



**Arrangements for:**

**Professional Development Award:  
Supporting Individuals with Dyslexia in  
Learning and Workplace Settings**

**at SCQF level 7**

**Group Award Code: G8LK 47**

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## **Acknowledgements**

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that the Dyslexia Working Party made to the development of Higher National qualifications. This group is an informal partnership of practitioners from Clydebank College, Dyslexia Scotwest, Dyslexia South West, Jewel & Esk Valley College, Learning Connections, Learning for Sure, and Jean Alcock Research and Consultancy Services (JARCS). The Group held regular meetings chaired by Jean Alcock who also took responsibility for the co-ordination of meetings and for advising on and progressing the work.

The development work was funded by Communities Scotland (Learning Connections) with in-kind support from SQA.



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# 1 Introduction

This is the Arrangements Document for the Professional Development Award — Supporting Individuals with Dyslexia in Learning and Workplace Settings at SCQF level 7 which was validated in July 2007. This document includes the following information: background information on the development of the Group Award, its aims, guidance on access, details of the Group Award structure, and guidance on delivery.

The award is aimed at practitioners working with individuals in a variety of adult learning and workplace settings.

The two Higher National Units, which make up the award, were validated in February 2007. The Group Award was validated in July 2007.

The development work was carried out by The Dyslexia Working Party which is an informal partnership of practitioners from Clydebank College, Dyslexia Scotwest, Dyslexia South West, JARCS (Jean Alcock Research and Consultancy Services), Jewel & Esk College, Learning Connections and Learning for Sure. It was funded by Communities Scotland (Learning Connections) with in-kind support from SQA.

To support centres in the delivery of the new qualification, the Dyslexia Working Party has developed Support Packs. Details of how to obtain these are attached as Appendix 1

## 2 Rationale for the development of the Group Award

### Background

The Dyslexia Working Party, working in conjunction with SQA, developed a stand-alone Higher National Unit on understanding dyslexia which was validated in 2002 as a locally produced Unit (Unit number D9AD 04). which was designed to give practitioners with knowledge and understanding of the issues facing adults with dyslexia. This Unit has been updated and superseded by the development of the new PDA. The PDA comprise two Units:

F16Y 34 *Dyslexia: Understanding and Supporting Individuals with Dyslexia*

F171 34 *Dyslexia: Working with Individuals with Dyslexia*

The first covers theory and understanding and is a revision of the original Unit D9AD 04, *Understanding the Needs of Adults with Dyslexia*. Unit 2 provides practical elements for *Working with Adults with Dyslexia*. This Unit was required as it had been identified that, while there was provision for those working with children with dyslexia, there were specific needs- both in knowledge and practice- required by those working with adults and there was no specific qualification available.

The two Higher National Units in the Group Award were validated by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) as free-standing Units in February 2007. Each Unit corresponds to 1 credit at SCQF level 7 (8 SCQF points). The PDA was validated as a Group Award in July 2007.

## **Rationale**

The Group Award was developed to provide an accredited route for the many practitioners in Scotland who work with adults in a variety of learning and workplace settings. The new qualification provides a route for candidates to evidence their experience of working with adults with dyslexia.

There has been no such course available in Scotland although a course — Dyslexia and Literacy: a course for Skills for Life Tutors — is available for adult support tutors working in similar settings in England. This is accredited by Dyslexia Action (formerly the Dyslexia Institute) and the Open College Network. The Professional Development Award will have similarities in terms of theory and practice, putting these within a Scottish context where relevant.

This new award in Scotland is intended to provide a broader perspective: it does not encourage candidates to think of dyslexia solely in terms of literacy, nor does it advocate the use of a structured literacy programme. Rather than a literacy-orientated approach, it will encourage candidates to take a holistic view of dyslexia rather than one focused on teaching methods to improve literacy. The table below gives a comparison between the PDA and the England-based course.

**Table 1: Comparison between proposed PDA and existing Course for Practitioners Working with Adults based in England**

| <b>Award</b>   | <b>Awarding Body</b>                 | <b>Credit value</b>                          | <b>Entry requirements</b>   | <b>Theory</b> | <b>Practice</b> | <b>Literacy Teaching Programmes</b> | <b>Time</b>   |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|---|---------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| PDA in Supporting Individuals with Dyslexia in Learning and Workplace Settings | Scottish Qualifications Authority    | 2 credits at SCQF level 7 (16 SCQF points)   | Communication Skills at SCQF level 5<br>Experience of working with adults in a support role                                   | ✓             | ✓               | ✗                                   | Flexible delivery — notional 60 hours taught and 20 hours practice                          |
| Dyslexia and Literacy: a course for Skills for Life Tutors                     | Dyslexia Action/Open College Network | 18 credits (+ 3 optional credits) at level 3 | Qualified Teacher status or working towards a level 4 teaching qualification<br>Already working with adults in a support role | ✓             | ✓               | ✓                                   | 5 hours taught (1 day a week over 15 weeks)<br>25 hours practice<br>110 hours private study |

Prior to the validation of this new PDA, practitioners in Scotland had access to three education-based accredited courses. In each of these, emphasis is placed on classroom teaching methods for improving literacy in children.

This new PDA is the only nationally validated and certificated qualification in dyslexia in Scotland that:

- ◆ is aimed at the needs of adults rather than children
- ◆ takes a holistic approach of dyslexia rather than one focused on teaching methods
- ◆ does not require candidates to have a recognized teaching qualification

#### **Other accredited Courses in Dyslexia**

- 1 Dyslexia Action (formerly the Dyslexia Institute) and the Hornsby Centre working in partnership to offer the Hornsby Course in Dyslexia and Literacy which leads to a Dyslexia Action Certificate and 30 credit points at level 3 (Open College Network). This is a year long course covering both theory and practice. In Scotland it is mainly done as a distance learning course.
- 2 The Moray House School of Education at **Edinburgh University** offers a suite of Additional Support for Learning courses at Post-Graduate level. Candidates must be qualified teachers to undertake this qualification.
- 3 Open University 'Difficulties in Literacy Development' Postgraduate course for teachers and other educational professionals.

Dyslexia specialists in FE and HE are keen to improve the level of support available to students with dyslexia by giving practitioners relevant and specific training. They have supported the development of this PDA because they think they will be able to make a more convincing case for delivery of the Units to be included in day time provision. The previous HN Unit DPAD 04 *Understanding the Needs of Adults with Dyslexia* was offered mainly as an evening course in Further Education but the new award is considered more attractive as day-time provision.

Dyslexia is being increasingly recognized in the workplace. Organisations that provide Workplace Learning opportunities for companies welcome a named qualification for their practitioners, especially one that can be linked with other relevant PDAs.

Employing organisations that contract outside agencies to provide workplace learning programmers for their employees would feel more confident about the Outcomes if they knew that the practitioners employed by these agencies had specific experience of supporting individuals with dyslexia or showing dyslexic traits.

One such organization that has indicated support for the new award is Learning Connections. Learning Connections recognizes the value of HN Units as a progression route for literacy tutors who have completed their Introduction to Tutoring in Adult Literacy and Learning (ITALL) training.



## **3 Aims of the Group Award**

### **3.1 General aims of the Group Award**

The aim of this award is to provide a qualification that ensures that practitioners are given the means to provide effective and appropriate support to help people with dyslexia, or showing dyslexic traits, in order that they may reach their full potential in learning and employment.

### **3.2 Specific aims of the Group Award**

The award aims to give candidates the knowledge and understanding and the practical experience necessary to support adults with dyslexia in learning and workplace settings.

Candidates completing this award will have demonstrated sound knowledge and understanding of:

- ◆ the nature and spectrum of dyslexia
- ◆ the remit and responsibilities of statutory and voluntary support agencies
- ◆ the difference between screening and assessment procedures used to identify adults with dyslexia
- ◆ appropriate strategies to support adults with dyslexia

and practical experience of:

- ◆ working with an individual with dyslexia to plan and develop strategies within a learning or workplace setting
- ◆ supporting that individual in a real situation
- ◆ reflecting and evaluating their own practice

**NB:** It should be noted that candidates completing this Professional Development Award will not be qualified to diagnose dyslexia. Such a diagnosis can only be given by an Educational or Occupational Psychologist. Candidates applying for the award should be made aware of the boundaries of their responsibility on completion of the qualification.

### **3.3 Target groups**

The PDA is designed to meet the needs of a wide range of candidates. It is primarily for people in the public, private and voluntary sectors who are working with adults in a variety of learning and workplace settings. It is particularly relevant to paid staff and volunteers who are working in informal and formal education, recruitment and human resources, health or social care settings, prison, probationary and ex-offender services.

It will be of value to those, working in these fields, who wish to gain accreditation. It could also be used as a specialist qualification for those working in adult literacy.

### 3.4 Employment opportunities

Candidates who have successfully completed the PDA may be able to seek employment in a range of education and educational support environment. They may also use the award as evidence of knowledge and practice to work in a voluntary capacity.

## 4 Access to Group Award

There are no prescribed entry requirements for this Award. However, candidates will require to demonstrate competence in *Communication* skills. This may be evidenced by a qualification at SCQF level 5 or above — for example *Communication* at Intermediate 2, or an SVQ level 2 which has the Core Skill of *Communication* embedded in the qualification, or by workplace experience and/or competence in communicating in an educational or support for learning setting.

For the first Unit F16Y 34 *Dyslexia: Understanding and Supporting Individuals with Dyslexia*, candidates should have good communication skills and some experience, paid or voluntary, of working with individuals in a variety of settings such as guidance, information, learning, training, care.

For the second Unit F171 34 *Dyslexia: Working with Individuals with Dyslexia*, candidates should have good communication and interpersonal skills. They should be working in either a paid or voluntary capacity in a tutoring or supporting role with individuals in a learning or workplace setting. To undertake this Unit they will need to identify and secure the agreement of an individual with dyslexia or showing dyslexic traits with whom they can work for the purposes of completing the Unit.

Each Unit is free-standing and can be delivered as such, particularly for purposes of continuing professional development. This will be particularly valuable for candidates undertaking F16Y 34 *Dyslexia: Understanding and Supporting Individuals with Dyslexia*, with roles in initial guidance and information in relation to gain a good level of knowledge and understanding of dyslexia but who will not be working with individuals on an on-going basis.

It is recommended that candidates who are working over a period of time with individuals in learning, training, care and continuing support should undertake both Units.

Ideally candidates undertaking the full PDA should complete F16Y 34 first, in order to gain the theoretical knowledge of dyslexia in individuals.

## 5 Group Award structure

The award is comprised of two HN Units, both at level 7.

### 5.1 Framework

| Unit title   | Code    | SCQF credit points | SCQF level | SQA credit value |
|--|---------|--------------------|------------|------------------|
| Dyslexia: Understanding and Supporting Individuals with Dyslexia | F16Y 34 | 1                  | 7          | 8                |
| Dyslexia: Working with Individuals with Dyslexia                 | F171 34 | 1                  | 7          | 8                |

### 5.2 Mapping information

The award has been mapped against existing qualifications relating to dyslexia. It has been also measured against other HN Units in related areas, eg Support for Learning- to ensure that the allocated level is consistent and meets the benchmarks for SCQF level 7.

### 5.3 Articulation, professional recognition and credit transfer

This award has no direct articulation to other qualifications but could provide evidence and support acceptance to a range of qualifications such as SVQs and HNDs.

With regard to professional recognition, the Group Award can offer evidence to support applications but at present offers no direct professional recognition.

There is no direct credit transfer at present for the Group Award. However, candidates who have successfully completed the original HN Unit for Dyslexia, D9AD 04 *Understanding the Needs of Adults with Dyslexia*, may be considered for Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) for the new Unit F16Y 34 *Dyslexia: Understanding and Supporting Individuals with Dyslexia*.

## 6 Approaches to delivery and assessment

It is strongly recommended that the Unit F16Y 34 *Dyslexia: Understanding and Supporting Individuals with Dyslexia* should be delivered first as the knowledge and understanding gained in this Unit underpins the delivery of the second Unit F171 34 *Dyslexia: Working with Individuals with Dyslexia*.

With regard to learning and teaching, there is scope within the Unit F16Y 34 for visits to centres which specialise in support for adults with dyslexia, and for visiting speakers/practitioners.

The second unit is designed to be delivered through a mixture of taught group sessions; individual tutor contact; and time spent in supporting an individual with dyslexia or showing dyslexic traits. The type of support will vary depending on the nature of the relationship between the candidate and the individual.

An adult literacy tutor will spend more time in one-to-one contact with the individual than an extended learning coordinator in an FE College or a Human Resource Officer. However, the latter two may spend more time in arranging external support such as assessment and equipment and arranging and reviewing on-going internal support.

For the purposes of the unit, the candidate must spend sufficient time in one-to-one contact with the individual to be observed working with them.

The suggested delivery period for this Unit is 20 weeks to ensure adequate time between group sessions for the required practical work to be completed.

Centres should be mindful that the purpose of the award is to enable candidates to acquire an understanding of dyslexia with particular reference to adults. Centres should encourage a holistic approach to the understanding of dyslexia with particular reference to adults, rather than concentrating solely on literacy and numeracy. They should look at the impact of dyslexia on:

- ◆ family
- ◆ community
- ◆ working and social life
- ◆ emotional wellbeing
- ◆ cognitive and functional ability

The practice-based element of the Group Award will include observation of the candidate working with an individual in a real situation.

Candidates should be encouraged to recognize that there are beneficial as well as difficult or challenging aspects to dyslexia.

### **Core Skills**

In the two Units there is no automatic certification of Core Skills. However, there may be opportunities to gather evidence towards certification of the Core Skills of:

- ◆ Communication (in Outcome 1 of both Units)
- ◆ Problem Solving (in Outcome 1 in Unit F16Y 34 and Outcome 2 in Unit F171 34)
- ◆ Working with Others (in Outcomes 1 and 2 of Unit F171 34)

### **Open Learning**

Unit F16Y 34 can be undertaken by a formal teaching programme. Some aspects of this may be undertaken by Open or Blended Learning. However, this method is not appropriate for the practical components in the Unit F171 34 *Dyslexia: Working with Individuals with Dyslexia*.

Details for the assessment procedures for each of the two Units are given in the specifications.

## 7 General information for centres

### Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website [www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).

### Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used within this/these Group Award(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](http://www.sqa.org.uk)).

**Resource Packs have been developed and information on these is contained in Appendix 1.**

## 8 General information for candidates

The Professional Development Award (PDA): Supporting Individuals with Dyslexia in Learning and Workplace Settings is comprised of two Higher National Units:

F16Y 34 *Dyslexia: Understanding and Supporting Individuals with Dyslexia*  
F171 34 *Dyslexia: Working with Individuals with Dyslexia*

Each Unit has the value of 1 credit at SCQF level 7 (8 SCQF points).

This award will give you both the knowledge and understanding of the nature and implications of dyslexia and the practical experience of working with an individual with dyslexia. It will help you to identify ways in which to build on an individual's strengths in order to help minimize his/her weaknesses. It will thus enable you to provide more effective and appropriate support when faced with clients who are dyslexic or who display dyslexic traits.

It should be noted that this Award will **not** qualify you to assess or diagnose dyslexia in an individual. Such an assessment or diagnosis can only be made by an educational or occupational psychologist.

This award is relevant to people (paid staff and volunteers) working in informal and formal education; recruitment and human resources; health and social care, including prison, probationary and ex-offender services.

You should have good communication skills and some experience, paid or voluntary, of working with individuals in settings such as guidance or information, or in a learning, training, or care environment.

Both Units can be undertaken as free-standing Units. The first Unit *Dyslexia: Understanding and Supporting Individuals with Dyslexia* is valuable if you are providing initial guidance and information and need to gain a good level of knowledge and understanding of dyslexia. However, if you are working over a longer period of time with individuals in a learning, training, care or continuing support role it is recommended that you should undertake both Units, as successful completion of both Units entitles you to the Group Award — the PDA Dyslexia: Supporting Individuals with Dyslexia in Learning and Workplace Settings.

Ideally, when working towards the Group Award, Unit F16Y 34 should be undertaken before Unit F171 34 in order to gain the required theoretical knowledge of dyslexia in individuals.

To undertake Unit F171 34 you should be working in either a paid or voluntary capacity, in a tutoring or supporting role with individuals in a learning or workplace setting. You will need to identify and secure the agreement of an individual with dyslexia or showing dyslexic traits with whom you can work for the purposes of completing the Unit.

## 9 Glossary of terms

**SCQF:** This stands for the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework, which is a new way of speaking about qualifications and how they inter-relate. We use SCQF terminology throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF visit the SCQF website at [www.scqf.org.uk](http://www.scqf.org.uk)

**SCQF credit points:** One HN credit is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points. This applies to all HN Units, irrespective of their level.

**SCQF levels:** The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HN Units will normally be at levels 6–9. Graded Units will be at level 7 and 8.

**Subject Unit:** Subject Units contain vocational/subject content and are designed to test a specific set of knowledge and skills.

**Graded Unit:** Graded Units assess candidates' 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 candidates to retain and adapt their skills and knowledge.

**Dedicated Unit to cover Core Skills:** This is a non-subject Unit that is written to cover one or more particular Core Skills.

**Embedded Core Skills:** This is where the development of a Core Skill is incorporated into the Unit and where the Unit assessment also covers the requirements of Core Skill assessment at a particular level.

**Signposted Core Skills:** This refers to the opportunities to develop a particular Core Skill at a specified level that lie outwith automatic certification.

**Qualification Design Team:** The QDT works in conjunction with a Qualification Manager/Development Manager to steer the development of the HNC/HND from its inception/revision through to validation. The group is made up of key stakeholders representing the interests of centres, employers, universities and other relevant organisations.

**Consortium-devised HNCs and HNDs** are those developments or revisions undertaken by a group of centres in partnership with SQA.

**Specialist single centre and specialist collaborative devised HNCs and HNDs** are those developments or revisions led by a single centre or small group of centres who provide knowledge and skills in a specialist area. Like consortium-devised HNCs and HNDs, these developments or revisions will also be supported by SQA.

## 10 Appendices

Appendix 1: Information on Support Packs

Appendix 2: Useful addresses

## Appendix 1: Information on Resource Packs

The Dyslexia Working Party has developed Resource Packs to support delivery of both Higher National Units.

These can be downloaded by dyslexia trainers from:

[www.dyslexiaworkingparty.org.uk](http://www.dyslexiaworkingparty.org.uk)

Each Resource Pack contains:

- ◆ a Tutor Guide giving an overview of the Unit, a sample scheme of delivery and a comprehensive list of background reading and useful websites
- ◆ a Student Guide giving an overview of the Unit and a comprehensive list of background reading and useful websites
- ◆ Tutor Support Notes, Handouts, Group Exercises, PowerPoint Presentations and Assessment Guidelines related to each of the Unit Outcomes

The Resource Packs are not designed as the definitive or only method of delivery of the Higher National Units. However they do provide centres with guidance for delivery that is customised to meet the requirements of the Unit specifications.

All the material in the Resource Packs can be photocopied for distribution to candidates, with exception of the Sample Assessment Report in Outcome 3 of F16Y 34 which is subject to copyright.



## Appendix 2: Useful addresses

Dyslexia Scotland  
2nd Floor, East Suite  
Wallace House  
17-21 Maxwell Place  
Stirling FK8 1JU  
Tel: 01786 44 66 50  
Email: [info@dyslexiascotland.org.uk](mailto:info@dyslexiascotland.org.uk)

Education Scotland  
Optima Building  
58 Robertson Street  
Glasgow G2 8DQ  
Tel: 0141 282 5265  
Email: [don.mackie@educationscotland.gov.uk](mailto:don.mackie@educationscotland.gov.uk)

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