

# Next Generation Higher National Unit Specification

## Health, Safeguarding, Welfare and Rights (SCQF level 7)

**Unit code:** J6E3 47  
**SCQF level:** 7 (24 SCQF credit points)  
**Valid from:** session 2024–25

### **Prototype unit specification for use in pilot delivery only (version 2.0) August 2024**

This unit specification provides detailed information about the unit to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year.

This unit specification is for teachers and lecturers and contains all the mandatory information required to deliver and assess the unit.

The information in this unit specification may be reproduced in support of SQA qualifications only on a non-commercial basis. If it is reproduced, SQA must be clearly acknowledged as the source. If it is to be reproduced for any other purpose, written permission must be obtained from [permissions@sqa.org.uk](mailto:permissions@sqa.org.uk).

This edition: August 2024 (version 2.0)

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2022, 2024

## Unit purpose

This unit helps learners to understand the issues surrounding the health, welfare and rights of individuals who access provision of care from social services or educational settings. Learners will develop an understanding of determinants of health and wellbeing, welfare policy, and policies regarding sustainability. Learners will demonstrate an awareness of their responsibilities for safeguarding and following frameworks and guidance to ensure the safety of individuals. This understanding is necessary to provide care and support that meets regulatory standards, and it underpins all aspects of work with individuals who access social service provision of care.

Entry to the unit is at your centre's discretion. Learners should, however, have effective communication and interpersonal skills. They can demonstrate these with relevant qualifications at SCQF level 6 or experience of working in the social services or education sector.

This is a mandatory unit in Higher National Certificate (HNC) Social Services and HNC Childhood Practice. Learners can also complete it as a stand-alone unit for continuous professional development (CPD). Learners who complete the unit as part of the HNC Social Services or HNC Childhood Practice group awards may have the opportunity to progress to further study, including Higher National Diploma (HND) or degree level courses.

## Unit outcomes

Learners who complete this unit can:

- 1 explain the rights of individuals who receive care and/or educational services
- 2 explain contributory factors to physical health and mental wellbeing
- 3 reflect on their own role and responsibilities for promoting physical health and mental wellbeing
- 4 evaluate methods for promoting physical health and mental wellbeing
- 5 evaluate roles, responsibilities and methods for safeguarding
- 6 explain the role of inquiries in shaping policy and approaches to protect individuals
- 7 develop sustainability knowledge and understanding, and skills in a vocational context

## Evidence requirements

### Outcomes 1, 2, 5 and 6

Learners must provide knowledge evidence for these outcomes. This can be oral or written (or a combination of both) and captured in a range of media. It may be produced over a period of time in lightly controlled conditions and requires authentication.

To successfully achieve these outcomes, learners must provide the following evidence:

- ◆ Explain an equalities and human rights approach to care in Scotland with reference to relevant legislation, government policy frameworks and national statistics.
- ◆ Explain their responsibilities as a practitioner in upholding the rights and responsibilities of the individuals they support.
- ◆ Explain influences on physical health and mental wellbeing, with reference to reputable sources of information.
- ◆ Evaluate the need for and the impact of government policy frameworks on the health and wellbeing of the Scottish adult or child population, reflecting on how policy has changed over time, and using research and national statistics to illustrate their answer.
- ◆ Analyse how family, community, and political structure(s) and roles contribute to the physical health and wellbeing of an individual in their practice setting.
- ◆ Evaluate how trauma-informed practice and early intervention can support an individual's health and wellbeing, with reference to research evidence and their experience and role as a practitioner.
- ◆ Describe types of harm and abuse that can be experienced by children and adults.
- ◆ Describe indicators of possible harm and abuse.
- ◆ Explain the roles and responsibilities of practitioners and organisations for safeguarding individuals.
- ◆ Explain reporting processes within their practice setting and legislative requirements when it is known or suspected that an individual, or individuals, are at risk.
- ◆ Explain inquiries relevant to their work setting.
- ◆ Explain how inquiries have informed and shaped the policy and approaches used to protect individuals.

### **Outcomes 3 and 4**

Learners must provide product evidence for these outcomes. This takes the form of a risk assessment for which learners must collaborate with the individual and others in the practice setting to gather information on the individual's needs, wishes and aspirations, and the risks to the individual.

Learners must reflect on their role and responsibilities within the risk assessment process and evaluate the methods they used, while ensuring they met the individual's rights and responsibilities. They produce evidence of this through oral and/or written methods under lightly controlled conditions, with authentication.

### **Outcome 7**

For this outcome, product evidence takes the form of an evaluation, where learners have reflected on sustainable policies or processes in the context of the unit. This can be oral and/or written and captured in a range of media. It may be produced over a period of time in lightly-controlled conditions and requires authentication.

Learners gather evidence that demonstrates they can:

- ◆ identify and describe sustainability in the context of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs)
- ◆ explain how a policy or process relevant to their sector could be made more sustainable and help meet the aims of at least two selected SDGs

## Knowledge and skills

The following table shows the knowledge and skills covered by the unit outcomes:

Knowledge	Skills
<p><b>Outcome 1</b> Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ the principles of a human rights-based approach in Scotland</li> <li>◆ relevant legislation related to rights, equality, and confidentiality</li> <li>◆ rights-based codes of practice or conduct, standards and practice policies</li> <li>◆ the role of regulatory bodies</li> <li>◆ the relationship between legislation, policies, principles and care practice</li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcome 1</b> Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ identify and apply relevant legislation, standards, codes of practice and frameworks to practice</li> <li>◆ research and analyse statistics</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 2</b> Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ the relationship between physical health and mental wellbeing</li> <li>◆ health inequalities, policies and practices</li> <li>◆ the impact of family, community and political structures and roles</li> <li>◆ social determinants of health</li> <li>◆ the impact of trauma and life experiences</li> <li>◆ the importance of early intervention</li> <li>◆ how health and welfare policies have changed over time</li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcome 2</b> Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ explain physical health and mental wellbeing</li> <li>◆ interpret and analyse data from current research</li> <li>◆ evaluate the impact of factors on individuals' physical health and mental wellbeing</li> </ul>

Knowledge	Skills
<p><b>Outcome 3</b> Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ environmental threats to health and safety</li> <li>◆ health and safety legislation for accident prevention and infection control</li> <li>◆ preventative and protective measures, including infection control</li> <li>◆ their role and responsibilities according to service and practice standards</li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcome 3</b> Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ carry out comprehensive risk assessments</li> <li>◆ work collaboratively with others</li> <li>◆ work safely within relevant legislation and regulations</li> <li>◆ reflect on their role in the risk assessment process</li> <li>◆ evaluate how the individual's rights and responsibilities were met throughout the process</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 4</b> Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ how to balance rights, risk management and risk enablement</li> <li>◆ how to manage conflicting opinions about risk enablement</li> <li>◆ evidence-based risk assessment</li> <li>◆ an outcomes-focused approach</li> <li>◆ person-centred care</li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcome 4</b> Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ evaluate the models or methods they used in risk assessment</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 5</b> Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ risk factors for harm and abuse</li> <li>◆ legislation to protect individuals from harm and abuse</li> <li>◆ the role, responsibilities, and powers of the local authority to investigate and protect</li> <li>◆ the role of practice and service regulators</li> <li>◆ national frameworks</li> <li>◆ safeguarding policy frameworks</li> <li>◆ reporting procedures relevant to the workplace setting</li> <li>◆ their role in reporting actual or suspected risks to individuals</li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcome 5</b> Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ identify types of harm and abuse</li> <li>◆ identify indicators of harm and abuse</li> <li>◆ explain how to respond appropriately to actual or suspected harm and abuse</li> </ul>

Knowledge	Skills
<p><b>Outcome 6</b>                      Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ inquiries that are relevant to their work setting</li> <li>◆ how inquiries have shaped policy</li> <li>◆ how inquiries have shaped approaches used to protect individuals</li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcome 6</b>                      Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ identify relevant inquiries</li> <li>◆ discuss the main points of the inquiry</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 7</b>                      Learners should demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ a general understanding of sustainability and the UN SDGs</li> <li>◆ an understanding of subject-specific sustainability issues, how these relate to the SDGs, and potential improvements</li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcome 7</b>                      Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ review SDGs and assess own knowledge and understanding</li> <li>◆ review unit content against the SDGs to identify a sustainability-related issue</li> <li>◆ apply knowledge and understanding of sustainability and the SDGs to propose improvement</li> </ul>

## Meta-skills

Throughout the unit, learners develop meta-skills to enhance their employability in the social services and childhood practice sector.

### Self-management

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ focusing: researching, evaluating understanding on an ongoing basis through formative assessment
- ◆ integrity: discussing own values, ethics and personal development
- ◆ adapting: critical reflection, accommodating new ideas through research and practical experience
- ◆ initiative: independent research, collaborating with other professionals to share enthusiasm and knowledge

### Social intelligence

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ feeling: discussing own values and personal development, empathy, personal reflection, building relationships
- ◆ communicating: developed through collaborative working, sharing ideas and perspectives
- ◆ collaborating: teamwork, shared goals within practice

### Innovation

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ curiosity: research and observations to understand the link between theory and practice
- ◆ sense-making: holistic thinking, researching, evaluating understanding
- ◆ critical thinking: analysing research, making informed decisions

## Literacies

Learners develop core skills in the following literacies:

### Numeracy

Learners develop numeracy skills by:

- ◆ analysing research statistics within relevant data
- ◆ managing time-sensitive tasks



## **Communication**

Learners develop communication skills by:

- ◆ participating in spoken question and answer sessions, and small and large group discussions
- ◆ receiving and responding appropriately to verbal and non-verbal communication in the learning and care practice environments
- ◆ creating and responding to written and digital communications in the learning and care practice environments
- ◆ completing written assignments and accurately referencing sources of information
- ◆ collaborating with others within the practice setting

## **Digital**

Learners develop digital skills and computer literacy by:

- ◆ using digital platforms to access information to support learning and understanding
- ◆ using a PC or other devices to develop coherent portfolio and project work
- ◆ using digital platforms to engage with and collaborate with professionals and carers in the sector
- ◆ completing risk assessments using digital communication

## Delivery of unit

This 3-credit unit can be delivered as a stand-alone unit for CPD. When you deliver the unit as part of a group award, you can integrate teaching, learning and assessment with the mandatory core and optional units. You also have the opportunity for some integration with the core Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) units.

We recommend that you deliver the unit through lectures, group work, practical classroom activities, visiting speakers and visits to appropriate practice settings. There are a variety of media resources that you can use to support your delivery of the unit.

The notional design length of the unit is 120 hours. We suggest the following distribution of time, including assessment:

**Outcome 1** — Explain the rights of individuals who receive care and/or educational services.  
(21 hours)

**Outcome 2** — Explain contributory factors to physical health and mental wellbeing.  
(20 hours)

**Outcome 3** — Reflect on their own role and responsibilities for promoting physical health and mental wellbeing.  
(19 hours)

**Outcome 4** — Evaluate methods for promoting physical health and mental wellbeing.  
(18 hours)

**Outcome 5** — Evaluate roles, responsibilities and methods for safeguarding.  
(24 hours)

**Outcome 6** — Explain the role of inquiries in shaping policy and approaches to protect individuals.  
(6 hours)

**Outcome 7** — Develop sustainability knowledge and understanding, and skills in a vocational context.  
(12 hours)

You should support learners to carry out autonomous learning and independent research, and use tutorials and group exercises to consolidate learning.

## **Professional recognition**

This unit forms part of the HNC Social Services and HNC Childhood Practice framework. The HNC Social Services and HNC Childhood Practice meet registration requirements for the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

## Additional guidance

The guidance in this section is not mandatory.

In the unit, the term ‘individuals’ encompasses the wide variety of individuals using services in either social services or childhood practice settings. The term ‘practitioner’ encompasses the learner in a practice setting and other people involved in supporting individuals.

We expect learners to research areas of their own interest. They must also reflect on their work in a practice setting.

The unit explores current legislation, policy frameworks and practice related to health, welfare, and rights. Learners must reference relevant human rights and children’s rights legislation, both national and international. The unit explores the role of practitioners in helping individuals to participate in shaping the decisions that impact on their human rights.

Learners must research and understand how to respect rights, acknowledging equality, diversity, and inclusion. They develop a sound understanding of a human rights-based approach, and demonstrate the standards and principles of human rights in practice.

Learners understand the range of factors that can influence an individual’s physical health and mental wellbeing and understand the ‘barriers’ to health that can prevent positive outcomes. They examine the role of the socialisation and social determinants of health. Learners explore a variety of different factors and inequalities that impact physical health and mental wellbeing outcomes. They understand the correlation between inequality, protected characteristics, identity, stigma, wellbeing, poverty and health inequalities. They understand the impact and effects of trauma and life experiences and how to adapt their practice to support individuals. Learners can evidence the understanding of their responsibility in keeping individuals safe, being familiar with policy and procedures, and exploring early intervention and preventative and protective health measures.

Infection prevention and control remains significantly important in both social service and childhood practice settings. Learners should be able to reflect on this responsibility in their role as a practitioner.

Learners’ research could include aspects of health, such as oral health, diet, nutrition, hydration, physical activity, and mental health. They can research the current government measures in place to improve health outcomes for individuals in Scotland and evaluate how these have changed over time.

All new qualifications will now contain the skills, knowledge and values of Learning for Sustainability (LfS) as we work towards Scotland’s Learning for Sustainability Action Plan. Learners will therefore be given the opportunity to develop:

- ◆ a general understanding of the UN SDGs
- ◆ an understanding of subject-specific sustainability issues, how these relate to the SDGs and potential improvements
- ◆ the confidence to apply the skills, knowledge and understanding, and values developed through their learning in the next stage of their lives

NextGen: HN published prototype unit specification for use in pilot delivery only (version 2.0)  
August 2024

Learners will evidence their research and understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through describing the background and purpose of the SDGs. Learners will discuss the 3 pillars of sustainability — economic, environmental and social — and how they interlink. Learners could emphasise the social impacts of sustainability and how this relates to their own role.

Learners can evaluate how well policy or processes relating to their sector meet the SDGs. The policy or process may be directly related to their workplace or placement, or they may refer to government policy. There are opportunities teaching for outcome 7 to be effectively integrated with outcomes 1 and 2 where there is discussion around the impact of government policy frameworks.

Learners who work in educational or early years settings will be aware of their specific responsibilities for LfS. The 'Target 2030: A Movement for People, Planet and Prosperity. Scotland's Learning for Sustainability Action Plan' outlines these specific responsibilities. These include:

- ◆ children they are supporting having an opportunity to learn about LfS
- ◆ practitioners having continuous professional learning (CPL) relating to LfS as there are specific policies and frameworks which they will need to be aware of
- ◆ practitioners understanding they have a role in ensuring the learning environment is sustainable

Outcome 7 provides flexibility for learners in educational/early years settings to evidence and reflect on the use of LfS in their practice setting.

Risk assessment is necessary to promote and maintain the health and safety of individuals in practice settings. You should teach learners the essential components of this process and how to complete and comply with risk assessments, in collaboration with others. Learners must use an outcome-focused, person-centred approach to risk assessment. They should understand that they should monitor and review risk assessments to consider any relevant changes to circumstances. They must produce a risk assessment relating to their practice, and the content should reflect the advice provided by the national regulator for health and safety. The learner's supervisor or line manager should authenticate the risk assessment, and this would normally take the form of a signed witness testimony or an electronic communication.

You should ensure that learners understand their role in safeguarding individuals, according to relevant legislation and policy frameworks: National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021, Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), and relevant local policy for safeguarding adults. Understanding types and indicators of harm and abuse, as well as responsibilities for reporting, is fundamental to the practitioner role. Learners should have some understanding of risk factors that make individuals more vulnerable to harm and abuse, as well as the role of regulatory bodies in safeguarding.

Learners should know and understand the practice setting's recording and reporting systems and their role within them. They achieve this by researching and discussing duties and responsibilities. They should be familiar with the recording and reporting procedures for raising concerns in the workplace and the skills required when an individual discloses harm and abuse.

Learners should be aware of inquiries or significant case reviews relevant to their work setting. They can identify the role of these inquiries in shaping practice to protect individuals.

We recommended that, if you deliver the unit as a stand-alone unit, you assess the outcomes holistically. If you deliver it as part of the group award, we recommend integration with the remaining HN units. You can integrate teaching, learning and assessment across units.

You can use a range of assessment methods and instruments, such as:

- ◆ assignments
- ◆ individual or group presentations
- ◆ video diaries
- ◆ critical incident analysis
- ◆ reflective accounts

Learners collate their evidence in a portfolio with a contents list that identifies where each piece of required evidence can be found for verification.

To promote communication skills and transition to degree-level courses, we recommend that you direct learners to produce at least one fully referenced essay of around 2,500 words for summative assessment. This could be related to outcomes 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7 and involve research into health inequalities, safeguarding, the impact of government policy frameworks and inquiries, and the UN SDGs. If you deliver the unit as part of the group award and integrate it with the remaining core or optional units, you can adjust the word count accordingly.

For outcomes 3 and 4, learners must carry out practical activities and reflect on them in the context of their role and responsibilities. This should be supported by a witness testimony or expert witness statement by a mentor or supervisor, to authenticate collaborative practice with the individual and others. We recommend that learners produce a reflective account of around 1,000 words or an audio or video recording, plus notes of equal substance.

NextGen: HN published prototype unit specification for use in pilot delivery only (version 2.0)  
August 2024

Where you use group presentations as summative assessment, each individual learner's contribution should be clear from submission of their individual notes and research. You can use professional discussion to clarify each learner's understanding of the evidence requirements being assessed. We suggest that you make a checklist of evidence requirements met by each learner available for verification purposes.

## **Equality and inclusion**

This unit is designed to be as fair and as accessible as possible with no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment.

You should take into account the needs of individual learners when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs is available on the assessment arrangements web page:

[www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).



## Information for learners

### Health, Safeguarding, Welfare and Rights (SCQF level 7)

This section explains:

- ◆ what the unit is about
- ◆ what you should know or be able to do before you start
- ◆ what you need to do during the unit
- ◆ opportunities for further learning and employment

### Unit information

This is a mandatory unit in the Higher National Certificate (HNC) Social Services and HNC Childhood Practice group awards. It also provides underpinning knowledge for the workplace practice based Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) unit Promote Health, Safety and Security in the Work Setting at SCQF level 7, which is also a mandatory unit. You can integrate the unit with other core and optional units within this group award.

During the unit, you learn how social service and childhood practice practitioners and their employers must meet national standards that set out what people should expect when using health, social care or social services in Scotland. You must comply with codes of practice to ensure that individuals achieve better outcomes, are treated with respect and dignity, and that their basic human rights are upheld. Social services and childhood practice are underpinned by legislation that workers and organisations have a statutory duty to comply with, and policy frameworks they must adhere to. During the unit, you also learn about sustainability and how this can be applied to your sector. The unit explores these influences on practice and provides you with opportunities to develop some of the required knowledge and skills to be a safe and effective practitioner.

Entry to the unit is at your centre's discretion. You should, however, have effective communication and interpersonal skills. You can demonstrate these by relevant qualifications at SCQF level 6 or experience of working in the social services or education sector.

The teaching, learning and assessment of the unit takes place in social service and childhood practice settings. You should refer to current:

- ◆ terminology
- ◆ regulatory bodies
- ◆ national standards
- ◆ relevant Scottish and UK legislation
- ◆ Scottish policy frameworks and recommended practices

Completing the unit in a practice setting, such as a work placement or your place of employment, provides you with invaluable opportunities to develop and apply your knowledge, skills and understanding and meet the evidence requirements.

As you progress through the unit, you become increasingly confident at linking your knowledge and understanding to your practice, and we encourage you to make links between the learning completed in this unit and others in the group award.

Your centre provides you with assessments. These can include:

- ◆ assignments
- ◆ essays
- ◆ individual or group presentations
- ◆ video diaries
- ◆ critical incident analysis
- ◆ reflective accounts
- ◆ any other appropriate methods

You also produce a risk assessment. You must complete the assessments, submit them by the required dates, and retain evidence in a portfolio with a checklist of evidence and statements from you that confirm that it is all your own work.

## **Meta-skills**

Throughout the unit, you develop meta-skills to enhance your employability in the social service and childhood practice sectors.

### **Self-management**

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ focusing: researching, evaluating understanding on an ongoing basis through formative assessment
- ◆ integrity: discussing own values, ethics and personal development
- ◆ adapting: critical reflection, accommodating new ideas through research and practical experience
- ◆ initiative: independent research, collaborating with other professionals to share enthusiasm and knowledge

### **Social intelligence**

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ feeling: discussing own values and personal development, empathy, personal reflection, building relationships
- ◆ communicating: collaborative working, sharing ideas and perspectives
- ◆ collaborating: teamwork, shared goals within practice

NextGen: HN published prototype unit specification for use in pilot delivery only (version 2.0)  
August 2024

## **Innovation**

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ curiosity: research and observations to understand the link between theory and practice
- ◆ sense-making: holistic thinking, researching, evaluating understanding
- ◆ critical thinking: analysing research, making informed decisions

The HNC Social Services and the HNC Childhood Practice are recognised qualifications for registration with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and employment in social service and early years sectors.

The HNC provides three of the mandatory units for the SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 7 or the SVQ Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF level 7.

Progression to the Higher National Diploma (HND) Childhood Practice may be an option for holders of the HNC in Childhood Practice, as well as progression to degree level courses. You should investigate each university's entry criteria.

# Administrative information

---

**Published:** August 2024 (version 2.0)

**Superclass:** PR

---

## History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date
2.0	◆ Learning for Sustainability outcome added.	July 2024

Note: please check [SQA's website](#) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this document.