

Unit Support Notes — Employment Skills: Preparing for Employment (National 2)



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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this document for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

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Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the *Employment Skills: Preparing for Employment* (National 2) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- ◆ the *Unit Specification*
- ◆ the *Unit Assessment Support pack*

General guidance on the Unit

Aims

The *Employment Skills: Preparing for Employment* (National 2) Unit is a free-standing Unit and is designed to meet the needs of a broad range of learners who may choose to study it.

The general aim of the Unit is to develop the skills required to identify and apply for employment opportunities.

Progression into this Unit

Entry into this Unit is at the discretion of the centre.

This Unit may be suitable for learners who have successfully completed qualifications in independent living skills, personal development or related areas at SCQF level 1.

Prior learning, life and work experiences may provide an appropriate basis for entry into this Unit. This could include relevant skills, knowledge and understanding and appropriate experiences and outcomes.

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

As this Unit will be delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

Content and contexts which are used in the teaching of this Unit are at the discretion of the centre. However, content and contexts should provide evidence that all Outcomes and Assessment Standards in the Unit have been achieved.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

- 1 Prepare an application for a given job.
- 2 Prepare for and participate in a simulated interview.

Progression from this Unit

This Unit may provide progression to:

- ◆ other Employment Skills Units at National 2
- ◆ other Units, Awards and Courses at National 2
- ◆ other related Units, Awards and Courses at National 3
- ◆ further study, employment and/or training

Further details about these Units can be found on SQA's website.

Learners may progress to other Units at the same level or Units and Courses at higher levels. The nature of this progression will depend on the individual needs of the learner.

The skills, knowledge and understanding developed in this Unit could also support progression in other curriculum areas as well as life and work contexts.

Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

The purpose of this section is to provide general advice and guidance on approaches to learning, teaching and assessment which can be used for the delivery of this Unit.

Learning and teaching

The skills-based focus of the Unit lends itself to the use of a variety of learning and teaching approaches, reflecting the values and principles of the curriculum. Effective learning and teaching will draw on a variety of approaches to enrich the experience of learners. In particular, a mix of approaches which provide opportunities for personalisation and choice will help to motivate and challenge the learners.

Learning should be relevant to the learner's everyday life, their overall learning programme, and/or work and leisure. Teachers/lecturers could also consider interdisciplinary and cross-curricular approaches to learning and teaching, and explore how extra-curricular activities or the personal interests of learners could be included and recognised.

Many of these approaches could involve group work. Group work approaches can be used within Units where it is helpful to simulate real-life situations, share tasks and promote teamworking skills. However, there must be clear evidence for each learner to show that they have met the required Assessment Standards for the Unit.

Learners should be given the opportunity to use their normal mode of communication and have access to the appropriate resources for support where they would normally be available in real-life situations in which the activity is being carried out.

Examples of learning and teaching approaches and ways of recording evidence are provided in the table on the next page.

Employment Skills: Preparing for Employment (National 2)

The general aim of this Unit is to develop the skills required to identify and apply for employment opportunities. The learner will:

Outcomes and Assessment Standards	Guidance and suggested learning and teaching approaches
<p>1 Prepare an application for a given job by:</p> <p>1.1 Creating a CV</p> <p>1.2 Completing an application form</p>	<p>Teachers/lecturers could discuss the range of employment sectors with learners. Teachers/lecturers could also discuss the range of sources used to advertise job vacancies. These could include formal and informal sources, for example: newspapers and magazines (in print and online), employment-related websites, noticeboards in the centre, friends and family, peers.</p> <p>Teachers/lecturers could also help learners identify the sector(s) and/or types of employment most suited to their skills, knowledge and, if appropriate, work experiences to date. This could include using elements of a simple skills analysis to help learners identify what they are good at, what they enjoy and/or find interesting.</p> <p>Teachers/lecturers could also discuss general approaches, attitudes and behaviours required to be an effective employee with learners. Examples could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ the importance of good time-keeping◆ the need to adapt behaviour for different situations in the workplace◆ the need to accept instructions and/or corrections in the workplace◆ the importance of asking for help when needed <p>Teachers/lecturers should help the learner to choose an appropriate job. The job could be related to a</p>

real-life employment opportunity, or form part of activities related to a simulated workplace and/or enterprise setting. Learners could prepare an application for the given job by completing pre-prepared templates (in hard copy and/or online), providing responses to prompt questions and/or selecting words/phrases from a given list. Teachers/lecturers could discuss/show learners different types of application forms and explain the different sections which commonly appear in these forms, eg previous employment, personal statement, references.

Learners prepare an application for a given job by firstly creating a short CV and then completing an application form using information from their CV as appropriate. Teachers/lecturers could explain to learners the purpose of a CV, eg to show employers what you can do and have done, as well as giving information about your skills and knowledge. The CV could include:

- ◆ personal information
- ◆ contact details
- ◆ details of their work/relevant experiences to date (if applicable), eg participation in award schemes such as Duke of Edinburgh/John Muir Award
- ◆ a short personal statement (if appropriate)

The application form could be in hard copy and/or online and could include:

- ◆ completing the boxes of a pre-prepared template (eg name, address, mobile phone number)
- ◆ ticking boxes of a pre-prepared template (eg age, gender)
- ◆ responding to set questions in a pre-prepared template (eg 'Have you had a job before?' 'Who did you work for?' 'What was your role?' 'What did you do in your last job?' 'What skills/experience do you have that are suited to this role/job?' 'Would you need to learn anything new for this job?')
- ◆ providing contact details for references

<p>2 Prepare for and participate in a simulated interview by:</p> <p>2.1 Preparing appropriately for the interview</p> <p>2.2 Demonstrating appropriate personal presentation at interview</p> <p>2.3 Demonstrating appropriate participation at interview</p>	<p>Teachers/lecturers should discuss the purpose of a job interview with learners and the importance of preparation for, and positive participation in, an interview. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ exploring different types of interview (audition, conversation, presentation, practical demonstration, group) with a particular focus on the approach which is likely to be used in the simulated interview itself ◆ identifying ways of preparing for interview (eg knowing the location/venue, remembering the date and time, checking journey times to ensure punctuality, remembering to take any materials required such as a copy of CV) ◆ identifying approaches to personal presentation (eg personal hygiene, wearing clothes and footwear appropriate to the interview situation) ◆ identifying appropriate behaviours (eg switching off mobile phones, making eye contact with interviewer(s), using appropriate language, gestures, body language) <p>Teachers/lecturers could use role-play activities to help learners appreciate the importance of these points. For example, one group could act out an interview where the candidate displays positive planning, positive personal presentation and positive behaviour. Another group could act out a similar interview but this time the candidate displays no planning, a lack of personal presentation and negative behaviour. Teachers/lecturers could then discuss the issues raised by, and the implications for, each of the candidates.</p> <p>The learner then participates in a simulated interview. This could be a 'rehearsal' for an interview with a real employer, or a 'mock' interview carried out by a teacher/lecturer/others within the centre as part of simulated employment/role-play activities. It is suggested that the interviewer(s) could be someone who is not well-known to the learner to give a degree of authenticity. However, teachers/lecturers should ensure that the environment is supportive of, and sympathetic to, learners' needs to ensure</p>
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they can meet the Assessment Standards.

The learner demonstrates appropriate planning and personal presentation for, and positive participation in, the simulated interview. For example, the learner:

- ◆ finds out about the company before the interview
- ◆ rehearses answers to questions they might be asked
- ◆ arrives at the interview location on the correct date at or before the scheduled interview time
- ◆ uses appropriate greetings and behaviour during introductions and closing of the interview (eg handshake and eye contact)
- ◆ brings a copy of their completed application form and a copy of their current CV to the interview
- ◆ wears clothing and footwear appropriate for the interview (this could also include removing jewellery and tying back long hair if the interview requires working with tools or preparing food)
- ◆ switches off their mobile phone prior to the interview
- ◆ listens carefully and responds appropriately to interview questions (eg giving their name, explaining why they are interested in the job, outlining their experience(s) to date)
- ◆ demonstrates positive behaviour during the interview (eg by smiling, making eye contact, responding at appropriate times, using appropriate language in their responses)

The Unit could also be linked to activities in the National 2 sector-specific *Employment Skills* Units as appropriate.

This Unit could also be linked to activities in the *Self and Work: Investigating the Workplace* Unit and the *Self and Work: Completing a Work Placement* Unit of the National 2 Personal Development Award.

Assessment

There is no external assessment for National 2 Units. All Units are internally assessed against the requirements outlined and described in the *Unit Specification* and the *Unit Assessment Support pack*.

To achieve the Unit, learners must achieve the Unit Outcomes.

Evidence for this Unit could be collected during learning and teaching activities.

Teachers/lecturers could therefore record naturally occurring evidence as a way of meeting the Unit Outcomes. Naturally occurring evidence is evidence which occurs within and as part of the learning and teaching, and can be recorded for assessment purposes in a variety of ways, including:

- ◆ observation of evidence demonstrated during an activity (using an observation checklist, visual recording, photography or equivalent)
- ◆ oral questioning before, during and on completion of an activity (recorded using an audio-visual or audio recording or using detailed written assessor notes as evidence)
- ◆ learning and teaching activities which generate physical evidence for assessment
- ◆ identifying opportunities to record evidence within out-of-centre activities

Alternatively, where assessment is carried out as a discrete activity, this could be as a single event or it may be broken up into smaller, more manageable sections. In this case, care must be taken to avoid duplication of evidence and potential assessment.

Learners will benefit from receiving accurate and regular feedback on their work regarding their learning. This helps to ensure they are actively involved in the assessment process. It is also important that different approaches to assessment are adopted to suit the varying needs of learners.

Authentication

For guidance on authentication of evidence that is gathered outwith the direct supervision of the teacher/lecturer responsible for the learner, eg outside the school or classroom, refer to SQA's *Guide to Assessment*.

It is important that teachers/lecturers track and keep accurate records of their assessments in order to:

- ◆ inform learners of their progress
- ◆ identify where further consolidation is required
- ◆ retain and store appropriately evidence of work in progress and completed work for verification purposes

It is anticipated that learners will need a high degree of teacher/lecturer assistance. More details about the type of support are provided within the Equality and inclusion section.

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

The *Unit Specification* lists the skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work that learners should develop in this Unit. These are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and should be built into the Unit where there are appropriate opportunities. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Unit.

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work	Examples of learning and teaching approaches
1 Literacy	
<p>1.1 Reading</p> <p>Reading means the ability to understand and interpret ideas, opinions and information presented in texts, for a purpose and within a context. It includes handling information to make reasoned and informed decisions.</p>	<p>Where appropriate, learners could use their normal mode of communication to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ communicate the key information required to prepare a CV ◆ respond to questions about the key information required to complete an application form ◆ use key information to compile an appropriate CV for a given job ◆ use key information to complete an application form for a given job
<p>1.2 Writing</p> <p>Writing means the ability to create texts which communicate ideas, opinions and information, to meet a purpose and within a context.</p>	
<p>1.3 Listening and talking</p> <p>Listening means the ability to understand and interpret ideas, opinions and information presented orally for a purpose and within a context, drawing on non-verbal communication as appropriate. Talking means the ability to communicate orally ideas, opinions and information for a purpose and within a context.</p>	
3 Health and wellbeing	
<p>3.4 Planning for, and making choices and changes</p> <p>This includes planning, making decisions and taking action based on achievements for the next stage in life, then making a successful move to the next stage of education or work.</p>	<p>Where appropriate, learners could demonstrate planning and making choices by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ preparing appropriately for a given job application ◆ preparing for, and participating in, a simulated interview

4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship	
<p>4.1 Employability</p> <p>Employability is the ability to gain employment by developing the personal qualities, skills, knowledge, understanding, and attitudes required in rapidly changing economic environments. It is the ability to maintain employment by making transitions between jobs and roles, and the ability to obtain new employment if and when required.</p>	<p>Where appropriate, learners could demonstrate employability skills by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ creating an appropriate CV for a given job ◆ completing an application form for a given job correctly

It is important that learners have opportunities to develop these broad general skills as an integral part of their learning experience.

There will be opportunities for the development of additional skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work throughout this Unit. These will vary from centre to centre depending on the approaches being used to deliver the Unit.

Equality and inclusion

The additional support needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences or when considering any reasonable adjustments that may be required. Assessment methods should offer all learners an equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement. This should be reflected in the language used, the use of different assessment presentation methods and the use of appropriate illustrative materials that reflect an inclusive view.

Learners undertaking qualifications at SCQF level 2 are likely to require more support with their learning than at other levels. The support provided should be appropriate for the learner, for the subject area and for the activity involved. Examples of support might include:

- ◆ allowing extra time to complete activities
- ◆ practical helpers under direct learner instruction could assist with practical activities (this could also include a reader and/or scribe as appropriate)
- ◆ the use of specialised and adapted equipment
- ◆ the use of ICT, including adaptive technologies such as braille and assistive technologies (such as voice-activated software) to support learners with limited capacities to write

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Unit Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Unit.

Alternative approaches to Unit assessment to take account of the specific needs of learners can be used. However the centre must be satisfied that the integrity of the assessment is maintained and where the alternative approach to assessment will generate the necessary evidence of achievement.

Appendix 1: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications on SQA’s website:
<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14976.html>
- ◆ [*Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work*](#)
- ◆ [*Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment*](#)
- ◆ [*Guide to Assessment \(January 2014\)*](#)
- ◆ Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas
- ◆ [*Research Report 4 — Less is More: Good Practice in Reducing Assessment Time*](#)
- ◆ [*Coursework Authenticity — a Guide for Teachers and Lecturers*](#)
- ◆ [*SCQF Handbook: User Guide \(published 2009\)*](#) and
- ◆ SCQF level descriptors: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/4595.html
- ◆ [*SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*](#)
- ◆ [*Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool*](#)
- ◆ [*SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools*](#)
- ◆ [*SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education*](#)
- ◆ [*SQA e-assessment web page*](#)

Administrative information

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History of changes to Unit Support Notes

Unit details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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