



Group Award Specification for:

**National Progression Award (NPA) — Palliative and
End of Life Care**

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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 the qualification.
- ◆ provide a guide for new staff involved in offering the qualification.
- ◆ inform course managers teaching staff, assessors, learners, employers and higher education institutes (HEIs) of the aims and purpose of the qualification.
- ◆ provide details of the range of learners the qualification is suitable for and progression opportunities.

Palliative and end of life care are vital aspects of care provided by health and social services professionals to people living with and dying from any advanced, progressive and incurable condition. Palliative care is about ensuring quality of life for both the person and their family at every stage of the life-limiting disease process from diagnosis onwards.

It is envisaged that this award in Palliative and End of Life Care will be utilised in a variety of settings, and by a number of providers. The fundamental rationale for the award is to provide learners with an opportunity to develop skills and knowledge surrounding Palliative and end of life care.

NHS Education for Scotland and the Scottish Social Services Council are supportive of the National Progression Award (NPA) in Palliative and End of Life Care at SCQF level 6.

Rationale

In the Strategic Framework for Action on Palliative and End of Life Care, the Scottish Government made 10 commitments towards a national vision that by 2021, everyone in Scotland who needs palliative care and end of life care will have access to it. These commitments are part of wider public service reform, as set out in the Health and Social Care Delivery Plan, which emphasises the importance of ensuring meaningful conversations and puts personal outcomes at the heart of service delivery.

To support the health and social service workforce, NHS Education for Scotland (NES) and the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) were commissioned to develop a new framework that would offer a way of identifying the knowledge and skills required by all workers who might come into contact with people who have palliative and end of life care needs.

Learners will be introduced to the government frameworks and policy guidance including palliative and end of life care; enriching and improving experiences.
<https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/2450/palliative-and-end-of-life-care-enriching-and-improving-experience>

The framework promotes a consistent, inclusive and flexible approach to learning and development on palliative and end of life care for the health and social service workforce. It is aspirational and values workers' previous learning, and existing knowledge and skills. It acknowledges the place of informal and formal learning in supporting the workforce to develop knowledge and skills, and recognises sector and discipline-specific standards and frameworks, such as National Occupational Standards and the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework. The framework's flexibility enables it to be used in different ways to support learning and development at individual, service-provider and organisational levels.

Education and training providers can use the framework to:

- ◆ review existing provision, inform the content of education and learning opportunities, and shape the design and delivery of vocational and professional undergraduate and postgraduate education and learning opportunities (the framework takes account of recognised credit and qualifications frameworks).
- ◆ maximise opportunities for health and social service workers to learn together to promote collaborative and integrated working.
- ◆ enhance and strengthen sustainable relationships with health and social services providers and organisations in creating and delivering palliative and end of life care learning and development activity.

Target audience

The NPA in Palliative and End of Life Care at SCQF level 6 may be suitable for a wide range of learners, however, the main target groups are:

- ◆ Young people
- ◆ Adults
- ◆ People supporting individuals living with and dying from any advanced, progressive and incurable condition

This is not an exhaustive list and only indicates examples of potential learners.

The award could also be relevant for those looking to enhance their skills portfolio and anyone who is considering a career within Health and Social services. The award provides learners with pertinent and valuable skills which can be applied in many employment contexts.

2 Qualification structure

The NPA in Palliative and End of Life Care at SCQF level 6 contains the equivalent of 4 SQA unit credits, with an overall total of 24 SCQF credit points. The units making up the NPA have been designed and developed for this award, and all of the units are mandatory.

A mapping of Core Skills development opportunities is available in Section 5.3.

2.1 Structure

This award meets the relevant NPA design principles as it is:

- ◆ made up of 4 SQA unit credits at SCQF level 6.
- ◆ amounts to 24 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6.
- ◆ all the units within the award are at SCQF level 6 which is the SCQF level for the award.

The award consists of mandatory units, there are no optional units.

Mandatory units

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J471	46	Fundamentals of Palliative Care	2	12	6
J472	46	Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement	1	6	6
J473	46	Care in the Last Days of Life	1	6	6

Learners successfully completing 24 SCQF credit points will gain the group award.

3 Aims of the qualification

The NPA in Palliative and End of Life Care at SCQF level 6 has been designed to enable learners to understand the principles, knowledge and skills necessary in delivering high-quality palliative and end of life care. The award will equip learners with the theoretical knowledge and understanding relating to holistic, multidisciplinary, evidenced-based approaches to caring for the individual receiving Palliative care and end of life care.

3.1 General aims of the qualification

- ◆ To prepare for and enable learner progression within the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).
- ◆ To facilitate progression to higher-level study or to enable learners to progress to work-based qualifications.
- ◆ To develop the ability to be flexible and to work cooperatively with others.
- ◆ To prepare learners to achieve a consistent level of quality of work within a given period.
- ◆ Enhance understanding of partnership working.
- ◆ To develop personal effectiveness.
- ◆ Develop transferable skills including Core Skills.
- ◆ Provide opportunities for career planning and enhance learners' employment opportunities.

3.2 Specific aims of the qualification

The aim of the NPA in Palliative and End of Life Care at SCQF level 6 is to equip individuals with the range of knowledge, skills and values, which will enable them to support the changing workforce skills mix. The NPA will assist in developing an appropriately skilled and qualified workforce that meets both future and current needs within Health and Social Services for Workers in a supporting care role at skilled level (Framework for Action on Palliative and End of Life Care,) at SCQF level 6 as well as the Continuous Learning Framework (CLF).

- 1 To enable learners to understand types and models of loss and grief and the Impact on families and carers that may increase vulnerability and difficulties in coping with grief and bereavement.
- 2 To enable learners to understand how loss, grief and bereavement may affect the needs and behaviour of individuals at different stages of life and support mechanisms available.
- 3 To enable learners to understand models of reflection and the importance of reflection in improving care practice.
- 4 To enable learners to understand the key concepts of palliative care and the importance of early identification of people who would benefit from palliative care.
- 5 To enable learners to understand how common life-limiting conditions may affect the person and how a palliative care approach would help.
- 6 To enable learners to understand the importance of anticipatory care planning and the purpose of reviewing and evaluating care and support plans.
- 7 To enable learners to practice in a manner that recognises the importance of diversity, cultural beliefs and preferences within the context of providing palliative and end of life care.
- 8 To make learners aware of assistive technologies and equipment.

- 9 To enable learners to understand professional, legal and ethical approaches to protecting and promoting people's rights and safety, and the principles of child and adult protection.
- 10 To enable learners to understand the purpose of a formal assessment of capacity and changes in capacity and the impact on consent, choice and decision making with reference to current legislation.
- 11 To make learners aware of multidisciplinary team working in the delivery of palliative and end of life care.
- 12 To enable learners to understand how and when transitions in care and support may arise between and across services, sectors and settings.
- 13 To enable learners to understand the dying process and the uncertainties around death, common symptoms in the last days of life, and the role of support services supporting the dying person.
- 14 To enable learners to develop skills of communication to show compassion and empathy to meet the needs of the individual in the last days of life.
- 15 To enable learners to understand the importance of information and support that is available to the individual, family and carers, thereby empowering them to state their choices and preferences.
- 16 To enable learners to understand attitudes towards death and dying and the resultant behaviours.
- 17 To assist learners to understand ethical dilemmas associated with the last days of life, current issues that apply to the last days of life, and the importance of advocacy and proxy decision makers in the promotion of people's choices and preferences.
- 18 To enable learners to demonstrate an understanding of the principles and national and local guidelines for end of life care and how these contribute to improving care.
- 19 To enable learners to understand the carers responsibility in relation to end of life care including cultural requirements when a person dies.
- 20 To enable learners to develop a working knowledge of the legislation and processes for confirmation and certification of death, and practical issues that surround death, information, and sources of support available.

4 Recommended entry to the qualification

Entry to this qualification is at the discretion of the centre.

Learners wishing to undertake this award should be able to demonstrate effective communication and interpersonal skills. They should be able to use these skills to give an account of their experiences, reflect on them and make valid conclusions.

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 would 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.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	5	Case studies, presentations, reports, essays
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	5	Research, Presentations, Reports
Numeracy	5	Research, Presentations, Reports
Problem Solving	5	Case studies, presentations, reports, essays, practical activities
Working with Others	5	Case studies, presentations, reports, essays, practical activities

Please note that as communication is an essential skill in all aspects of work in social services it may be advisable to provide additional support to some learners if they do not have the recommended level 5 Core Skill *Communication*.

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 national occupational standards and/or trade/professional body requirements. In addition, significant opportunities exist for learners to develop the more generic skill, known as Core Skills through doing this qualification.

5.1 Mapping of qualification aims to units

Code	Unit title	Aims																			
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
J471 46	Fundamentals of Palliative Care				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X								
J472 46	Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement	X	X	X																	
J473 46	Care in the Last Days of Life							X						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

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

National Occupational Standard							Unit code and title
H5NA 04	H5NB 04	H5L5 04	H5NC 04	H5NE 04	H5NF 04	H5NG 04	J471 46 Fundamentals of Palliative Care J472 46 Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement J473 46 Care in the Last Days of Life
		H5NV 04		H5NX 04			
H5NS 04	H5NT 04		H5NW 04	H5NX 04	H5NY 04	H5P0 04	
H5P1 04	H5P2 04	H5P5 04	H5P6 04	H5P9 04	H5PA 04	H5PB 04	
H5PD 04	H5PF 04	H5PG 04					
Underpinning knowledge							

5.3 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualification

Unit code	Unit title	Communication			ICT		Numeracy		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
		Written (Reading)	Written (Writing)	Oral	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Using Number	Using Graphical Information	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively with Others	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
J471 46	Fundamentals of Palliative Care	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
J472 46	Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
J473 46	Care in the Last Days of Life	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X

5.4 Assessment strategy for the qualification

Unit	Assessment			
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4
Fundamentals of Palliative Care	Written account, such as a report, a compare and contrast essay, or an open-book assessment.	Written account such as an investigative report and producing an information leaflet/flyer,	Written account such as an investigative report and producing an information leaflet/flyer.	Individual/group PowerPoint presentation.
Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement	Individual/group presentation.	Individual/group presentation.	Reflective case study.	
Care in the Last Days of Life	Booklet with a suggested word count of 1,500–1,750 words produced in an appropriate format. This will cover outcomes 1-4			

6 Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment

This award should be delivered by staff experienced in the delivery of palliative and end of life care. This is essential in order to contextualise the learning experience for learners.

Teachers/lecturers should be mindful of the sensitive and emotive nature of palliative care and how it may affect learners, especially those who have had a past bereavement or involvement with palliative care services. Relevant and appropriate support should be sought if required.

Palliative care is for people of all ages and delivered in all areas of health and social care. It is important that the teacher/lecturer directs learners to relevant statutory, non-statutory and third sector organisations to ensure learning is focused and comprehensive.

The use of the internet and appropriate reading materials should be encouraged to offer current thinking in relation to palliative and end of life care.

In delivering the units, there should be a balance between teacher/lecturer led presentation and learner centred learning. Some learning and teaching activities may be carried out on a group basis and, where this applies, learners could also receive feedback from their peers.

Teachers/lecturers should, where possible, provide opportunities to personalise learning and enable learners to have choices in approaches to learning and teaching.

Teachers and lecturers should also create opportunities for, and use, inclusive approaches to learning and teaching. This can be achieved by encouraging the use of a variety of learning and teaching strategies which suit the needs of all learners, for example:

- ◆ Group exercises
- ◆ Group discussion
- ◆ Use of case studies
- ◆ Individual and/or group research
- ◆ Use of videos
- ◆ Lectures
- ◆ Use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) such as web-based material
- ◆ External speakers from specialist teams

Learners should be introduced to the government frameworks and policy guidance including palliative and end of life care; enriching and improving experiences. (Framework for Action on Palliative and End of Life Care)

The framework promotes a consistent, inclusive and flexible approach to learning and development on palliative and end of life care for the health and social service workforce. It is aspirational and values workers' previous learning, and existing knowledge and skills. It acknowledges the place of informal and formal learning in supporting the workforce to develop knowledge and skills, and recognises sector and discipline-specific standards and frameworks, such as National Occupational Standards and the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework.

The framework's flexibility enables it to be used in different ways to support learning and development at individual, service-provider and organisational levels.

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.

The Assessment Support Pack for each unit provides sample assessment material. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the Assessment Support Pack to ensure a comparable standard.

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.

An integrated approach to assessment is recommended.

Fundamentals of Palliative Care

Outcome 1 could be assessed by completing a written account, such as a report.

Outcomes 2 and 3 could be integrated and assessed by completing a written account such as an investigative report and producing an information leaflet or flyer.

Outcome 4 could be assessed by an individual or group PowerPoint presentation.

Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement

Outcomes 1 and 2 may be assessed by an individual or group presentation.

Outcome 3 may be assessed as a report.

Care in the Last Days of Life

Outcomes 1 to 4 could be integrated and assessed by an individual or small group development of an information booklet. This booklet can then be given to families and carers to support conversations about the care received by their family member/friend, and the professionals involved.

6.1 Sequencing/integration of units

All of the units in the NPA must be completed to achieve the award. The units are designed to be stand-alone and could be delivered in this way. However, if the learner is undertaking the full NPA, it is recommended that the units are delivered sequentially as follows:

- 1 Fundamentals of Palliative Care
- 2 Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement
- 3 Care in the Last Days of Life

The units are building blocks of learning, and learning from each unit is reinforced throughout the award.

6.2 Recognition of prior learning

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.

The following sub-sections outline how existing SQA unit(s) may contribute to this group award. Additionally, they also outline how this group award may be recognised for professional and articulation purposes.

6.2.1 Articulation and/or progression

On completion of the NPA in Palliative and End of Life Care SCQF level 6, learners may be able to progress to other qualifications such as:

- ◆ SVQ Social services and Healthcare at SCQF level 6
- ◆ HNC/HND Care and Administrative Practice at SCQF level 7/8
- ◆ HNC/HND Social Services at SCQF level 7/8

6.3 Opportunities for e-assessment

The preferred methods of assessment for the NPA include electronic assessment, as it is believed that this approach is most likely to engage learners' enthusiasm. Assessment material can be presented electronically through centre devised methods; for example, case study material could be provided electronically, and associated responses to questions can be gathered by electronic means. Where electronic assessment is not possible, such as to meet the additional needs of learners alternative methods may be used (for example a paper-based approach).

6.4 Support materials

A list of ASPs is available to view on SQA's website at the following link:

<https://secure.sqa.org.uk/login.html>

6.5 Resource requirements

It is recommended that appropriate IT facilities be available to learners

No other specific resource requirements have been identified in order to facilitate delivery of the award.

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 assessments used within this qualification 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 this qualification.

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

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)

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

Acknowledgement

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges, NHS Education for Scotland (NES) and the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) 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 aim of the NPA in Palliative and End of Life Care at SCQF level 6 is to equip you with the range of knowledge, skills and values, which will enable you to support the changing workforce skills mix. The NPA will ensure you are appropriately skilled and qualified and are able to meet the requirements of both future and current needs within Health and Social Services for workers in a supporting care role.

You will be required to complete all three mandatory units.

The mandatory units are designed in order to ensure that you focus on the following areas:

Fundamentals of Palliative Care

- 1 Explain what palliative care is, who would benefit from it and when.
- 2 Investigate appropriate assessment and care planning models including anticipatory care planning.
- 3 Investigate relevant legislation, organisational policies and procedures.
- 4 Evaluate the key dimensions of effective multidisciplinary team working.

Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement

- 1 Explain theories of loss and grief and recognise the impact loss, grief and bereavement have on families/significant others and carers.
- 2 Describe the impact loss, grief and bereavement may have at different stages of life.
- 3 Explain models of reflection and the importance of reflection in improving care practice.

Care in the Last Days of Life

- 1 Describe the dying process including common symptoms experienced in the last days of life.
- 2 Explain the importance of effective communication in the promotion of choices and preferences of the individual, family and carers in the last days of life.
- 3 Explain ethical dilemmas that relate to decision making in the last days of life.
- 4 Describe how principles, legislation, policy and guidelines direct care when a person dies.

There will be an assessment of your learning which may include, written work, visual and verbal presentations and group work. The submission of these assessment items can help develop your Core Skills.

You will be introduced to the government frameworks and policy guidance including palliative and end of life care; enriching and improving experiences.

<https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/2450/palliative-and-end-of-life-care-enriching-and-improving-experience>

The framework promotes a consistent, inclusive and flexible approach to learning and development on palliative and end of life care for the health and social service workforce. It is aspirational and values workers' previous learning, and existing knowledge and skills. It acknowledges the place of informal and formal learning in supporting the workforce to develop knowledge and skills, and recognises sector and discipline-specific standards and frameworks, such as National Occupational Standards and the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework.

The framework's flexibility enables it to be used in different ways to support learning and development at individual, service-provider and organisational levels.

You will have the opportunity to develop the Core Skills of:

Communication at SCQF level 6 — may be evidenced by your work with individuals and groups as well as within written assessments.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) — may be evidenced by accessing, processing, and presenting information.

Numeracy — may be evidenced by the use of graphical information to support research, presentations as well as within written assessments.

Problem Solving at SCQF level 6 — may be evidenced through facilitated group discussion about the most appropriate course of action for care delivery.

Working with Others at SCQF level 6 — may be evidenced by your ability to interact, communicate and negotiate with those with whom you come into contact, and to work collaboratively with other professionals and individuals, recognition of professional boundaries and professional conduct in practice.

The units within the award will facilitate the development of citizenship and includes; concern for others; being aware of rights and responsibilities; being aware of the democratic society; being outward-looking towards society; being able to recognise one's personal role in this context, and of acting responsibly. You will develop employability skills including the development of care specific knowledge and also an understanding of employment skills such as appropriate attitudes and behaviours.