

# **NextGen: HN unit specification**

## **Medical Terminology (SCQF level 7)**

**Unit code:** J9KJ 47

**SCQF level:** 7 (8 SCQF credit points)

**Valid from:** August 2026

This unit specification provides detailed information about the unit to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year. It is for lecturers and assessors, and contains all the mandatory information you need to deliver and assess the unit.

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# Contents

<b>Unit purpose .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Unit outcomes .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Knowledge and skills .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Meta-skills .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Learning for Sustainability .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Delivery of unit .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Additional guidance .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Equality and inclusion .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Information for learners .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Administrative information.....</b>	<b>16</b>

# Unit purpose

This unit develops learners' knowledge of medical terminology, primarily for use in medical administration roles such as medical receptionist, medical secretary, GP administrator, GP receptionist or NHS clerk.

It is primarily intended for learners who want to find employment in a medical administration role, or who want to do CPD or further study in administration in a healthcare setting. It could also be suitable for learners who already work in healthcare roles, such as nurses, physical therapists or emergency services.

Entry to the unit is at your centre's discretion. Before they start the unit, we recommend learners have one or more of the following:

- good communication and literacy skills
- have achieved or be working towards a relevant administration qualification
- recent administrative work experience

Learners study this unit as part of PDA Medical Administration or HNC Administration and Digital Business Technologies. They can also study it on a stand-alone basis.

Learners who complete the unit as part of the HNC can progress to HND Administration Management and Digital Business Technologies (SCQF level 8) or to degree-level study. They can also find employment in a healthcare setting.

If they complete it as a stand-alone unit, they can progress to the PDA, HNC or both.

# Unit outcomes

Learners who complete this unit can:

1. define and apply medical terminology relating to human body systems

## Evidence requirements

Assess the unit under closed-book conditions.

### Outcome 1

Learners need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing they can:

- explain aspects of nine human body systems by identifying and defining medical terms and correctly extending medical abbreviations
- extend and spell correctly 18 medical abbreviations
- spell correctly 36 definitions of medical terms
- pronounce correctly 15 medical terms related to human body systems

Terms and abbreviations must cover:

- pharmacology
- physiology
- pathology
- procedures, instruments and investigations
- key professional roles, titles and professional qualifications

# Knowledge and skills

Knowledge	Skills
<p><b>Outcome 1</b></p> <p>Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the origins of medical terms</li> <li>• roots, prefixes, suffixes and combining vowels to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ produce accurate combining forms</li> <li>○ explain medical terms</li> </ul> </li> <li>• related pathology and medical investigations</li> <li>• medical abbreviations</li> <li>• pharmacology commonly used in each system</li> <li>• drugs classification and terms used in prescribing drugs</li> <li>• physiology and related terms of each system</li> <li>• pathology and related terms of each system</li> <li>• procedures, instruments and investigations related to each system</li> <li>• the key professional roles, abbreviated titles and qualifications of professional bodies</li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcome 1</b></p> <p>Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explain aspects of human body systems by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ identifying and defining medical terms</li> <li>○ extending medical abbreviations</li> <li>○ pronouncing medical terms</li> <li>○ describing body systems</li> <li>○ applying a systematic approach to medical specialities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# Meta-skills

You must give learners opportunities to develop their meta-skills throughout this unit. We have suggested how to incorporate the most relevant ones into the unit content, but you may find other opportunities.

## Self-management

This includes focusing, integrity, adapting and initiative. The most relevant are:

- focusing:
  - filtering out non-essential information, sorting information into relevant categories, and understanding relationships between different pieces of information
  - concentrating on key information while making sense of the data
  - sustaining focus when learning component parts of the terms (prefixes, roots and suffixes), which are often derived from Latin
  - maintaining attention to detail and accuracy, and avoiding errors in a healthcare setting that could have serious consequences
- integrity:
  - being self-aware and exercising self-control when reporting insights
  - being honest and ethical when analysing and presenting information, to help ensure that work is trustworthy and reliable
- adapting:
  - accepting new ideas and reflecting critically on them, self-educating and responding constructively to changes and challenges
  - staying current and relevant in a rapidly evolving environment
- initiative:
  - taking responsibility for actions and managing risks effectively when processing data, underpinned by self-belief and trust in own judgements

- managing time effectively
- using resources to meet assessment deadlines
- making informed decisions and being proactive

## **Social intelligence**

This includes communicating, feeling, collaborating and leading. The most relevant are:

- communicating:
  - listening to and understanding instructional content, including directions for practical work
  - learning how to communicate with stakeholders effectively
- feeling:
  - taking the thoughts, feelings and perspectives of other people into account
- collaborating:
  - coordinating with others to convey information and solve problems

## **Innovation**

This includes curiosity, creativity, sense-making and critical thinking. The most relevant are:

- curiosity:
  - exploring inspire new ideas and concepts
  - extending reading and researching to professional medical publications (online or paper-based) and referencing historical and contemporary events and news
  - reinforcing and adding meaning to learning medical terminology by placing it in context

- creativity:
  - coming up with new ways to solve problems, answer questions or express meaning
- critical thinking:
  - evaluating information and drawing conclusions to solve complex problems and make decisions

# Learning for Sustainability

Throughout this unit, you should encourage learners to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of sustainability.

This includes:

- a general understanding of social, economic and environmental sustainability
- a general understanding of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- a deeper understanding of subject-specific sustainability
- the confidence to apply the skills, knowledge, understanding and values they develop in the next stage of their life

To ensure learners are confident with learning for sustainability they could:

- evaluate the sustainability implications of medical practices, procedures and resource use
- consider how to integrate sustainability principles into decision making and problem solving in healthcare-related learning and practice
- reflect on how they can apply sustainability knowledge and values in future study, employment or clinical environments to promote ethical and sustainable healthcare

# Delivery of unit

This unit is:

- an optional unit in HNC Administration and Digital Business Technologies
- a mandatory unit in PDA Medical Administration

Although you can deliver it as a stand-alone unit, we recommend you deliver it alongside the Hospital Patient Administration unit and/or GP Medical Administration unit.

The notional time for delivery and assessment is 40 hours. The amount of time you allocate to each outcome is at your discretion.

# Additional guidance

The guidance in this section is not mandatory.

## Approaches to delivery

You can deliver this unit in person or online. If you deliver it online, you must make sure learners complete their assessment under closed-book conditions.

As well as developing learners' knowledge and understanding of medical terminology, you should encourage them to consider the role of medical terminology in healthcare related communications and why it is important to be accurate and professional.

The content of your teaching material should reflect realistic workplace practice as much as possible. This adds meaning and enhances the learning experience.

You should encourage learners to research available sources of medical information and literature, for example medical journals, online websites, relevant historical or contemporary news stories.

Learners could use audio word processing to consolidate their learning.

You could invite healthcare practitioners to speak to learners to:

- emphasise the importance of professional standards
- give insight into workplace practice
- share experience of real-life scenarios to add context and meaning to learning

## Approaches to assessment

You can assess the unit using a range of questions covering nine human body systems. You could base the questions on a diagram or other information such as a case study.

Questions could involve:

- short answer responses, for example:
  - fill the blank
  - extend this abbreviation
  - label this diagram
- structured short answer responses using the terms correctly in context, for example:
  - Describe the meaning of the term X in relation to Y body system.
  - Create and label a diagram describing Y human body system using correct terminology.

You can assess pronunciation by:

- using simulation and role-play exercises
- having conversations with your learners
- listening to learners read stimulus material with associated words for definition and/or extension

The underpinning knowledge of each body system is essential. You should only assess learners when you have covered the knowledge and skills.

Suggested body systems:

- digestive
- respiratory
- cardiovascular
- blood and lymphatic
- renal

- endocrine
- female reproductive (including obstetrics)
- male reproductive
- nervous (including mental health)
- musculoskeletal
- integumentary
- eye
- ear

# 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 must consider the needs of individual learners when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled learners and those with additional support needs is available on the [assessment arrangements web page](#).

# Information for learners

## Medical Terminology (SCQF level 7)

This information 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 unit helps develop your knowledge of medical terminology, primarily for use in medical administration roles such as medical receptionist, medical secretary, GP administrator, GP receptionist or NHS clerk.

The unit covers human body systems terminology used in pathology, pharmacy, physiology, procedures and professional organisations and agencies.

You learn how to:

- construct medical words and terms using roots, prefixes and suffixes, and understand their meanings
- pronounce medical terms and develop your understanding of the structure and physiology of the human body

The unit helps you prepare for employment in the healthcare sector by developing your understanding of medical terminology and the importance of using it accurately in healthcare settings.

Before you start the unit, we recommend you have one or more of the following:

- good communication and literacy skills
- have achieved or be working towards a relevant administration qualification
- recent administrative work experience

You can study the unit as part of PDA Medical Administration or HNC Administration and Digital Business Technologies, or on a stand-alone basis.

If you complete the unit as part of the HNC you can progress to HND Administration Management and Digital Business Technologies (SCQF level 8) or to degree-level study. You can also find employment in a healthcare setting.

If you complete it as a stand-alone unit, you can progress to the PDA, HNC or both.

## **Meta-skills**

Throughout this unit, you develop meta-skills that are useful for the health sector.

Meta-skills are transferable behaviours and abilities that help you adapt and succeed in life, study and work. There are three categories of meta-skills: self-management, social intelligence and innovation.

### **Self-management**

This meta-skill includes:

- managing time effectively
- using resources to meet assessment deadlines
- sustaining focus when learning component parts of the terms (prefixes, roots and suffixes), which are often derived from Latin
- maintaining attention to detail and accuracy to avoid errors in a healthcare setting that can have serious consequences

### **Social intelligence**

This meta-skill includes:

- being confident at writing and pronouncing medical terms

## Innovation

This meta-skill includes:

- extending reading and researching to professional medical publications (online or paper-based) and referencing historical and contemporary events and news
- reinforcing and adding meaning to learning medical terminology by placing it in context

## Learning for Sustainability

Throughout this unit, you develop skills, knowledge and understanding of sustainability.

You learn about social, economic and environmental sustainability principles and how they relate to the health sector. You also develop an understanding of the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#).

To broaden your skills, knowledge and understanding of sustainability you could:

- evaluate the sustainability implications of medical practices, procedures, and resource use
- consider how to integrate sustainability principles into decision making and problem solving in healthcare-related learning and practice
- reflect on how you can apply sustainability knowledge and values in future study, employment, or clinical environments to promote ethical and sustainable healthcare

# Administrative information

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**Superclass:** PA

## History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date

Please check [our website](#) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this unit.

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