

Next Gen: HN unit specification

Spa Rituals (SCQF level 7)

Unit code: JN79 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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Unit purpose

This unit gives learners the knowledge and skills they need to provide a variety of spa rituals that reflect current industry practice. It is beneficial for learners who want to broaden their knowledge and skills to enhance their employability options in the beauty or spa therapy industry.

Learners research three spa rituals offered by your centre that reflect current industry practice. They produce a report that includes an overview of each spa ritual, and the effects, benefits, contra-indications, contra-actions and adverse reactions for each spa ritual.

Learners gain knowledge of the effects and benefits of products used in the spa rituals so they can consider them when tailoring the spa ritual to meet the client's needs. They also use this knowledge to discuss the effects and benefits of spa rituals in their research report.

Learners consult with clients to plan, prepare, perform and evaluate the effectiveness of the ritual or rituals they provide.

The rituals should follow current industry practice and focus on luxury so that learners experience the level of quality expected in the industry.

This unit is an optional unit in HNC Beauty Therapy. Learners can also study this unit on a stand-alone basis.

For health and safety reasons, it is the centre's responsibility to ensure that candidates are 16 years old at the time of registration. See the [Hair and Beauty Industry Authority \(HABIA\) fact sheet](#) for more information on pre-16 age restrictions.

Entry is at the discretion of your centre. However, we recommend before starting this unit, learners should have completed or are in the process of completing a relevant:

- anatomy and physiology qualification
- body massage qualification

On completion of this unit, learners can progress to further study, including additional Higher National units at SCQF Level 7 and 8.

This unit contributes to overall progression in the subject area.

Unit outcomes

Learners who complete this unit can:

1. research spa rituals
2. prepare for spa rituals
3. perform comprehensive consultations and devise spa ritual treatment plans
4. perform spa rituals
5. evaluate the effectiveness of spa rituals

Evidence requirements

For outcome 1, learners must research a minimum of three spa rituals offered by your centre and produce a report in open-book conditions. You should assess outcomes 2, 3, 4 and 5 holistically. You observe learners carrying out three different spa rituals on three different clients. These must reflect current industry practice in that the various components of the treatment make one spa ritual, for example, a body brush, hot oil massage and mud mask combined as one treatment. Learners must carry out practical tasks in a commercially acceptable timeframe.

Outcome 1: research spa rituals

Learners must produce an open-book project that reflects SCQF level 7 and demonstrates a clear understanding of key concepts. The project should include identification and description of relevant points (where appropriate), as this level of study expects learners to engage with content critically and with appropriate depth.

Key concepts include:

- an overview of three spa rituals
- the effects and benefits of each spa ritual (including products)
- the absolute and relative contra-indications of each spa ritual
- the potential contra-actions and adverse reactions of the treatment provided

You must complete an assessor checklist to confirm that learners have met the research evidence requirements.

Assessment conditions for **outcomes 2 to 5** are practical and can be assessed holistically. The product evidence includes an assessor observation checklist to record learner performance, supported by a detailed client consultation record and treatment plan that learners complete for each client.

Outcome 2: prepare for spa rituals

Learners must prepare themselves and the treatment area for three different spa rituals.

Learners must:

- select appropriate resources, to be used in accordance with the treatment protocols to reflect industry practice
- prepare the treatment area in accordance with industry standards, following health, safety and hygiene requirements relating to the individual ritual
- prepare self in accordance with current industry and organisational codes of dress and practice

Outcome 3: perform comprehensive consultations and devise spa ritual treatment plans

Learners must perform an observed comprehensive consultation with three different clients. They must consider the following points:

- absolute and relative contra-indications
- current medical history
- relevant lifestyle factors
- medications and medical conditions
- clients' skin and/or body concerns, expectations and desired outcomes

Learners must:

- develop and agree the spa ritual for each client
- explain the treatment protocol to the clients
- discuss potential outcomes and associated risks, contra-actions and adverse reactions
- comply with the legislative requirements of gaining signed, informed consent
- confirm with clients that they have understood the proposed treatment plan
- complete spa ritual consultation documents to reflect industry standards

Outcome 4: perform spa rituals

Learners must perform three different spa rituals on three different clients.

Learners must:

- perform the planned spa ritual for each client
- use products and equipment in accordance with client needs, spa protocols, sequences, manufacturer guidelines, legislation, and time constraints set by industry
- monitor clients during the ritual, considering client well-being, modesty, comfort, safety, contra-actions and adverse reactions
- adapt the treatments in accordance with the client's needs
- provide post-treatment advice, including aftercare and specific homecare advice
- obtain client feedback post-treatment
- consider the importance of sustainability and waste management throughout the spa ritual process

Outcome 5: evaluate the effectiveness of the spa rituals

Learners must:

- use reflective practice to evaluate the effectiveness of the spa rituals
- include the degree of success achieved, considering:
 - clients' aims
 - effects and benefits of the spa rituals provided
 - client feedback
 - assessor feedback
- record their findings on the spa rituals consultation documents

Knowledge and skills

Knowledge	Skills
<p>Outcome 1</p> <p>Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • three spa rituals your centre is offering • the effects and benefits of each of the spa rituals, including products • absolute and relative contra-indications to each spa ritual, including how to identify and describe each condition • how to identify and describe potential contra-actions and adverse reactions for each spa ritual, and the remedial actions to take • how to structure an open-book report • referencing and bibliographies • the importance of authenticating research 	<p>Outcome 1</p> <p>Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • research spa rituals offered by the delivering centre • produce an open-book report that includes an overview of each treatment, effects and benefits, contra-indications, contra-actions and adverse reactions for each spa ritual
<p>Outcome 2</p> <p>Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to select and prepare the appropriate resources in line with treatment protocols to reflect industry practice • how to prepare the treatment area • current industry and organisational codes of dress and practice 	<p>Outcome 2</p> <p>Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prepare themselves and the treatment area for a spa ritual • select appropriate resources, to be used in line with treatment protocols to reflect industry practice

Knowledge	Skills
<p>Outcome 3 Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the importance of the consultation process • absolute and relative contra-indications • the relevance of clients' current medical history, lifestyle factors, medications and medical conditions to the treatment plan • the client's skin and/or body concerns • the client's expectations and potential outcomes from each spa ritual provided • the treatment protocols • the potential risks, contra-actions and adverse reactions • the importance of informed consent • current data legislation general data protection regulation (GDPR) guidelines and data processing agreements (DPA) • how to complete spa ritual consultation documents to reflect industry standards 	<p>Outcome 3 Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perform comprehensive client consultations • develop and agree a spa ritual treatment plan for each client • explain the treatment protocols • discuss potential outcomes and associated risks, contra-actions and adverse reactions with clients • comply with legislative requirements • complete spa ritual consultation documents to reflect industry standards

Knowledge	Skills
<p>Outcome 4</p> <p>Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to perform the planned spa ritual for each client • how to use products and equipment in accordance with spa protocols, considering sequences, manufacturer guidelines, legislation and time constraints set by industry • the importance of monitoring clients during the ritual and considering client well-being, modesty, comfort, safety, contra-actions and adverse reactions, and remedial actions, if necessary • how to adapt the treatment in accordance with the client's needs • post-treatment advice, including aftercare and specific homecare advice • the importance of obtaining post-treatment feedback from clients regarding their treatment, and how to use this to influence future practice • the importance of sustainability and waste management throughout the spa ritual 	<p>Outcome 4</p> <p>Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perform a spa ritual, reflecting current industry practice • consider products, sequences, sustainability, waste management, manufacturer guidelines, legislation and time constraints • monitor the client throughout the treatment process • adapt treatments in accordance with the client's needs • obtain client feedback post-treatment • provide post-treatment advice, including aftercare and specific homecare advice

Knowledge	Skills
<p>Outcome 5 Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflective practice • the importance of reflective practice • methods they can use to evaluate the effectiveness of treatments • how to accept and use feedback from others, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ client feedback ○ assessor feedback • how to evaluate the effectiveness of spa rituals, reflecting on the client's aims and the effects and benefits of the rituals provided 	<p>Outcome 5 Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate the effectiveness of an applied spa ritual and identify the degree of success achieved, considering client aims, effects and benefits of the treatment provided, and client and assessor feedback • record their evaluation on the spa ritual consultation documents

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:
 - ensuring that every aspect of the treatment is meticulously planned and executed
 - paying attention to detail to guarantee a high-quality treatment and client satisfaction
- integrity:
 - building trust with the client, as they may share personal information during the consultation process
 - understanding the importance of following GDPR
- adapting:
 - ensuring that the treatments provided are up-to-date with the latest trends and techniques

Social intelligence

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

- communicating:
 - ensuring that the client fully understands the spa ritual, including the procedure, benefits, and potential risks

- actively listening to the client's feedback
- adapting the spa ritual, as needed
- ensuring the spa ritual is effective
- feeling:
 - empathising with the client during the consultation and spa ritual process
 - building trust with the client
 - encouraging clients to share their true concerns and preferences, leading to more personalised and effective treatments

Innovation

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

- sense-making:
 - interpreting and understanding information from clients
 - making sense of changing circumstances and responding effectively

Literacies

This unit provides opportunities to develop the following literacies.

Numeracy

- breaking down spa rituals into manageable time segments
- allocating specific time slots for each part of the ritual to ensure the total treatment time is commercially acceptable
- using units of measurement (for example body mass index (BMI), centimetres, inches and millimetres) during the analysis part of consultations
- being precise and accurate with numbers, especially when mixing and measuring products

Communication

- working closely with clients and peers
- using academic writing and language skills

Digital

- researching three different spa rituals delivered by the centre and producing an open-book report

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

Throughout the spa ritual process, learners should be aware of the importance of sustainability and waste management, and the impact this can have on the environment.

Delivery of unit

This unit is an optional unit in HNC Beauty Therapy. You can also deliver it as a stand-alone unit.

The notional time for delivery and assessment is 40 hours. The amount of time you allocate to each outcome is at your centre's discretion. We suggest the following distribution of time, including assessment:

Outcome 1: Research spa rituals (5 hours)

Outcome 2: Prepare for spa rituals (5 hours)

Outcome 3: Perform comprehensive consultations and devise spa ritual treatment plans (5 hours)

Outcome 4: Perform spa rituals (20 hours)

Outcome 5: Evaluate the effectiveness of the spa rituals (5 hours)

Additional guidance

The guidance in this section is not mandatory.

Content and context for this unit

This unit gives learners the appropriate skills and underpinning knowledge required to work in the beauty and spa industries. You develop learners' ability to devise three different spa ritual plans for three different clients. They select the spa rituals after a comprehensive consultation with each individual client. Learners prepare the treatment area appropriately prior to the rituals, then perform and evaluate each ritual. You should explain the importance of following current codes of dress and practice to learners.

Learners can perform spa rituals on any part of the body, but they should reflect current industry practice. Encourage learners to evaluate the effectiveness of the spa ritual and to make certain that they give appropriate post-treatment advice to maximise results. They must give appropriate aftercare and specific homecare advice to clients. The rituals performed should reflect current industry practice, with the focus on luxury to replicate industry expectations.

In outcome 1, learners research three different spa rituals being delivered by the centre and submit their research in an open-book report.

Learners' reports should demonstrate knowledge of three spa rituals, including an overview of each treatment, and the benefits, effects, contra-indications, contra-actions and adverse reactions for each spa ritual. This report should serve as a valuable, meaningful and practical resource for learners, both now and in the future. It should function as a training manual and reference guide for each of the spa rituals for ongoing use. The emphasis is on quality, not quantity.

Learners can incorporate popular components into each main treatment and tailor it to ensure variety. For example, they can carry out exfoliation using salts, a body brush, or a cream. Hot product applications can vary between lotions, creams, or oils. Wraps may also differ, using various products or materials such as foil, plastic,

or fabric, to create the required ritual experience. The three treatments delivered must be distinctly different, introducing learners to a range of techniques that broaden their practical understanding of spa rituals and enhance their overall learning journey.

Resources

The occupational expertise of those involved in the assessment and quality assurance processes is key to ensure valid, fair and reliable assessment. The assessor and internal verifier must be occupationally competent.

They must:

- hold an appropriate professional or technical qualification, for example HND Beauty Therapy or equivalent, that demonstrates an in-depth technical knowledge of the unit and the standard of competencies required
- hold an appropriate teaching qualification or be working towards one
- be able to interpret current working practices, technologies and products within spa therapies, and be committed to upholding the integrity of the unit
- demonstrate competence in assessment and/or internal verification of the subject
- have access to and engage with continuous professional development activities to keep up-to-date with developments and any issues relevant to the unit

Products, equipment and tools are dependent on the spa ritual chosen, and they should reflect current industry practice. All chosen products should be of a professional quality, reflecting industry standards.

To provide context, learners must have access to practical examples of industry applications of spa rituals:

- salon setup: plinths, laundry, heated beds and blankets, candles, showers, disposable towels, music, lighting and general ambiance
- digital tools: laptops, tablets and computers
- e-learning platforms for virtual classes or supplementary learning (for example Microsoft Teams, Moodle, Blackboard)
- presentation tools: like PowerPoint and TikTok for visual learning aids

- course materials: learner handouts, textbooks, articles, and other reading and reference materials
- multimedia content: videos, podcasts, or online tutorials
- formative and summative assignments and quizzes to track progress and understanding
- budget: sufficient funding for appropriate materials and tools
- facilities: access to a realistic working environment that should reflect current industry practice, including toilet and water facilities
- library access for research and study
- guest speakers or industry experts: occasional workshops or talks by professionals in the spa therapy industry

Approaches to delivery

Your delivery should focus on the practical component of the unit. Demonstrate each ritual by integrating theory and practice, as this should make the learning experience enjoyable. For outcome 1, you should encourage learners to explore external training providers' treatment protocol manuals for layout and depth of information. Your centre should establish links with industry representatives. To inspire and motivate learners, we recommend including enrichment activities, such as trips to a spa and guest speakers, where possible.

Learners must understand the effects and benefits of the products they use in the spa rituals that your centre offers. They should consider these when tailoring spa rituals to meet clients' needs, and during discussion with clients. They also need this information to discuss the effects and benefits of the spa rituals in their research report.

You should teach learners how legislation affects everyday practice and take opportunities to integrate relevant current legislation in a realistic context, including GDPR and DPA guidelines.

Learners must understand the importance of ensuring that environmental conditions are suitable for the client and the spa ritual, along with always maintaining client modesty, privacy and comfort.

You should encourage learners to promote environmental and sustainable working practices, and to follow workplace and supplier or manufacturer instructions for the safe use of material and products. They should understand how to follow post-treatment guidelines, including waste disposal and preparing the work area effectively to make it ready for future use.

Approaches to assessment

You can assess learners' knowledge of the absolute and relative contra-indications, contra-actions and adverse reactions of the spa rituals in the research report for outcome 1. There may be opportunities for learners to cross-reference this component of the report if they complete any of the HNC Beauty Therapy mandatory units at SCQF level 7:

- Skin Therapy Treatments and Product Knowledge
- Signature Body Massage Treatments
- Face and Body Electrotherapy

Absolute and relative contra-indications, contra-actions and adverse reactions are also assessed practically in this unit.

Absolute and relative contra-indications include:

- fungal Infections
- parasitic infections
- viral infections
- bacterial infections
- allergies
- recent injuries: cuts, abrasions, scars, operations, fractures or bruising
- undergoing medical treatments (chemotherapy, Roaccutane)
- sunburn
- skin disorders (severe psoriasis, severe eczema)
- dysfunction of the nervous system
- under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- hypersensitive skin

- eye infections
- recent aesthetic procedures (microneedling, Botox, fillers)
- epilepsy (uncontrolled)
- diabetes (uncontrolled)
- high blood pressure (uncontrolled)
- low blood pressure (uncontrolled)
- claustrophobia
- pregnancy

An additional list of contra-indications specific to spa rituals:

- heart conditions
- pacemaker
- history of thrombosis or embolism
- varicose veins
- metal pins or plates
- medication
- piercings
- menorrhagia

Contra-actions and adverse reactions include:

- adverse skin reactions
- swelling
- bruising
- dizziness, light-headedness, nausea
- skin breakouts
- increased urination or bowel activity
- muscle soreness or muscle fatigue
- headaches
- general fatigue
- heightened emotional release or healing crisis

The research that learners carry out in outcome 1 must reflect three different spa rituals offered by your centre. You should assess outcomes 2 to 5 holistically.

You must carry out practical observations on three different spa rituals. The spa ritual assessment should reflect current industry practice. You must regard the various components of the treatment as one spa ritual. For example, consider body brushing, hot oil massage and applying a mud mask as one treatment.

Learners produce one research report and three completed consultation documents, supported by your assessor observation checklist. Your centre should implement robust measures to verify the authenticity of learners' work, such as using advanced plagiarism detection tools and AI-powered checkers.

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

Spa Rituals (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 provides you with the knowledge and skills to perform a variety of spa rituals that reflect current industry practice.

You research three different spa rituals that reflect current industry practice. You produce a report that includes an overview of each spa ritual and its benefits, effects, contra-indications and contra-actions. This report should serve as a valuable, meaningful and practical resource for you, both now and in the future. It should function as a training manual and reference guide for each of the spa rituals. The emphasis is on quality, not quantity.

You consult with three different clients to plan, prepare, perform and evaluate the effectiveness of the rituals you provide. The rituals you perform reflect current industry practice, with a focus on luxury to replicate industry expectations.

The unit is beneficial if you want to broaden your knowledge and skills or enhance your employability options in the beauty or spa therapy industry.

Entry is at the discretion of your centre. However, we recommend before starting this unit, learners should have completed or are in the process of completing a relevant:

- anatomy and physiology qualification
- body massage qualification

You must be at least 16 years old prior to the course start date, due to insurance requirements and to comply with the National Occupational Standards (NOS).

Progression opportunities include Higher National Diploma (HND) Beauty Therapy, additional Higher National units, or a career in the spa therapy industry.

Meta-skills

Throughout this unit, you develop meta-skills that are useful for the beauty and spa sectors.

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:

- integrity:
 - building trust with clients, as they may share personal information during the consultation process; it is important to follow GDPR and DPA guidelines

Social intelligence

This meta-skill includes:

- communicating:
 - ensuring that the client fully understands the spa ritual, including the procedure, benefits, and potential risks
 - actively listening to the client's feedback, and adapting the spa ritual as needed to ensure that it is effective
- feeling:

- demonstrating empathy during the consultation and spa ritual process to build trust with the client and encourage them to share their true concerns and preferences, leading to a more personalised and effective treatment

Innovation

This meta-skill includes:

- sense-making:
 - interpreting and understanding information from the clients
 - making sense of changing circumstances and responding effectively

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 Beauty and Spa sector. You also develop an understanding of the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#).

Throughout the spa ritual process, you should be aware of the importance of sustainability and waste management, and the impact this can have on the environment.

Administrative information

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Superclass: HL

History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date

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