



COMMUNICATION
SCQF Level 5
40 Hour Unit (F3GB 11)

CORE SKILLS UNIT

ASSESSMENT SUPPORT PACK

Part 1: Information for tutors

What is involved?

This Unit is designed for delivery in schools, colleges, workplaces, community, and other learning environments. The content should involve tasks and skills that are suited to the requirements of the individual learner. The focus of the Unit is on transferable communication skills:

- reading, summarising, and evaluating
- writing
- speaking and listening

These skills should be useful to learners in their education, in their social and personal lives, or in current and future jobs.

For this Unit, learners are expected to be able to communicate with others through extended documents and discussions, and to complete tasks with little support. The Unit is designed for those who have skill or experience in communicating in the workplace, in public, in the community, or in education and training. The work undertaken in assessments may have some complex aspects and will require knowledge or experience of formal communication. The Unit might be suitable for learners who are currently working towards other qualifications at SCQF levels 4 or 5, eg National Qualifications or SVQs.

Communication tasks can be combined with other Core Skills activities, such as those for Working with Others, Problem Solving, or Information and Communication Technology (ICT). If you are adopting this approach, remember that records must be kept for each of the Units.

Assessment and evidence

Learners at SCQF level 5 are required to deal with language that is sometimes complex and conveys different strands of information or ideas, not all of which will be familiar from the everyday context. They should require little support in completing their tasks.

When assessing by observation, you must keep a detailed checklist. Similarly, if you use oral questioning, you must keep a record of both the questions and the learner responses. All evidence, whether produced by the learner or a record made by yourself, must be retained, signed, and dated by you.

This Unit is not just about assessing a minimum number of tasks. Rather, it should be used as a tool for developing the range of skills. In reading, it is important that you encourage the learners to read widely from a range of documents with different themes, styles, and formats, used in different contexts, eg in work, leisure, or education. Similarly, learners should experiment with a variety of writing formats and styles, practising formal and informal styles, using graphics and supporting materials, and writing for different audiences, before attempting an assessment task. Speaking and listening skills, in discussion and in delivering presentations on familiar and unfamiliar topics, should be developed over a period of time, to build confidence and technique.

Practising and developing expertise in a range of contexts will emphasise to the learners that these skills are not limited to a particular subject, course of study, or workplace situation but can be used in all areas of their lives.

Reading

You should choose well-structured reading material on a non-fiction topic that learners may have been expected to encounter through a general awareness of vocational or current issues. The reading material should combine factual content with analysis or present a sustained point of view. It may sometimes feature unfamiliar, abstract ideas and complexity in tone, point of view, or central argument.

The reading material may have more than one purpose, eg to inform and report, or evaluate; to express a reaction and to persuade. The topic should be one that learners may reasonably be expected to encounter through their personal, workplace, educational, or social experiences.

The reading material may include images as well as words. It may use some specialist/technical vocabulary and complex sentence structure.

The length of the chosen reading text should be appropriate to level 5 i.e. between 500 and 800 words.

Writing

You should use a task for assessment that is relevant to the learners in their personal, workplace, educational, or social environment. Documents may include images such as maps, sketches, diagrams, or photographs in support of the written text. These may be created by learners or selected from a bank of images. The document will have a clearly defined purpose and audience.

Information, ideas, or arguments will be well presented in a logical order, with the main points supported by adequate detail. Learners will use appropriate vocabulary, including specialist or technical terms, and sentence structures. A few errors may be present when learners are using complex syntax or vocabulary, but these should not be significant.

Learners will produce one piece of writing of at least 500 words (or a number of related pieces) that conveys several pieces of information and/or a clearly stated opinion. If there are a number of pieces, one of these must contain no fewer than 300 words. Document(s) can be handwritten, or word processed.

Speaking and listening

The oral communication must be one spoken interaction between the learner and one or more people. This may be either a discussion (lasting a minimum of four minutes) or the learner may give a short presentation lasting a minimum of three minutes, with an additional one minute for questions.

A discussion should have a clear purpose, be on a relevant topic, and allow for exploration and the reaching of conclusions. The learner must make a significant contribution.

A presentation must include significant interaction with the audience. It may be supported by images using information technology software or multimedia tools.

You will establish learner competence by observation of the spoken interaction referring to the evidence requirements, supplemented where necessary by questioning.

Planning

You should work out where opportunities for meeting the standard are likely to arise. You should discuss the assessment process with learners so that they clearly understand what is expected of them.

Guidance on the Unit

What learners need to know or be able to do

The Unit states that learners will:

When reading:

- pick out the important ideas and supporting detail in a piece of non-fiction writing
- evaluate a piece of writing in terms of its aim or purpose (eg is it clearly laid out, has the writer chosen an appropriate format, does it contain all the information that a reader would need, does it present both sides of a difficult issue, how complete is the information, is it well-structured, does it use appropriate images, does it contain appropriate vocabulary, including technical/specialised words where necessary?)

When writing:

- choose a format for the piece of writing that is appropriate to the readers and the subject matter (eg a report, minutes of a meeting, blog, or article)
- choose layout, structure, vocabulary, and graphics (if appropriate) that make the piece of writing clear, suit the topic, and are appropriate for readers
- vary the sentence structure, paragraphing, and vocabulary to suit the purpose and intended reader(s)
- present the information/ideas with some supporting detail in a logical order, linking related information or ideas
- highlight the main points in the piece of writing
- use spelling, grammar, and punctuation accurately (eg structure of sentences, clauses, tenses of verbs, capital letters, full stops, commas, question marks, dashes, brackets, colons, and semi-colons)

When speaking and listening:

- express spoken ideas clearly (eg by choosing language that fits the topic and the situation, and that the listeners understand; speaking clearly and loudly enough; varying speed and tone; pausing at appropriate points)

- present the information/ideas with some supporting detail in a logical order, linking related information or ideas (eg a presentation with a beginning/overview, middle section with information in logical sequence, conclusion/summary of main points; making a contribution to a discussion stating and expanding on an opinion)
- emphasise the main points (eg through tone, gestures, and volume of speaking)
- use body language to support delivery (eg by smiling, leaning forward, using appropriate gestures, and making eye contact)
- listen carefully to what others say, taking account of their contribution and responding accordingly (eg by responding to their point of view; explaining their own point of view; repeating information; giving extra information; summarising; rephrasing; asking questions to clarify anything which they do not understand; exploring subjects in greater depth)

Assessment guidance, together with some suggested activities, is contained in Part 2.

Reading

Reading skills can be developed and assessed by using or adapting material related to the working, learning, or social environment of learners. Available documents might include articles, reports, advertising materials, letters or e-mails, workplace policies and procedures, and instruction manuals.

Picking out the important ideas and supporting detail

Learners will need to know how to pick out all the important points that the writer is making and the detail that supports these ideas. They should be encouraged to look at how the writer identifies the subject of the document. This could be the title or subject line of an e-mail or a letter, an eye-catching headline, or even a picture on an advertising portfolio. Within the document, there will be important points the writer does not want the reader to miss. Sometimes these are in bigger or bolder print, or set out in bullets, numbered, or underlined. Another way of highlighting important points would be to separate a longer piece of writing into paragraphs, so that each important point starts on a new line. The writer may also use diagrams, photographs, or other graphics to draw attention to important points. It is important that learners are aware of the line of reasoning in a document that may express different points of view or suggest a number of reasons why a situation has arisen.

Making links between key information/ideas and the supporting detail

Learners should demonstrate their ability to identify the links between supporting detail and the main points in the document. This may involve pulling together material from different parts of the document or interpreting certain lines of argument. Learners must be careful not to ignore sections or paragraphs that may provide background or additional information. They should slow down and read more carefully when they come to information that is important. Alternatively, they could mark or note where the important information is, so that they can return to it later.

Evaluating a piece of writing

Learners should be able to judge the effectiveness of the communication. They will need to decide how useful the information was. In dealing with a difficult issue, was the subject covered in enough detail, conveying all the information that the reader required? Did the learner judge that the layout, use of language, and graphics were effective in making the meaning clear?

Deciding whether or not a piece of writing has achieved its aim or purpose

When deciding whether or not the piece of writing has achieved what it set out to do, the learners must consider the aim or purpose. For example, if the purpose was to persuade the reader to purchase a new product range, then the specifications, pricing structures, and delivery details should all have been set out clearly, in a logical order, and in a language that could be understood by the intended reader, even though technical terms may have been included.

Learners are not required to work out the purpose of the piece of writing in order to pass. You can tell them this as part of the assessment instruction. However, they do need to know the purpose in order to evaluate successfully.

Identification of intended reader is not essential for level 5, but it may be useful for candidates to consider readership during evaluation and in preparation for Tasks 2 and 3.

Writing

At this level, learners will normally produce written communications as part of their working, educational, or personal routine. Suitable writing tasks may not occur naturally, and you may have to set a special assessment.

Writing for the reader

Learners need to decide whom they are writing for and why (eg to inform, instruct, advise, or persuade). They should be clear about the main messages and make sure the way they write is appropriate for readers both in content and style, eg a report for the managing director or an article for a local newspaper will normally be more formal than a round-robin letter or e-mail to a friend living overseas. Learners should be able to state clearly their reason for producing the written piece. There may possibly be more than one purpose, eg to inform and persuade, or to inform and advise.

Choosing a suitable format

Different formats are appropriate for different situations. The content of the document will influence the choice of format, eg whether to write a formal report on the success of the internal training plan for the past year or an e-mail forwarding the minutes of a parent–teacher meeting to the entire group.

The choice of subject will also influence whether the communication is completed in handwriting or produced electronically. In reality, in today's workplaces, and in many educational and social contexts, and at this level, learners will almost certainly produce their task electronically.

Choosing layout, structure, vocabulary, and graphics

Thinking about the potential readers, the content, and the format will help learners select an appropriate structure and layout. In a workplace or college context there may well be a prescribed way of writing reports, letters, and e-mails, in which case this should be adhered to, though sometimes the writer may be allowed to influence the appearance of the finished piece. Supporting items, eg maps, diagrams, pie charts, and photographs, can be included in support of the text. These may be selected from a bank of images or created by the learners.

Varying sentence structure, paragraphing, and vocabulary

Learners should be able to vary the structure of sentences, eg simple or complex; use paragraphs and/or bullet points; select and use vocabulary that

is appropriate to the purpose of the document and the intended readers. Every organisation has its own specialist or technical vocabulary and learners will need to understand and use this if writing for internal readers. However, when writing for non-specialists, or for more general readers, more straightforward vocabulary and structure should be used to aid understanding. The communication will have failed if it is pitched at a level inappropriate to the readers.

Presenting information in a logical order

Learners should be able to write in a clear, logical order by, for example, linking introduction, main body, and conclusion, using paragraphs and headings as appropriate to the format of the document. Within each section, the main ideas should be expressed first, or given prominent placing, with supplementary information following. At this level, learners may wish to separate out detailed supporting material as an appendix.

Learners should demonstrate the ability to select information or ideas that are relevant to the main messages of the written communication and avoid including any material that may be interesting but has little bearing on their aim in writing the piece. Information will be presented and analysed, with selection and highlighting of the most significant details. Ideas and opinions will be developed and supported by evidence.

Learners may find it useful to prepare for this writing task by asking colleagues, tutors, teachers, or other learners for the information they need. They can also use existing internal documents as background and consult textbooks, journals, library, and internet for source material.

Highlighting the main points

Prominence can be given to significant words or phrases by their order within the document, placement in relation to other words, and repetition. Common conventions can be used to highlight important points, eg large or bold type, bullet points, or underlining.

Spelling, punctuation, and grammar

Spelling, punctuation, and grammar should be consistently accurate. Learners should make sure that the words they use most often are spelled correctly, which at this level may include specialist words, technical terms, or abbreviations. Learners should check words they are unsure of, using a dictionary or spell-checker. They will be expected to comply with grammatical

structures by constructing sentences and clauses correctly and using the correct tense and agreement for verbs. The main punctuation conventions should be followed (eg use of capital letters, full stops, commas, question marks, dashes, brackets, colons, and semi-colons).

Improving on an initial draft

Learners should read their document to check that the ideas and information they have put together can be clearly understood, and that format, layout, and structure are appropriate to the reader and topic. They should also proof-read for grammatical or spelling errors before editing and redrafting. At least one further check should be made before producing a final version.

Speaking and listening

Naturally occurring discussions on any aspect of work, education, community, or social life offer opportunities for assessment. Alternatively, learners may wish to give a short presentation or demonstration about a particular project, hobby, community activity, or topical issue, fielding questions from the listeners to demonstrate listening skills.

Expressing ideas clearly

Learners should know how to prepare for important conversations or discussions, making sure they know what they want to say. They should choose vocabulary that is appropriate to the topic and that the listeners will understand. If technical words or abbreviations are used that are unfamiliar to the listener, these should be explained. They should be able to use some of the most common spoken conventions to aid understanding, eg by speaking slowly, clearly and loudly enough; varying speed and tone for emphasis; pausing to allow for a response from the listener.

Presenting information/ideas with some supporting detail in a logical order

Learners should understand how to present spoken information logically. One indicator of the importance of topics is the order in which information is presented: usually the most important idea first, which is often repeated at the end for emphasis. This is particularly important when giving instructions. Prominence can be given to significant words or phrases by their order, placement in relation to other words, and repetition. They should be able to construct a speech or presentation with a recognisable structure, ie beginning, middle, and conclusion. Sometimes a summary can be an effective way of drawing the discussion or presentation to a close.

Emphasising the main points

Learners should understand how to use tone, gesture, and volume to emphasise the main points when speaking, eg deliberately stressing a point; rising intonation when asking a question; use of fingers to identify and count off the main points in a summary; speaking louder to stress certain important words.

Using body language

Body language is a valuable clue to the mood and intention of the speaker. It is the unspoken supplement to the spoken words, and the speaker should consciously make use of this. It can convey confidence or diffidence, transparency or concealment, interest or indifference. Learners should be encouraged to try to look as relaxed as possible (even if they are nervous) and smile (if it is appropriate to do so). The main indicators are posture, eye contact, facial expression, and gesture. There is a range of gestures that enhance the spoken message, eg opening the hands in a welcoming gesture, nodding or shaking the head. Some gestures are more akin to formal signs, eg putting the hand up in a response to a question or pointing when giving directions.

Listening carefully

It is important that learners listen carefully to what others say, allowing them the opportunity to ask questions or to offer points of view. It is often appropriate to pause at intervals while speaking to encourage others to contribute or ask questions. The speaker should be prepared to provide clarification on vocabulary, specific topics, and on the general sense of what has been said, rephrasing if necessary to aid understanding. Learners should also seek clarification from other speakers if they need to and explain their own point of view.

Gathering evidence

It may be appropriate for you to gather written evidence produced by the learner while carrying out the practical activities. However, written evidence is not essential for the reading and speaking/listening elements of this Unit and is inappropriate if it disadvantages the learner.

From the learner's point of view, it is useful to have the means of keeping all the work of this Unit together. You can help here by creating and providing a workbook that includes all the evidence-gathering items. An alternative would be to provide worksheets that can be made into a portfolio.

If you have chosen to integrate the Communication work with that of other Units being undertaken by the learner, it may be possible to do combined assessment as part of a larger single activity. In this case you must keep separate records that show all standards being met in each Unit.

General guidance on assessment evidence for this Unit

Assessment activities for Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening can be designed to assess each task separately, or as one large assessment activity designed to cover all standards across all three tasks within this unit. Evidence must not be collected from assessment activities that cover only part of a task.

For the Reading task, the assessment activity should focus on one reading text and the evidence collected should demonstrate the learner's ability to summarise and evaluate that text only. The evidence for this task can be collected over more than one occasion and with no time restriction, within reasonable limits.

For the Writing task, the assessment activity should focus on one theme for the written piece or pieces. The evidence for this task can be collected over more than one occasion and with no time restriction, within reasonable limits.

For the Speaking and Listening task, the assessment activity should focus on one presentation or discussion conducted on one occasion and observed by the assessor.

All assessment activity for this unit is open book and it is the centre's responsibility to ensure that the evidence collected is the learner's own work.

Reading

Read a well-structured piece of non-fiction writing. They may then write a short report, or the assessor may ask questions and make notes or record what they have said.

Writing

Produce a document (or a series of related documents) totalling at least 500 words that is concerned with the presentation and analysis of information and/or with developing an opinion or argument. At least one of the documents should be a substantive piece of no fewer than 300 words.

Speaking and listening

Take part in a discussion or give a short talk to one or more people with questions and answers. The assessor will observe and make notes or a recording of the discussion. The learner should also keep a brief record explaining the situation (eg who was present, what was being discussed, and what was the purpose of the discussion). This record might include any plan that the learner developed for their presentation/discussion.

Evidence for the Unit as a whole may be gathered in a variety of ways. Some typical activities might be:

- summarising the benefits and possible side effects of a medication discussed on a website, evaluating how well the text has conveyed the key messages
- summarising the main points of a review of a new computer game, evaluating how well-balanced and interesting the review was
- writing minutes of a class meeting, including the detail of issues discussed
- producing a report on the options for new premises for a drama club with appropriate subdivisions and headings
- taking part in a meeting with neighbours to decide on the best course of action in response to a problem with vandalism
- giving a presentation on the learner's interest in rap music, supported by visual aids, and responding to questions from the audience.

Disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual learners 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.

Part 2: Assessment guidance

You can use the exemplar assessments given in this section in several ways:

- to help identify the type and amount of evidence that the learner needs to produce
- to help identify the level of complexity in evidence required for this Core Skill at this level
- to help you create an assessment task related to the learner's own situation.

Some possible tasks are suggested overleaf.

Part 3 contains generic exemplar planning sheets and assessment checklists that you may use as they are. However, you may also adapt these to reflect the detail of the tasks you decide to set.

Task 1: Reading a well-structured piece of non-fiction writing

The document should consist of well-structured material on a non-fiction topic that combines factual content with analysis or presents a sustained point of view. It may sometimes feature unfamiliar, abstract ideas and complexity in tone, point of view, or central argument. The reading material may have more than one purpose, eg to inform and report and evaluate; to express a reaction and to persuade. The topic should be one that learners may reasonably be expected to encounter through their personal, workplace, educational, or social experiences. The reading material may include images as well as words. It may use some complex vocabulary and sentence structures that allow for exemplification.

The length of the chosen reading text should be appropriate to level 5 i.e. between 500 and 800 words.

Evidence for any reading assessment may be presented as answers to questions or in the form of a written or oral report, supplemented by responses to questions if necessary.

Assessors and internal verifiers are responsible for ensuring that the reading text used for assessment satisfies the requirements of level 5 in terms of complexity and length.

Personal/social context

- 1 Select one or more articles from your local paper reporting on a new development (eg housing or retail development). Produce a short report on the main issues, identifying key points in each article and evaluating the strengths and weaknesses (eg bias or emotive approach) of each piece of writing chosen.
- 2 Look up a website of one of the leading weight-management organisations. Identify the main methods suggested for weight-management, commenting on how effective each part of the information was in adding to the main argument.
- 3 Choose a specialist magazine, eg on home improvements or music. Read one or more articles and summarise the key information, including any interesting supporting detail. Evaluate how persuasive the material was in encouraging readers to follow this pursuit or hobby.

Educational context

- 1 Consult a textbook that deals with study techniques, eg mind-mapping or speed-reading. Comment on the effectiveness of the way the information was presented and how convincing the arguments were for using this particular technique.
- 2 Access an online encyclopaedia that provides information on a study topic, eg Egyptian dynasties or demographic changes in the UK. Identify and comment on the methods used for presenting information and whether or not the supporting information enhanced the main topic.

Workplace context

- 1 Senior management has issued a lengthy notice inviting comment about proposed changes to the layout of the supermarket, complete with diagrams and sketch maps. Identify the main issues and the detail corresponding to each of these. Summarise the information and produce evaluative comments.
- 2 Read a suggested event pack for a one-day event, which includes an agenda, delegate list, synopsis of speeches, and workshop choices. Summarise the main content, then evaluate the materials.
- 3 Read a briefing document advising staff on the way customer care should be delivered and the responsibilities of sales staff. Identify the main points and evaluate the effectiveness of the document for use in staff training.

Task 2: Writing — producing a document (or series of documents) totalling at least 500 words

Learners will produce one piece of writing of at least 500 words (or a number of related pieces) that conveys several pieces of information and/or a clearly stated opinion. If there are a number of pieces, one of these must contain no fewer than 300 words. Document(s) can be handwritten, or word processed. Learners should be encouraged to write the word count at the end of their assessment.

Documents may include images such as maps, sketches, diagrams, or photographs in support of the written text. These may be created by the learner or selected from a bank of images. The learner will use appropriate vocabulary, including specialist or technical terms, and sentence structures. The document will have a clearly defined purpose and audience. Information will be presented and analysed, with selection and highlighting of the most significant ideas. A few errors may be present when learners are using complex grammar or vocabulary, but these should not be significant.

Personal/social context

- 1** Design and write a newsletter on local services for the community, which could include additional graphics. Pull together interesting and useful items, eg schools, transport, waste disposal, entertainment, and leisure facilities.
- 2** Write a letter or article for a newspaper, setting out a persuasive argument supporting or opposing a local issue that is causing public concern, eg plans to install an industrial-size wind farm in a beautiful location or the potential closure of a local post office.
- 3** Write a letter advising a friend on whether or not to ask for their twin 5-year-olds to be put into separate classes when they begin school. State the main arguments clearly.

Educational context

- 1** Write an essay supporting or opposing single-sex/co-educational schooling, presenting both sides of the argument but stating your own position unambiguously.
- 2** Produce a portfolio of written documents tracing work completed on a research project, eg a summary of internet research; notes taken when conducting interviews; evaluation of the usefulness of each piece of information researched; final short report.

- 3 Collate and present the results of laboratory experiments, summarising the results and making recommendations.

Workplace context

- 1 Create a chart that will help in matching products to clients of a beauty salon. It should clearly identify the therapy services provided in the salon; the products to be used for each; the composition and features of each product.
- 2 Write an article for a local newspaper, identifying the range of services now offered within the town library and trying to persuade more people to use the facility. Currently, a large section of the public is unaware of some features, eg internet access and family-tree searches.
- 3 Write a report to the Traffic Manager, setting out your concerns about the increasing workload being imposed on yourself and other drivers. Point out the difficulties experienced by drivers dealing with very tiring working conditions, eg driving throughout Europe; extended time away from home; increased paperwork.

Task 3: Speaking and Listening —participating in a discussion, or delivering a presentation

The oral communication must be one spoken interaction between the learner and one or more people. This may be either a discussion (lasting a minimum of four minutes) or the learner may give a short presentation lasting a minimum of three minutes, with an additional one minute for questions. A discussion should have a clear purpose, be on a relevant topic, and allow for exploration and the reaching of a consensus. The learner must make a significant contribution. A presentation must include significant interaction with the audience. It may be supported by images using information technology software or multimedia tools. The topic should be one that is relevant to the learner's experience. You will establish learner competence by observation of the spoken interaction, supplemented where necessary by questioning of the learner.

Personal/social context

- 1** Deliver a talk describing research into family history, supported by family-tree diagrams, photographs, memorabilia, or other material.
- 2** Parents are worried that their children's walking route to school is not safe, due to the increase in heavy traffic. Discuss what could and should be done, and recommend individuals who should be approached to help solve this problem.
- 3** Hold a meeting to debate whether or not the community should formally oppose the plans for a new supermarket in the locality.

Educational context

- 1** Discuss and decide on the criteria for a class representative. The group must reach a consensus.
- 2** Deliver a presentation to try to encourage your college/school class to support a specific charity. Identify the value of this organisation, describe the work it does, and emphasise the benefit of an educational link.
- 3** Interview a group of staff and discuss with them any issues surrounding course provision, eg amount of assessment or length of self-study periods. Note and summarise input.

Workplace context

- 1** Discuss with a group of colleagues what might be done to improve and speed up baggage handling. Online and auto check-in has not achieved the expected reduction in traveller processing. Note recommendations.
- 2** Deliver a talk to staff, supported by some demonstration if appropriate, on the way that customer service might be improved if staff worked better as a team. Suggest some possibilities but also ask for ideas.
- 3** Deliver a staff briefing to identify the mandatory cleaning routine for your area of the hospital. Use supporting visual material and written checklists.

Additional information for assessors

The three communication tasks may be connected. For example, if the learner presents evidence for Task 1 in report format, the same document could provide full or partial evidence for Task 2, as long as it meets specific skill (and length) requirements for writing.

Similarly, a Task 1 report, or Task 2 writing exercise, could be used as part of the preparation for an oral presentation or discussion.

Assessors should ensure that reading texts are appropriate for this level in content, complexity and length.

A brief marking guideline should be drawn up to ensure consistency of reading assessment.

Part 3: Exemplar recording documentation

This section provides forms that can be used for planning and recording learners' results.

Planning sheets

Planning documents are tools that encourage wider learning around Core Skills Communication standards.

Planning sheets should not be used to assess summative assessment. They are intended for formative purposes only.

However, you can use these to help learners plan and/or provide supplementary evidence in support of assessment, if needed.

Assessment checklists

Assessment Checklists should be used to assess summative assessment.

Assessment Checklists contain the standards for Core Skills Communication at this level. The standards are in the Skills that learners must demonstrate to pass summative assessment.

You can use Assessment Checklists to make observation notes and record achievement for each task.

Planning sheets

The following documents should be used for learning and planning purposes only. Assessment Checklists in the next section should be used for summative assessment.

Planning sheet A for Task 1: Reading assessment

Use this sheet to help you prepare for assessment.

Learner:

Date:

Title of what you read:

Main aim or purpose of what you read: To...

What were the main ideas? List them briefly, in your own words.	
How did supporting detail link with main ideas (think about graphics, use of colour, examples, headings, etc)?	
How successful was the piece of writing in what it was trying to do? Would it work for the sort of reader it was intended for? Try to make at least three points, and back up by referring to ideas, choice of words, and style, as well as to conventions such as layout, graphics, etc.	

Planning sheet B for Task 1: Reading assessment

There are different ways of assessing your reading skill. Your tutor may ask you questions about what you have read and record your answers (Planning Sheet A will help you prepare for this).

Or you may be asked to write a short report on what you have read. The following format may help you with this.

Report on.....

Insert the title of the document you read.

1. Main ideas

Here summarise the main ideas of the document. You can use bullet points if you want to.

Then describe some of the supporting details, eg graphics, examples, etc, and explain, in full sentences, how they connect with or back up the main ideas.

2. Evaluation

Rate the piece of writing by commenting on its main strengths and weaknesses, giving evidence from the text to back up your points. Think about the writer's use of word, style, layout, and graphics. Your evaluation should keep in mind the aim or purpose of the piece of writing.

This evaluation section of your report is likely to be at least 100 words long.

Signature:

Date:

Don't forget to sign and date your report.

Exemplar reading report

Report on cannabis from

<https://www.talktofrank.com/drug/cannabis>

Look through the reading piece you are directed to by your assessor. This website is intended for anyone who wants to know more about drugs, their effects, how they are used, and the associated risks. It is intended for an adult reader, perhaps someone who uses drugs themselves or is thinking about it, or a parent who is worried about someone in their family. Its purpose is to inform and educate the reader.

1. Main ideas

The information covers:

- the mood altering effects of cannabis (relaxation to paranoia, how it affects judgment)
- the risks of cannabis (effects on breathing, lung cancer, reduced chances of having babies). Cannabis is addictive.
- The look and the smell and texture of different kinds of cannabis and the different ways people use cannabis, e.g. to smoke it, eat it, vape it.
- The duration of being high on cannabis is most potent in the first 10 minutes but it can last for 2 – 4 hours. However, it exists in urine 2 or 3 days afterwards.
- Dealers can mix cannabis with other substances to increase the weight and the profit of the drug. This could be harmful.
- the law (illegal class B drug; you can be arrested for possession and go to jail for 5 years; supplying is 14 years in jail; illegal to drive after smoking a joint).
- Being caught with small amounts of cannabis by the police can bring a warning. Second and more offenses can bring fines and a criminal record.

There is one picture on the page. This is at the top next to the title, 'Cannabis.' The picture shows different kinds of cannabis. Underneath the title, is a list of different names for cannabis. This is helpful to readers who might only know certain names of the drug or can only recognise it by sight. This supports the idea that this page is about giving information about cannabis to

a wide range of people.

2. Evaluation

This webpage is easy to understand for anyone who wants to know about cannabis. The main concerns that people might have are highlighted with coloured headings in a 'quick info' box at the start, and for each heading there is a 'read more' live link so you can easily jump to the section where there is more information. This is in tabs with a coloured cross beside each to indicate that there is more info that expands when clicked. When the tabs are closed, the page looks uncluttered and this allows you focus on single sections of information one at a time.

It is very informative, covering each aspect of the drug including health and legal risks. It tells you things you might not know. It is particularly useful in giving you street names so that you can recognise things like 'sinsemilla' and 'skunk'. It gives information using straightforward language and it tries to personalise this by using the word 'you' to make information more meaningful. For example, 'Cannabis changes how you think'. It explains difficult terms well for a general reader, eg 'hallucinogenic effects of cannabis are mainly due to a compound in cannabis called THC (tetrahydrocannabinol)'. Overall, this is an interesting and succinct source of information.

Signature: Bill Bloggs

Date: 29 April 2022

Planning sheet for Task 2: Writing assessment

Use this sheet to help you prepare for assessment.

Learner:	Date:
What will be the purpose of your writing?	
Who is your intended reader?	
What are the main points you intend to make? (For SCQF level 5 the writing should contain information and analysis and/or developing an opinion or argument.)	
What format will you choose that is appropriate to your reader(s) and purpose?	
How will you arrange structure and layout to make the writing clear?	
What graphics/images might you use to enhance the writing?	
What sources of information do you intend to use (eg people, class notes, textbooks or websites)?	

Planning sheet A for Task 3: Speaking and Listening

Use this sheet to help you prepare for assessment.

Oral presentation

Learner:	Date:
What do you plan to speak about?	
What will be the purpose of your presentation?	
Who will your audience be? Will they know you? Will they know anything about your topic?	
What main points will you make?	
How will you involve your listeners (eg by question and answer session at the end; use of questions at the start)?	
What visual aids might make your presentation more effective/interesting?	
What sources of information can you use (eg people, class notes, textbooks, or websites)?	
What sort of prompts might help you (eg cue cards or PowerPoint slides)?	

Planning sheet B for Task 3: Speaking and Listening

Use this sheet to help you prepare for assessment.

Discussion

Learner:	Date:
What will the discussion topic be?	
What will be the purpose of the discussion?	
Who will take part?	
What sources of information will you use to research your topic (eg people, class notes, textbooks, and websites)?	
What will your role be? What main points will you make?	
What are the roles of the rest of the group?	
What sort of prompts or visual aids might help you (eg cue cards, notes, and pictures)?	

Assessment checklists

The Skills in the following Checklists are the standards that learners must reach to pass summative assessment. All standards must be achieved.

Assessment checklist: Reading

Task 1: Read, understand, and evaluate well-structured written communication.

Learner:

Description of reading task:

Skills	Tutor feedback	Achieved (Yes/No)
Important ideas and supporting detail in a piece of non-fiction writing are identified.		
Links made between the key information/ideas and the supporting detail.		
Writing is evaluated in terms of its aim or purpose. Evidence to support evaluation includes reference to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• content• style• conventions, such as layout, graphics, and language.		

Tutor's signature:

Date:

Note: A suitable text will combine factual content with analysis or present a sustained point of view. It may use some complex vocabulary and sentence structures that allow for exemplification. It may include images as well as words. The text may have more than one purpose (eg to report and evaluate; to inform and persuade). It should be

between 500 and 800 words in length.

Assessment checklist: Writing

Task 2: Produce well-structured written communication.

Learner:

Description of writing task:

Word Count:

Skills	Tutor feedback	Achieved (Yes/No)
Format for piece of writing is appropriate to readers and subject matter.		
Layout, structure, vocabulary, and graphics (if appropriate) make communication clear, suit topic, and are appropriate for reader(s).		
Sentence structure, paragraphing, and vocabulary are varied to suit the purpose and intended reader(s).		
Information/ideas are presented in logical order with some supporting detail, linking related information or ideas.		
Main points in the piece of writing are highlighted.		
Spelling, grammar, and punctuation are used accurately.		

Tutor's signature:

Date:

Note: The writing task will have a clearly defined purpose and audience. Information will be presented and analysed with highlighting of the most significant details. Ideas/opinions will be developed and supported by evidence. The text may have more than one purpose (eg to report and evaluate; to inform and persuade). One piece of writing must be at least 500 words or if there are a number of related pieces, one of these must contain no fewer than 300 words.

Assessment checklist: Speaking and Listening

Task 3: Produce and respond to oral communication.

Learner:

Description of speaking and listening task:

Duration:

Skills	Tutor feedback	Achieved (Yes/No)
Conveys all essential information, opinions, or ideas with supporting detail, relevant to the purpose, accurately and coherently		
Shows skill in sequencing and linking information, opinions, and/or ideas		
Uses appropriate vocabulary and range of language structures (vocabulary, register and sentence structure) that are appropriate to purpose and audience		
Speaks loudly enough for listeners to hear and adjusts pace and modulation to meet needs of audience		
Makes appropriate use of body language		
Responds to others, taking account of their contributions		

Tutor's signature:

Date:

Note: Oral presentation must be of the required duration for SCQF level 5 (a minimum of three minutes, with an additional one minute for the candidate to address the audience's questions). There must be significant interaction with the audience. For discussion (lasting a minimum of four minutes) the candidate's contribution must be significant.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Credit value

6 SCQF credit points (1 SQA credit) at SCQF level 5



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History of changes

Edition	Description of change	Date
3	Task 1 - selection of texts for reading assessments (length and level of complexity); role of purpose in relation to evaluation; suggested generic questions. Task 3 – expected duration for oral presentations.	June 2020
4	All Tasks: Clearer definition of purpose given for planning documents and assessment checklists. Task 1: exemplar report updated to reflect Core Skills Communication standards more clearly.	March 2022
5	General guidance on gathering assessment evidence for all tasks in this Unit has been added.	November 2023

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