Group Award Specification for:

PDA Acute and Community Care

Group Award Code: GP4R 48

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Contents

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 HEIs of the aims and purpose of the qualification.
♦   provide details of the range of learners the qualification is suitable for and progression opportunities.

This validation proposal is for the:

Professional Development Award (PDA) in Acute and Community Care SCQF level 8

This new award is designed to provide a specialist and robust qualification in acute and community care for Assistant Practitioners in healthcare (Career Framework (CF) level 4). This award will equip them with the range of knowledge, specialist skills, and values to enable them to improve professional practice and patient care and to promote continuous professional development.

The Health Care context in the early part of the 21st Century in Scotland continues to evolve to meet the demands of the population to maintain and improve high quality, safe, effective and patient-centred care (The Health Quality Strategy for NHS Scotland — Scottish Government 2010). Scottish Government Policy has highlighted the need for a workforce that will be able to meet the present and future healthcare needs through robust training and educational programme delivery, A Force for Improvement: Scottish Government (2009); A Guide to Education and Role Development for Health Care Support Worker (2010). In response to the challenges identified within workforce planning by local NHS Boards, early strategic discussions identified the potential for new and innovative training and educational provision to meet both the national policy drivers and local workforce plans for Health Care Support Workers (HCSW) at levels 3 and 4 on the Career Framework (CF) NHS Scotland Career Framework (2009) Scottish Government; A Guide to Education and Role Development for Health Care Support Worker (2010); Everyone Matters: 2020 Workforce Vision Scottish Government (2013).

With the changing delivery of healthcare away from the acute environment and into the community and the individual's own home it is becoming more and more imperative to ensure that the carers who provide these services receive appropriate training, this is especially relevant with the increasing number of individual receiving 'acute' care in their own home. In addition, this qualification supports the delivery of NHS Scotland's 20/20 vision where specific tasks and caseloads could be delegated to appropriately trained staff. This would in turn relieve pressure on the existing registered workforce. This initiative is supported by NHS Lothian and NHS Borders.

The Higher National Diploma (HND) Care and Administrative Practice was written to provide a qualification for Assistant practitioners at CF 4 however, due to the strained economic climate within healthcare a more 'user friendly' qualification is required. This PDA has been developed using some of the existing HND Units which have been updated and a number of new units have been specifically developed to meet the needs of the service. The qualification has been designed so that additional optional units can be added and it is the intention of the Qualification Development Team to add units in digital health and mental health.

This qualification has been designed for those already in employment in a health care community or acute setting. The PDA is set at Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) level 8 and therefore some prior relevant qualification at SCQF level 7 is recommended, the optimum route into this programme would be the Higher National Certificate (HNC) Care and Administrative Practice although other qualification may be appropriate such as Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ) level 3.

Competences and National Occupational Standards (NOS) describe the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to undertake a particular task or job to a nationally recognised level of competence. NOS are tools to help individuals, organisations and training providers to improve performance. Skills for Health, the body responsible for developing NOS for the UK health sector, has created an extensive database of competences each referring to a different health-related function. The NOS for support workers at CF level 4 were considered in designing this new qualification and the standards have been mapped and embedded throughout the award. This ensures the award matches the requirements at CF level 4 to the appropriate SCQF level and through this provides a rigorous education and training framework for Assistant Practitioner roles. To illustrate this, Table 1 shows the education and training requirements for each level of the CF linked to the equivalent level on the SCQF levels.

The Assistant Practitioner role is therefore aligned at level 4 on the CF. The educational requirement for a potential employee at CF level 4 is a qualification at SCQF level 8.

Table 1: Overview of Career Framework Matched to SCQF levels

	NHS Career Framework	Matched SCQF level
9	More Senior Staff	
8	Consultant Practitioners	
7	Advanced Practitioners	
6	Senior Practitioners	
5	Practitioners	9
4	Assistant Practitioners	8
3	Senior Healthcare Support Workers	7
2	Healthcare Support Workers	5/6
1	Support Workers	

The new Professional Development Award in Acute and Community Care has been developed to address the changing skills mix of the National Health Service in Scotland, in response to the need identified by NHS Lothian and NHS Borders. The introduction and development of support workers has been identified as one way of developing and modernising the community workforce in order to be responsive to current and future needs. Currently Senior Healthcare Support Workers carry out both skilled and unskilled tasks within the acute and community environments and receive little or no recognition for the enormous contribution that they make to the care and wellbeing of individuals. In addition, prior to this PDA, there has been no qualification they can undertake to progress their career to Assistant Practitioner level. This award has therefore been written to meet this educational and career progression gap for Senior Healthcare Support Workers.

The core group of stakeholders was available throughout the design process to advise on the structure of the qualification and the content of the award as well as to ensure continuity and progression. The specialist units were written or updated by professionals who are working in their respective fields thereby ensuring that content of the units is relevant and fit for purpose for the professions and for the scope of the work and roles undertaken by support workers.

There is no nationally recognised qualification for Assistant Practitioners in this field in Scotland and it is anticipated that the PDA will meet the needs of the profession and be the appropriate qualification for Health Boards. It has been designed to strengthen and support the workforce through knowledge, skills and tools that offer a consistent approach, safe practice and the promotion of health and wellbeing as well as continuous professional development. This qualification should be recognised by employers as best practice in the training and upskilling of the current workforce of SHCSW and Assistant Practitioners in Acute and Community Care. To date, there are a number of employers who are awaiting the validation of this programme.

2 Qualification structure

The qualification is made up of two mandatory units and 10 optional units.
A mapping of Core Skills development opportunities is available in Section 5.3.

2.1 Structure

This qualification is a group award; Professional Development Award in Acute and Community Care at SCQF level 8.

The qualification is made up of two mandatory two units (see Table 1) and optional units from which the candidate should chose 4 credits (see Table 2) totalling 7 credits.

Mandatory units

Table 1

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J1KH*	35	Evidence Based Practice, Decision Making, Research and Audit in a Care Setting	2	16	8
J1KJ	35	Leadership, Team working and Accountability in Care	1	8	8

Optional units

Table 2

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J1KK	35	Policy, Legislation and Standards in Community Care	1	8	8
J1KP	35	Palliative and End of Life Care	2	16	8
J1KL	35	Developing Effective Practice in Community Care	1	8	8
FN66	35	Care of the Acutely Ill Adult	2	16	8
J1KM*	34	Health Promotion in a Changing Society	2	16	7
FN5X	35	Pharmacology	1	8	8
FN65	35	Promoting Nutrition and Hydration	1	8	8
FN60	35	Contemporary Health and Social Care Perspectives	2	16	8
FN67	35	Disease Processes and Pain Management	2	16	8
FN68	35	Public Health: An International Perspective	1	8	8
J38V *	35	Approaches to Mental Health	2	8	16

Refer to history of changes for revision details

3 Aims of the qualification

This award aims to give candidates the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding to improve their own practice and to ensure that the care they provide meets industry and service user standards and expectations.

3.1 General aims of the qualification

The overall aim of this award is; to equip those who are currently working as support workers to enhance their practice through learning, to further develop their skills by equipping them with the necessary tools to offer a consistent and reliable service to clients.

The qualification has the following general aims:

1   Provide academic stimulus and challenge.
2   Develop study skills.
3   To provide knowledge and personal effectiveness.
4   To develop transferrable skills including the following Core Skills of *Communication, Problem Solving, Working with Others* and *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*.
5   To develop negotiation and enhanced communication skills.
6   Develop employments skills and provide opportunities for career planning and enhancing candidates' employment prospects.
7   Enable progression within the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework and into further or higher education.

3.2 Specific aims of the qualification

1   Develop and apply a broad range of specialised vocational knowledge and skills.
2   Develop/build on co-operative working skills.
3   Develop underpinning knowledge that enables integration of theory and practice.
4   Develop inter-professional working practices.
5   Develop and awareness of legal issues, data management and ethical considerations.
6   Enable the development of reflective practice.
7   Develop the ability to work co-operatively with others.
8   Develop the underpinning knowledge that enables integration of theory and practice.
9   Provide the competences required by employers.

3.3 Graded unit

There is no graded unit for this qualification.

4 Recommended entry to the qualification

This qualification has been designed for those already in employment in a health care community or acute setting. The PDA is set at SCQF level 8 and therefore some prior relevant qualification at level 7 is recommended, the optimum route into this programme would be the HNC Care and Administrative Practice although other qualification may be appropriate such as SVQ level 3

Entry to this qualification is however 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 as guidance only.

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	6	Good communication skills are required for learners undertaking this qualification. Learners will be required to read, understand and evaluate a range of documentation and participate in class discussions. Learners will be required to produce written assignments.
Numeracy	6	Learners will be required to have basic numeracy skills as measuring device will be used and also mathematics skills will be required during basic medication, weight and fluid balance calculations.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	6	Learners will be required to research using the internet, books and papers. Learners will also be required to submit assignments that re word processed and submitted via anti-plagiarism software when appropriate.
Problem Solving	6	Problem solving skills. Reflective evaluations of how the learner applies theory to practice and works to resolve patient care challenges.
Working with Others	6	Participation in group exercises. Interaction with training providers, clients and colleagues. This skill will be further developed through current employment or placement.

5 Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs

This qualification was designed to meet a specific purpose and what follows are details about 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 general qualification aims to units

Code	Unit title	General aims								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
J1KH 35*	Evidence Based Practice, Decision Making, Research and Audit in a Care Setting	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
J1KJ 35	Leadership, Team working and Accountability in Care	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
J1KK 35	Policy, Legislation and Standards in Community Care	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
J1KP 35	Palliative and End of Life	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
J1KL 35	Developing Effective Practice in Community Care	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
FN66 35	Care of the Acutely Ill Adult	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
J1KM 34*	Health Promotion in a Changing Society	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
FN5X 35	Pharmacology	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
FN65 35	Promoting Nutrition and Hydration	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
FN60 35	Contemporary Health and Social Care Perspectives	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
FN67 35	Disease Processes and Pain Management	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
FN68 35	Public Health: An International Perspective	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		

5.1.1 Mapping of specific qualification aims to the units

Code	Unit title	Specific aims								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
J1KH 35*	Evidence Based Practice, Decision Making, Research and Audit in a Care Setting	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J1KJ 35	Leadership, Team working and Accountability in Care	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J1KK 35	Policy, Legislation and Standards in Community Care	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J1KP 35	Palliative and End of Life	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J1KL 35	Developing Effective Practice in Community Care	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
FN66 35	Care of the Acutely Ill Adult	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J1KM 34*	Health Promotion in a Changing Society	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
FN5X 35	Pharmacology	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
FN65 35	Promoting Nutrition and Hydration	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
FN60 35	Contemporary Health and Social Care Perspectives	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
FN67 35	Disease Processes and Pain Management	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
FN68 35	Public Health: An International Perspective	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

5.2 Mapping of units to core dimensions

The knowledge and skills framework used by the National Health Service across the UK has identified six core dimensions that are linked directly to specific job levels identified in the Agenda for Change. These dimensions are:

1 Communication
2 Personal and People Development
3 Health Safety and Security
4 Service Improvement
5 Quality
6 Equality and diversity
7 People Management

Each job role within the NHS has an expected level of competence identified each of these dimensions as described in Table 1.

The levels of expected competence for an Assistant Practitioner working at CF level 4 in the Agenda for Change framework are identified for each dimension in Table 1.

Table 1

Code	Unit title	Core dimensions						
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
J1KH 35*	Evidence Based Practice, Decision Making, Research and Audit in a Care Setting	X			X	X	X	
J1KJ 35	Leadership, Team working and Accountability in Care	X	X	X	X	X	X	
J1KK 35	Policy, Legislation and Standards in Community Care	X	X	X	X	X	X	
J1KP 35	Palliative and End of Life	X						
J1KL 35	Developing Effective Practice in Community Care	X	X	X	X	X	X	
FN66 35	Care of the Acutely Ill Adult	X	X	X		X	X	
J1KM 34*	Health Promotion in a Changing Society	X	X	X	X	X	X	
FN5X 35	Pharmacology	X	X	X		X	X	
FN65 35	Promoting Nutrition and Hydration	X	X	X	X	X		
FN60 35	Contemporary Health and Social Care Perspectives	X	X		X	X		
FN67 35	Disease Processes and Pain Management	X	X	X	X	X		
FN68 35	Public Health: An International Perspective	X	X		X	X		

5.3 Mapping of units to National Occupational Standards

This is a sample mapping, the achievement of NOS will be determined by the candidate's workplace role.

Code	Unit title	National Occupational Standards									
J1KH 35*	Evidence Based Practice, Decision Making, Research and Audit in a Care Setting	SS03	GEN32	GEN62	CHS156	HI4.2010	HI10.2010	HI18.2010	PHS08	GEN13	SCDHSC0033	HI18.2010
J1KJ 35	Leadership, Team working and Account-ability in Care	GEN36	CFAM&LDB8	SS03	GEN32	GEN62	GEN23	GEN13	GEN33	GEN35	SCDHSC0033	
J1KK 35	Policy, Legislation and Standards in Community Care											
J1KP 35	Palliative and End of Life	CHS38	CHS52	CHS57	CHS97	CHS122	FMH13	GEN62	CHS44	CHS65	CHS85	CHS89
		GEN20	GEN111	GEN99	CM C5	CHS152	MH3.2013					
J1KL 35	Developing Effective Practice in Community Care	GEN39	SCDHSC0031	CHS53	CHS89	CHS232	CHS231	CHS233	GEN27	GEN39	GEN75	GEN97
		GEN98	GEN122	MH3.2013	SS02	CFAM&LEC4	LANACP6v2					
FN66 35	Care of the Acutely Ill Adult	CHS47	CH HM1	CH HM2	CC07	SCDHSC0385	CHS88	CHS99	GEN44	CC01	CC03	CC02
		CHS 151	CHS36	CHS38	CHS56	CHS58	CHS57	CHS152	GEN32	GEN62	GEN13	CHS224
		CHS39	CHS18	CHS92	CHD02	CHS126	CHS41	CHS11	CHS12	CHS13	CHS15	CHS16
		CHS2	CHS9	CHS22	CHS74	CHS46	CHS47	CHS98	CHS173	CHS177	CHS183	CHS72

Code	Unit title	National Occupational Standards									
		CHS 124	CHS164	GEN5	GEN69	GEN58	GEN39	Diab HA13	MH3.2013	LANACP6v2	CHS19.2012
J1KM 34*	Health Promotion in a Changing Society	CMG4	HWB13	GEN52	GEN32	PHP06	PHP07	PHP02			
FN5X 35	Pharmacology	GEN32	GEN62								
FN65 35	Promoting Nutrition and Hydration	CH HM2	CHS57	CHS56	CHS58	CHS59	CHS61	GEN32	GEN62	CHS92	CNH8	CHS92
		GEN5	CHS17.2012	Diab HD7	Diab HD6	Diab HD4	Diab HD3	Diab HD2	Diab HD8	PE5	PE6	PE8
		CHS68	CHS93	CHS92	CHS146	CHS147	CMC2	CMC5	CHHM1	CHHM2	DIAB HA1	MH3.2013
FN60 35	Contemporary Health and Social Care Perspectives	CHS46	CHS231	GEN23	GEN63	PHP02	PHP01	PHP03	PHP04	PHP05	PHP10	PHP011
FN68 35	Public Health: An International Perspective	PHP02	PHP01	PHP03	PHP04	PHP05	PHP10	PHP11			

5.4 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualification

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
J1KH 35*	Evidence Based Practice, Decision Making, Research and Audit in a Care Setting	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X		
J1KJ 35	Leadership, Team working and Accountability in Care	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J1KK 35	Policy, Legislation and Standards in Care Community	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
J1KP 35	Palliative and End of Life	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J1KL 35	Developing Effective Practice in Community Care	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
FN66 35	Care of the Acutely Ill Adult	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J1KM 34*	Health Promotion in a Changing Society	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
FN5X 35	Pharmacology	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
FN65 35	Promoting Nutrition and Hydration	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
FN60 35	Contemporary Health and Social Care Perspectives	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X		
FN67 35	Disease Processes and Pain Management	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
FN68 35	Public Health: An International Perspective	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		

5.5 Assessment strategy for the qualification

Unit	Assessment				
	Outcome 1	**Outcome 2**	**Outcome 3**	**Outcome 4**	**Outcome 5**
Evidence Based Practice, Decision Making, Research and Audit in a Care Setting	Critical evaluation through a case study of 2,000 words.			Research or audit project from candidates workplace.	
Leadership, Team working and Accountability in Care	Integrated essay assessment of 2,500 words.				
Policy Legislation and Standards	Research assignment of 200 words.				
Palliative and End of Life	Integrated candidate generated case study assessment of 2,500 words.		Integrated 'seen' case study with questions assessment of 2,500 words.		
Developing Effective Practice in Community Care	Integrated assessment using case studies, reflective accounts or reports.				
Care of the Acutely Ill Adult	Integrated case study of 2,500 words.		Achievement of work based competencies.	Reflective account of 1,500 words.	
Health Promotion in a Changing Society	Integrated essay assessment of 1,500 words.		Individual Research project with group presentation of all findings.		
Pharmacology	Closed book short answer questions.	Closed book Case studies assessment.			
Promoting Nutrition and Hydration	Open book case study 1,500-2,000 words.		Practical assessment via work based competencies.		
Contemporary Health and Social Care Perspectives.	Integrated research assignment.		Evaluation of a current public health campaign.		
Disease Processes and Pain Management	Closed book exam of 20 questions.		Case Study of 1,500 words.		
Public Health: an international perspective	Integrated assessment comprising group presentations and individual supporting submissions of 500 words.				

6 Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment

The qualification is a Professional Development Award in Acute and Community Care. It comprises two mandatory units of 3 credits and 10 optional units from which the candidate must chose 5 credits.

This PDA is not eligible for direct entry as the award is designed to further develop the knowledge, understanding and skills of those working in acute or community care. The candidate therefore must be employed as a Senior Healthcare Support Worker in an acute or community care setting.

The units teaching allocation is 40 notional hours per credit.

It is recommended that where specialist knowledge is required, appropriately qualified and experienced tutors deliver these units.

The approach to delivery and assessment in this new qualification is varied in order to give the candidates and centres a variety of teaching, learning and assessment approaches and a wide range and combination of teaching, learning and assessment methods may be used by centres. The following suggested delivery methods could be adopted by centres:

♦ lectures
♦ tutorials
♦ study packs
♦ problem based scenarios
♦ case studies
♦ group work
♦ presentation
♦ online materials
♦ IT based teaching materials
♦ projects
♦ Virtual Learning Environments

Whilst some units can be delivered through open/e-learning, it must be remembered that the entire award cannot be delivered via this route, principally due to the practical units which assess occupational competence. Throughout delivery, candidates should be set clear standards in terms of presentation of information. It is recommended that standard referencing conventions such as the Harvard referencing system are used throughout so that candidates are confident about using wider evidence in support of research and academic reporting. This should also ensure compliance with copyright and avoid issues of plagiarism. Centres must ensure that they have suitably qualified staff and appropriate resources and equipment for delivery of these qualifications.

6.1 Sequencing/integration of units

It would be preferable for a candidate undertaking this qualification to complete the mandatory units first as this will be the underpinning theory for the optional units.

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

This qualification is not designed to articulate with a particular degree programme.

6.2.2 Professional recognition

This qualification is not a professionally recognised award.

6.3 Opportunities for e-assessment

It is anticipated that the units in this award could be taught and assessed using blended teaching and assessment approaches.

6.4 Support materials

At the time of writing there are no assessments prepared for this award.

6.5   Resource requirements

The PDA is a specialist award and it is recommended that it is delivered by centres that have the knowledge and understanding of working with acute and community nursing care practitioners. Centre staff should be able to demonstrate this knowledge and understanding, particularly as they will be supporting learners who already work in the field. It is recommended that centre staff are registered nurses.

In addition, for centres wishing to deliver the competency units of PDA it is essential to have access to appropriate practical resources to be able to teach the necessary clinical skills.

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/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:

♦ candidates 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 candidates 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 candidates for the unit which has been revised where they are expected to complete the unit before its finish date.

Version Number	Description	Date
04	**Unit code corrected:** J1KM 35 Health Promotion in a Changing Society corrected to J1KM 34 Health Promotion in a Changing Society J1KM	17/11/23
03	**Unit title amended:** J1KH 35 - Evidence Based Practice, Research and Innovation in Care changed to "Evidence Based Practice, Decision Making, Research and Audit in a Care Setting"	13/05/22
02	**Revision of Unit:** J38V 35 "Approaches to Mental Health" added to Optional Units	30/10/19

Acknowledgement

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges 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. Due to the changing and increasing demands on care provision in Scotland this qualification has been developed to support the increasing number of acutely and chronically ill individuals who are cared for in their own homes. This requires that staff caring for these individuals to have the appropriate training. It is the aim of this qualification to provide that training.

Over the last few years the Scottish Government has published a number of papers describing the changing approaches aimed at ensuring better health care and the evolving roles of the range of professionals involved in providing that care. The outcome of this analysis has included the emergence of posts within NHS Scotland at Senior Health Care Worker and Assistant Practitioner level across a range of occupational areas. This award therefore comes at a time of on-going change and challenges facing the national health service. This award is aimed at those already employed within the sector seeking to improve skills and to meet the emerging job opportunities and requirements, particularly in community care. The new award will strengthen skills and career development within the sector. This qualification framework, starting with the HNC Care and Administrative Practice, provides a career pathway for Senior Healthcare Support Workers at CF level 3 (SCQF level 7) to progress to Assistant Practitioner roles at CF level 4 (SCQF level 8). This PDA therefore supports progression and increases the skills base within the workplace. In addition, the nature of the subject area encourages reflective practice and independent learning and the award structure promotes the ongoing development of specialist skills supported by transferrable skills developed through knowledge, understanding and application.

Aim of the award

There is no nationally recognised qualification for Assistant Practitioners in this field in Scotland and it is anticipated that the PDA will meet the needs of the profession and be the appropriate qualification for Health Boards. It has been designed to strengthen and support the workforce through knowledge, skills and tools that offer a consistent approach, safe practice and the promotion of health and wellbeing. This qualification should be recognised by employers as best practice in the training and upskilling of the current workforce of Assistant Practitioners in Acute and Community Care.

This qualification has been designed for those already in employment in a health care community or acute setting. The PDA is set at SCQF level 8 and therefore some prior relevant qualification at level 7 is recommended, the optimum route into this programme would be the HNC Care and Administrative Practice although other qualifications may be appropriate such as SVQ level 3.

The qualification is a Professional Development Award that is made up of 12 units of a variety of credit values. The candidate must undertake the two mandatory units and from the 10 optional units the candidate must undertake a total of 5 credits.

The assessment process in the Award covers a variety of approaches from group presentations, essays, research projects, clinical competences and exams. The assessments will be determined by the units the candidate chooses to undertake.

Currently there is no articulation pathway from this Award but the qualification would enable candidates to apply for entry to a variety of related degree programmes.