

## Unit Support Notes — Scottish Studies: Scotland in Focus (SCQF level 4)



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

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# Introduction

These *Unit Support Notes* are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the *Scottish Studies: Scotland in Focus (SCQF level 4)* Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers and should be read in conjunction with:

- ◆ the *Unit Specification*
- ◆ the *Award Specification*
- ◆ the *Award Support Notes*
- ◆ assessment support materials

# General guidance on the Unit

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

The aim of this Unit is to allow learners to broaden their existing knowledge of Scotland in terms of its people, its languages, society, culture, natural and built environment and/or heritage. They will do this by planning and completing an activity with a Scottish focus and reflecting on what they have learned.

If this Unit is being delivered as part of the *Scottish Studies Award* at SCQF level 4, learners will already be studying — or will have studied — in a Scottish context across three different subject areas. They can therefore use this Unit to develop their knowledge of Scotland further, with support, in a number of ways. For example, they could choose a Scottish focus in a subject area, or across subject areas, which they have already studied in a Scottish context. Alternatively, the focus could be in a **new** subject area or areas.

Whether the Unit is being delivered as part of the Award or as a free-standing Unit, learners must be given the opportunity to broaden their knowledge in an area that is of interest to them. Therefore, centres must ensure that the focus for the activity will allow learners to broaden, not simply consolidate, their existing knowledge of Scotland.

## Skills, knowledge and understanding

Learners who achieve this Unit will develop skills that are important for successful independent learning. They will learn to:

- ◆ make appropriate choices
- ◆ select relevant information from chosen sources
- ◆ use information and resources to achieve a chosen aim
- ◆ reflect on their learning
- ◆ identify what they have learned in some detail and communicate this appropriately

This Unit is at SCQF level 4. It is therefore appropriate for teachers and lecturers to provide advice to learners which could help them to develop, and then demonstrate, these skills. Advice should be aimed at building confidence to encouraging them to work towards a greater degree of independence.

Although the skills learners need to demonstrate are specified, there is no mandatory knowledge or understanding for the Unit. Centres and learners are free to choose any Scottish focus for their activities in light of the resources available and the context in which the Unit is being delivered. The focus for an activity could be on, **for example**:

- ◆ Scots or Gaelic

- ◆ discoveries, inventions or innovations of Scottish origin
- ◆ a specific Scottish community/communities
- ◆ a historical event or development
- ◆ an aspect of Scottish culture, for example, food, traditions, sport, folklore
- ◆ an issue of historical and/or contemporary importance
- ◆ industry or commerce
- ◆ an aspect of life in rural and/or urban Scotland
- ◆ a Scot of influence at home or abroad
- ◆ external influences on Scotland and its culture
- ◆ Scottish literature, performing or visual arts, or crafts
- ◆ an aspect of religion/religious belief in Scotland
- ◆ places of interest and/or importance in Scotland, or to the Scots
- ◆ an aspect of the natural or built environment
- ◆ the Scottish diaspora
- ◆ immigration
- ◆ the representation of Scotland and/or the Scots in, for example, film, literature, the media, art and design
- ◆ facts and fictions about Scotland

This list is not exhaustive. It provides an illustration of the extensive range of potential areas of study for this Unit.

# Approaches to learning and teaching

## Planning activities

Appropriate learning and teaching approaches will depend upon the resources and expertise available in each centre. They will also depend on the prior experiences, strengths and interests of learners. However, in all centres, these approaches must provide opportunities for learners to broaden their existing knowledge of Scotland and to develop the skills required to achieve the Unit. Learners will therefore need time, as well as guidance from their teachers and lecturers, to help them reflect on their existing knowledge of Scotland and choose an appropriate focus for further study. They will also need guidance on the nature of the skills involved.

Before learners begin to plan their activities, teachers and lecturers should help them to understand the skills and knowledge they will need to demonstrate in order to achieve the Unit. This could be through, for example:

- ◆ teacher or lecturer initiated discussion with opportunities for questioning and learner feedback
- ◆ the provision and discussion of a checklist that learners can use to monitor their progress through the Unit
- ◆ group, paired or whole class discussion of the skills learners will need to develop and why these are important

Teachers and lecturers could also use a variety of techniques to help learners reflect on their existing knowledge of Scotland, for example:

- ◆ structured paired, group or whole class discussions
- ◆ one-to-one discussion with individual learners
- ◆ mind-mapping, or another suitable technique, followed by peer and teacher or lecturer feedback, and discussion
- ◆ structured questions which learners can reflect on individually followed by teacher or lecturer feedback and advice
- ◆ review of a reflective journal which learners have kept while progressing through the Award

## Aims and activities

A range of options will need to be made available to allow learners to choose an appropriate aim, an activity, sources of information and resources. The extent and nature of potential options will depend upon the resources and expertise available in the centre. However, sufficient options should be made available to allow for personalisation and choice. This will be important to ensure that each

learner has the opportunity to explore an aspect of Scottish Studies that is of interest to them.

Appropriate activities will also depend on learners' existing strengths and skills. Learners will need to use these strengths and skills to communicate clearly what they have learned. For example, learners who choose to create an art work or build a model will only be able to communicate clearly if they already have the skills required.

The following are examples of appropriate aims and activities. These examples are for illustrative purposes only — centres are encouraged to provide different options as appropriate to the context in which they are delivering the Unit.

<p><b>Example 1:</b> Learner <b>A</b> has enjoyed studying some poems in Scots as part of the SCQF level 4 English Course.</p>
<p><b>Aim:</b> To find out about the use of the Scots language in Scotland today.  <b>Activity:</b> Produce an information booklet on the use of the Scots language in Scotland today.</p>
<p><b>Example 2:</b> Learner <b>B</b> has enjoyed playing Scottish music as part of the SCQF level 4 Music Course and also enjoyed seeing the play 'Passing Places' with the English department.</p>
<p><b>Aim:</b> To learn about music that could be used to illustrate a journey within Scotland.  <b>Activity:</b> Plan and contribute to a musical performance which illustrates this journey.</p>
<p><b>Example 3:</b> Learner <b>C</b> has studied the Jacobite Rebellion as part of the SCQF level 4 History Course and has learned in Art and Design how some Scottish artists have used inspiration from their own life experience to create their art works.</p>
<p><b>Aim:</b> To learn about what life was like for ordinary families at the time of the Jacobite Rebellion.  <b>Activity:</b> Create an art work which has been inspired by the life experienced by ordinary families at this time.</p>
<p><b>Example 4:</b> Learner <b>D</b> has studied part of the SCQF level 4 English, Geography and Media Studies Courses in a Scottish context but has also enjoyed studying SCQF level 4 Chemistry.</p>
<p><b>Aim:</b> To find out about a Scottish chemist whose work has had a significant influence in this field.  <b>Activity:</b> Deliver a presentation about a famous Scottish chemist to the Chemistry class.</p>

<p><b>Example 5:</b> Learner <b>E</b> is taking the Unit on a free-standing basis and has an interest in religion.</p>
<p><b>Aim:</b> To find out about the different religions which are practised in Scotland today.</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Produce a report on the religions which are practised in Scotland today.</p>
<p><b>Example 6:</b> Learner <b>F</b> has been finding out, as part of the Skills for Work Travel and Tourism Course at SCQF level 4, that many people come to Scotland to visit places of natural beauty and/or historic interest.</p>
<p><b>Aim:</b> To find out about a specific place of natural beauty and/or historic interest in Scotland.</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Go on a field trip to a specific place and produce a tourist guide about the area.</p>

Further examples of potential aims and activities can be found in the *Support Notes* for the *Scottish Studies: Scotland in Focus* Unit at SCQF levels 3 and 5. These also help to illustrate potential options which could be adapted for SCQF level 4.

## Sources and resources

Learners must choose at least **two** sources of information, and the resources they will need, from a range provided by their teacher or lecturer.

Sources should be detailed enough to ensure learners must select information which is relevant to their aim. Appropriate sources of information could include, for example:

- ◆ relevant websites
- ◆ fiction or factual/reference books — in hard copy or electronic format
- ◆ a person or group
- ◆ brochures, journals, newspapers or information booklets
- ◆ seminars or presentations from external speakers
- ◆ television or radio programmes, or DVDs
- ◆ field trips or visits
- ◆ visual displays
- ◆ specialist catalogues and/or magazines

Some activities may require only basic resources such as, for example, access to a computer and the materials required to present their findings in hard copy. Other activities may require, for example, access to art or craft materials, space to practise for a performance, or specialist equipment to create a product. The number and type of resources required will therefore depend upon the activities chosen. This should be taken into account when planning the range of potential aims and activities which will be available to learners.



Learners can complete their activities on their own or as part of a group. When they are doing this, teachers and lecturers should monitor progress and provide feedback, as part of the learning and teaching process.

# Approaches to assessment and gathering evidence

## Timing and conditions

Assessment will take place throughout the Unit as learners plan and complete their activities, and reflect on their learning. Learners should have access to the information and the resources they have chosen. Teachers and lecturers can also provide advice to help them remain focused on the aim of their activity. A closed-book assessment is therefore not appropriate for this Unit.

## Gathering evidence

The nature of the evidence produced to demonstrate achievement will depend on the aims and activities learners have chosen. Evidence could be:

- ◆ written, oral or electronically recorded
- ◆ generated through the creation and delivery of a performance that is supported by an assessor observation checklist
- ◆ generated through the planning and creation of a product such as, for example, an art work, craft item or model
- ◆ generated through the planning and carrying out of a practical activity such as a Scottish focused event or field trip
- ◆ a combination of the above

It will be possible to generate evidence for both Outcomes in an integrated way. This is because, for learners who achieve the Unit, the preparation and end product will contain evidence that they have planned and completed their activities, and reflected on their learning. For example, using the examples activities given in the *Approaches to learning and teaching* section above:

- ◆ in example 1, the information booklet will provide evidence that the activity has been planned and completed. The content of the booklet will provide evidence that the learner has identified what she or he has learned and communicated this clearly.
- ◆ in example 2, the performance, confirmed by the assessor, will provide evidence that the activity has been planned and completed, and the learner has communicated some of the learning. Notes, a logbook, blog or journal kept during the development process would also provide further evidence that the learner has identified and communicated their learning clearly.
- ◆ in example 3, the art work will provide evidence that the activity has been planned and completed, and that the learner has communicated some of the learning. An electronic or hardcopy annotated workbook, sketchbook or folio used to help develop ideas for the work would also provide further evidence that the learner has identified and communicated their learning clearly.

Whichever form the evidence takes, centres must ensure that this evidence is each learner's own work. When learners are working under supervision, teachers or lecturers will be able to observe that this is the case. When learners are working independently, teachers and lecturers could use one-to-one interviews or on-going questioning about progress as ways of authenticating the evidence.

### **Judging the evidence**

When making and verifying assessment decisions, teachers and lecturers must remember that the focus of assessment is on the learner's knowledge of their Scottish focus and on skills which are important for successful independent learning. All evidence must be judged against the Outcomes, Assessment Standards and Evidence Requirements in the *Scottish Studies: Scotland in Focus (SCQF level 4) Unit Specification*.

The focus of assessment is **not** on subject specific technical skills such as creative writing, technical drawing, using tools or performance skills. However, learners must communicate their learning clearly. They are unlikely to be able to do this if they do not already have the skills required to express themselves through the medium they are using.

# Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality 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.

Approaches to assessment should take account of the specific needs of learners. However, centres must ensure that the validity of the assessment is maintained and that all approaches to assessment have the potential to generate evidence of achievement covering both Outcomes and all Assessment Standards.

# 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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