- 9 Demonstrate integration of theory and practice in supporting services to improve.

Assessments for the units in the award will consist of written assignments illustrated with practice examples, direct observations of your scrutiny activity and critically reflective self-assessments. You will be required to carry out research and demonstrate evidence-based practice. You will also implement an improvement in your area of practice and critically evaluate this.