

SQA Advanced Unit specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Workplace Communication in English (SCQF level 6)

Unit code: HR1C 46

Superclass: KB

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Unit purpose

This Unit *Workplace Communication in English* sits at SCQF level 6 and is designed to develop skills in analysing, summarising, evaluating and producing written information in English in a complex vocational context. It also develops practical skills in speaking and responding in English in complex vocational situations.

The Unit enhances skills for learning, life and work and there is a particular emphasis on employability.

The Unit is for learners for whom English is an additional language. It can be taken as part of a Group Award or as a stand-alone Unit for the purposes of developing written and oral skills for use in complex vocational situations. Work undertaken for the Unit will be in a context appropriate to the learner's Group Award or relevant to an individual's vocational area/discipline.

The Unit embeds and provides automatic certification of the Core Skill of *Communication* at SCQF level 6.

Outcomes

On successful completion of the Unit the learner will be able to:

- 1 Summarise and evaluate written information on a complex vocational issue.
- 2 Produce written information on a complex vocational issue.
- 3 Produce and respond to oral communication on a complex vocational issue.

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Credit points and level

1 SQA Credit at SCQF level 6: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6)

Recommended entry to the Unit

Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners should have competence in *Communication Skills* at SCQF level 5 or equivalent. This could be demonstrated by achievement of one of the following:

F3GB 11 *Communication (Core Skill)*, SCQF level 5
EE3T 11 *Communication (NQ)*, SCQF level 5
C270 11 *English* SCQF level 5
C724 75 *National 5 English*
C222 11 *English for Speakers of Other Languages* SCQF level 5
C727 75 *National 5 ESOL*
IELTS 5.0
Appropriate work experience

Core Skills

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skill Communication at SCQF level 5

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes for this Unit specification.

Context for delivery

If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

If this Unit is delivered as a stand-alone Unit, it should be developed in a context to suit the learner's vocational needs and career pathway.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard. A list of existing ASPs is available to download from SQA's website (<https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/90557.10883.html>)

Equality and inclusion

This Unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

SQA Advanced Unit specification: Statement of standards

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Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

Outcome 1

Summarise and evaluate written information on a complex vocational issue.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Types, purposes and readership of written vocational communication
- ◆ The impact and effects of format, structure and layout of vocational communication
- ◆ Impact of language and style in vocational documents
- ◆ The uses and purposes of graphic communication
- ◆ Reading and understanding written information on complex vocational issues
- ◆ Identifying key information and supporting detail from written communication
- ◆ Summarising key points in written communication
- ◆ Evaluating the effectiveness of written communication in achieving its purpose and meeting the needs of intended readership

Outcome 2

Produce written information on a complex vocational issue.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Types, purposes and readership of documents on complex vocational issues
- ◆ Considering and selecting information from a range of relevant sources
- ◆ Conveying complex information and ideas
- ◆ Conventions of format, structure and layout in vocational documents
- ◆ Conventions of language and style in vocational documents
- ◆ Conventions of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- ◆ Uses and effects of graphic communication
- ◆ Methods of referencing sources
- ◆ Production of documents which analyse complex vocational issues
- ◆ Reviewing, revising and redrafting documents

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Outcome 3

Produce and respond to oral communication on a complex vocational issue.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Planning and preparing for an oral communication event
- ◆ Sourcing and selecting relevant information
- ◆ Identifying key elements and exploring points of view
- ◆ Presenting all essential information and complex ideas accurately, clearly, audibly and coherently
- ◆ Using a structure appropriate to purpose and listeners
- ◆ Using language and tone to take account of purpose and listeners
- ◆ Using appropriate non-verbal communication
- ◆ Using listening skills effectively to progress interaction
- ◆ Producing a written record of oral interaction

Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Outcome 1: Summarise and evaluate written information on a complex vocational issue

The learner will provide evidence to demonstrate his/her Knowledge and Skills by showing that he/she can:

- ◆ summarise written information on a complex vocational issue
- ◆ evaluate written information on a complex vocational issue

One text concerned with the presentation of information on a complex vocational issue will be presented to the learner for summarising and evaluating.

Firstly, the learner will read and understand the text, identifying, extracting and summarising key information.

The response should be such that it:

- ◆ demonstrates clear understanding of information, ideas and supporting detail
- ◆ expresses key information concisely and coherently in the learner's own words

Secondly, the learner will evaluate the text in no fewer than 200 words. The quality of the evaluation will be such that it:

- ◆ identifies the aims/purpose/objectives and the intended readership of the communication
- ◆ considers the contribution of the presentation and style to meaning/effect
- ◆ assesses whether the text meets its overall aims/purpose/objectives
- ◆ considers the effectiveness of the text in meeting the needs of the intended readership
- ◆ justifies comment by providing relevant evidence from the text

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Evidence presented can be written or oral.

The assessment will be conducted in supervised open-book conditions. The centre should ensure the authenticity of the learner's work.

Outcome 2: Produce written information on a complex vocational issue

The learner will provide evidence to demonstrate his/her Knowledge and Skills by showing that he/she can produce written information on a complex vocational issue.

The learner will produce written information amounting to a minimum of 800 words on a complex vocational issue.

The evidence can be presented as one single item or as a portfolio of up to three linked items of communication.

The quality of the text(s) should be such that:

- ◆ relevant information on a complex vocational issue is selected and conveyed accurately
- ◆ there is evidence of analysis of a substantial body of information or an issue is explored in depth
- ◆ the structure chosen is effective and conveys ideas clearly
- ◆ layout, structure and format are appropriate to context and purpose and assist in the clarity and effectiveness of the communication
- ◆ language and style are appropriate to purpose and readership
- ◆ spelling, punctuation and grammar are consistently accurate

The assessment will be conducted in open-book conditions. The centre should ensure the authenticity of the learner's work.

Outcome 3: Produce and respond to oral communication on a complex vocational issue

The learner will provide evidence to demonstrate his/her Knowledge and Skills by showing that he/she can plan, deliver and sustain an input of at least five minutes in an oral communication about a complex vocational issue.

The quality of the input should be such that:

- ◆ all essential information presented is accurate and relevant to purpose and listeners
- ◆ key elements are identified and other points of view explored
- ◆ communication is clear and audible
- ◆ communication is structured to take account of purpose and audience and all ideas are organised and presented clearly
- ◆ language and tone are used effectively
- ◆ non-verbal skills promote and progress communication
- ◆ responses to the contributions of others progress interaction
- ◆ the written record of the communication is accurate and to a professional standard

The assessment will be conducted in open-book conditions.

SQA Advanced Unit Support Notes

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Unit Support Notes are offered as guidance and are not mandatory.

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

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit may be delivered as part of a Group Award but can also be taken as a stand-alone Unit to support skills development.

The purpose of the Unit is to provide learners with the English language skills needed to analyse, summarise, evaluate and produce written information on complex vocational issues. Skills in presenting and responding to oral information in English in a vocational situation will also be developed. Content/context may vary but the focus should always be on the practice and conventions of English for vocational purposes.

Work undertaken as part of a Group Award must relate to the subject area of that Group Award. If the Unit is delivered as a stand-alone Unit, then it must be contextualised to suit the needs of a learner's vocational area or to suit future career progression or pathways. Again, the focus of the Unit should be on communication for vocational purposes.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

Induction to the Unit should encourage the learner to review and reflect on his/her current communication skills to identify strengths and possible areas for improvement, with a view to developing a personal development plan. The tutor could review with learners the practical English language skills needed to present information, ideas or processes, and respond both in writing and orally. Current communication practice in the workplace should be studied and taken into account when drawing up a development plan. This will raise awareness of employability skills and make clear the expected standard.

Outcomes may be approached discretely, in any order, or oral and written tasks may be combined thematically to allow a holistic approach to the development of relevant communication skills. If learners are part-time, in employment, or the Unit is delivered on a stand-alone basis, negotiation of content and delivery around workplace/employment/career pathway needs will be required.

The tutor should provide learners with guidance materials that provide:

- ◆ reference sources for the development of relevant written, oral and non-verbal English language skills
- ◆ examples of vocational communication in different formats/house-styles to reflect current and emerging trends

Extensive formative work to practise and develop skills and the allowance of time for the draft and redraft of materials will be essential to achievement.

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All learning and teaching should be learner-centred, participative, interactive and practical. Learners must be encouraged, and provided with opportunities, to take an active role in and assume some responsibility for their own learning. A facilitative approach can be pursued either face-to-face with learners or as part of online support, involving appropriate tutor interventions as required to help with the skills development. Passive and rote learning, or the mere reproduction of information from other sources is not acceptable.

The use of new technologies should be encouraged for researching, communicating and presenting information. This will assist in the development of a range of different skills, for example:

- ◆ Use of ICT
- ◆ Written and oral language skills
- ◆ Selection of current, appropriate sources of information
- ◆ Research
- ◆ Note taking
- ◆ Working independently and collaboratively
- ◆ Learning and study skills/skills in self-directed study
- ◆ Time management

Co-operative working with other learners to gather and exchange information, as typical of workplace practice, should be encouraged as far as is practical. Some activities should be pre-planned and learners briefed in advance. In any group work, the tutor should ensure the rotation of roles and responsibilities. Learners should be encouraged and supported, in a secure environment, to challenge their 'comfort zone'. This practice will reflect the realities of the workplace where employees are expected to be flexible and versatile. Such an approach to learning and teaching will strengthen English language skills in a vocational context and also develop skills in:

- ◆ Negotiation
- ◆ Collaboration
- ◆ Team work/interaction with others
- ◆ Initiative
- ◆ Resilience
- ◆ Peer respect
- ◆ Responsibility/sense of ownership
- ◆ Personal effectiveness
- ◆ Problem solving

Assessment of learners should take place after appropriate learning and skills development and towards the end of Unit delivery. Planning, preparation and record keeping are important aspects of the assessment process. Introductory work should take account of current vocational practice in terms of business formats of notes, visual aids, graphic materials, discussion and self-assessment review records. Drafts and planning notes should be retained to encourage reflective self-evaluation and as an aid to learning from and responding positively to feedback.

Conditions should be in place to ensure the authenticity of all evidence submitted by the learner. The problems and penalties associated with plagiarism should be explained and discussed at the start of the delivery of the Unit.

Materials supplied to learners should be in an accessible format (Equality Act 2010).

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This Unit certifies learners at SCQF level 6. The learner must be working towards and finally produce communication which meets the Evidence Requirements for the Unit. This evidence will also clearly reflect the level descriptors at SCQF level 6. The SCQF level descriptors can be found following the link below:

<http://scqf.org.uk/>

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

Group discussion on complex vocational issues during formative work will develop language skills in a relevant context, enhance confidence and foster interpersonal skills.

Assessment approaches should be sufficiently flexible to allow for adaptation to the needs and situations of the learners and their chosen vocational discipline. A thematic approach could look at, for example, training needs, health and safety concerns or sustainable business development. An extended case study or project could provide a context for integrating Outcomes. For example, Outcome 1 assessment could involve reading of one or more reports, articles or memoranda on customer service or environmental issues. This could provide some background information for any written documents to be prepared for Outcome 2.

For summative assessment purposes, each learner should summarise and evaluate a relevant text provided by the tutor, and record individual responses in writing or orally, using their own words as far as possible.

Further investigation of the same topic could be carried out to inform a group discussion (Outcome 3). Written communication (Outcome 2) could include a written report presenting key information, supporting detail and conclusions/solutions or recommendations and an action minute of the discussion.

Any use of graphic information to support either written or oral communication should be to professional standards.

Providing formal, detailed feedback to learners is good practice and will be particularly valuable for those who need to be re-assessed on any Outcome. Precise, supportive comments should be related to Evidence Requirements. Retention of draft work, notes of any interventions or feedback from tutors, tracking records, e-mails or log records can be a valuable aspect of quality assurance, indicate progress and provide helpful information for the Internal and External Verification process.

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Outcome 1: Summarise and evaluate written information on a complex vocational issue

An appropriate length of text is likely to be between 700–800 words. A contextualised text, with content, format and language relevant to vocational purposes should be used. Graphics such as pictures, diagrams, tables or charts may support and enhance the communication.

The text could be from a business article, textbook, or website providing vocational information or it could be a model for one of the types of document to be produced as part of the work for Outcome 2.

The learner should survey and skim content, identify key points and some supporting detail, and extract information in a way that clearly demonstrates understanding.

A summary of key information and supporting detail might take the form of notes, bullet points or a report and could be produced in responses to structured questions. Written Communication is not being assessed in Outcome 1 but the task provides a useful opportunity for tutors to give feedback with a view to improving the learner's written communication skills. In some situations an oral response, which would have to be recorded, may be appropriate.

Evaluation should examine the effectiveness of the text in terms of purpose and readership. Accuracy, relevance and/or objectivity of content should be taken into account. Learners could comment on good practice in the use of format, style, structure, layout and/or language and could suggest possible improvements. In order to support responses, specific reference to the text is required.

Evaluation responses are likely to be 200 to 300 words in length.

The assessment task should take place in open-book and supervised conditions. Learners could refer to teaching notes and may use dictionaries to check the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary.

Outcome 2: Produce written information on a complex vocational issue

The task of the learner is to present accurate written information in a structured format appropriate to the vocational context. The brief should therefore draw on a practical situation, for example, review of and recommendations, eg proposals for improving services, equipment, health and safety issues. Evidence Requirements may be met by successful completion of one or more documents; a portfolio could, for example, include a short report of around 500 words with a related memorandum or letter, and a set of action minutes.

Before beginning to write, learners need to be aware of a style and format appropriate to purpose and readership. While the issue under consideration will be complex, the language used to give details on it need not be. The documents should follow standard English language conventions and the remit provided could include a structure and headings. The text read and evaluated in Outcome 1 might form a model for content, structure and style. Graphic materials, such as pictures, charts, tables or diagrams, may be incorporated to support the text; it should be clear when these are the original work of the learner.

Although use of technology is not mandatory, learners should understand its importance in the effective sourcing, storing and presenting of accurate, current information. Efficient use of dictionaries and/or appropriate software will support checks and correct use of spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

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An important aspect of delivery will be the setting of precise remits. Planning and organising the process should involve the learner in effective time management to structure, revise and redraft written work. Setting deadlines should reflect professional working practice.

The assessment task should take place in open-book conditions, with full access to teaching/learning notes, relevant research materials and learner drafts. Although some written communication (for example, revision of a draft report) may be undertaken outside the centre, conditions should be in place to ensure the authenticity of all evidence submitted by the learner. Supervised production of early drafts, as well as the retention of drafts, outlines and planning or tracking documents signed by the learner, is recommended. The problems and penalties associated with plagiarism should be explained and discussed at the start of the programme. Tracking software may be useful to check that written work is the original work of the learner.

Outcome 3: Produce and respond to oral communication on a complex vocational issue

The oral assessment task for Outcome 3 may be linked with the other Outcomes or stand alone.

Evidence Requirements may be met by successful completion of, for example:

- ◆ Preparation for, and contribution to, a formal discussion or brief meeting requiring investigation and technical problem solving.
- ◆ Preparation for, and consideration of, a business proposal or marketing plan, with responses to questions and discussion.

Variations in accent, intonation and idiom can be acceptable if the learners adhere to the conventions of English. The time allocated to oral assessment should reflect the type of task and the numbers involved. Each learner must talk for a total of at least five minutes, although input need not be continuous and part of the exchange can be in the form of responses to questions from others. A discussion or presentation should be timed and managed accordingly. Tasks could be undertaken in a small group or in a one-to-one situation, in person, by video-conferencing, webinar, webcam or similar.

If learners are undertaking a practical assignment, the discussion could focus on reporting and analysing information, drawing conclusions and making practical recommendations.

Each learner in a group would be expected to deal with a different aspect of the topic under discussion. The group might investigate, prepare and propose different solutions to a technical problem, then discuss and agree appropriate action. An individual learner could prepare information, explain the issues and then take and respond to questions. In order to cover the Evidence Requirements effectively, a group should involve manageable numbers and probably consist of no more than eight people.

Evidence of planning could include reference notes or, possibly, prepared overheads or handouts. Discussion decisions could be recorded in an action minute or as a log workbook entry. Templates could be used to ensure that documents produced would be suitable for distribution in a vocational environment. In all cases, the learner would have to control the presentation of information, use appropriate register and language, and work to professional standards. Use of aids to enhance delivery, (presentation software, digital sound/video, etc) is acceptable but not essential.

Evidence to be retained for verification should include a detailed observation checklist with copies of any supporting materials and appropriate written records of activity. Assessor notes

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on the checklist should be detailed, comprehensive and matched to Knowledge and Skills. There should be some recording of oral work in order to provide examples of standards and to support internal and external verification procedures.

Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment.

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

Communication

This Unit embeds all components of the Core Skill of *Communication* at SCQF level 6.

The general skills for this Core Skill are:

Oral Communication — *Produce and respond to oral communication on a complex topic*

Written Communication (Reading) — *Read, understand, and evaluate complex written communication*

Written Communication (Writing) — *Produce well-structured written communication on complex topics*

Problem Solving

This Unit provides opportunities for the development of all components of the Core Skill of *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 5.

The general skills for this Core Skill are:

Critical Thinking — *Analyse a situation or issue*

The specific skills for this component are:

- ◆ identify the factors involved in the situation or issue
- ◆ assess the relevance of these factors to the situation or issue
- ◆ develop an approach to deal with the situation or issue

Learners could be given a remit for written and/or oral work which involved consideration of various factors contributing to a technical problem and suggestions for a solution.

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Planning and Organising — *Plan, organise, and complete a task*

The specific skills for this component are:

- ◆ develop a plan
- ◆ identify and ensure you have the resources to carry out the plan
- ◆ carry out the task

A plan, and identification of possible approaches to an issue could precede the group discussion.

Reviewing and Evaluating — *Review and evaluate a problem solving activity*

The specific skills for this component are:

- ◆ evaluate the effectiveness of all stages of the problem solving strategy and assess or explain the relevance of the evidence
- ◆ draw conclusions and justify them with reference to the evidence

An evaluation of the effectiveness of decision making could be written up in the Conclusions/Recommendations section of a report or the record of a formal discussion.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

This Unit provides opportunities for the development of all components of the Core Skill of *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* at SCQF level 5.

The general skills for this Core Skill are:

Accessing Information — *Use ICT independently, effectively and responsibly to access information within a range of tasks*

The specific skills for this component are:

- ◆ make effective, independent and responsible use of ICT
- ◆ carry out searches for information using a range of electronic sources
- ◆ evaluate the results of the search strategy using given criteria

Finding out information or investigating a problem for a report or discussion could involve use of ICT, which, although not mandatory, would reflect workplace practice.

Providing and Creating Information — *Use ICT independently, effectively and responsibly to carry out a range of processing tasks*

The specific skills for this component are:

- ◆ make effective, independent and responsible use of ICT
- ◆ carry out a range of processing tasks using ICT
- ◆ locate and integrate data from a range of sources
- ◆ evaluate information

Effective use of ICT in presenting information in written reports and oral presentations is not mandatory but is likely to be routine. Accessing, using and storing electronic data will develop the skills needed in workplace practice.

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Learners could further develop ICT skills as they plan and manage the production of written and oral presentations. Learners should be aware of the need to develop efficient systems of recording and storing information.

Working with Others

This Unit provides opportunities for the development of all components of the Core Skill of *Working with Others* at SCQF level 5.

The general skills for this Core Skill are:

Working Co-operatively with Others — *In interactions, work with others co-operatively on an activity and/or activities*

The specific skills for this component are:

- ◆ identify own role and the roles that make up the activity and/or activities and the relationship between them
- ◆ organise own role to contribute effectively to the activity and/or activities, adapting role as necessary
- ◆ pro-actively seek support from others
- ◆ pro-actively provide support to others to complete the activity and/or activities

Co-operative activities will develop skills in collaboration, personal effectiveness and team working.

Reviewing Co-operative Contribution — *Review work with others in a co-operative activity and/or activities*

The specific skills for this component are:

- ◆ evaluate overall co-operative working, considering own involvement and the involvement of others, referring to supporting evidence
- ◆ draw conclusions and justify them with reference to supporting evidence
- ◆ identify own learning and objectives for future co-operative working

Discussion of issues, particularly when there is problem solving which involves decision making, could support the development of self-reflective approaches to co-operative working. Feedback from the assessor at all stages of delivery will encourage review and self-evaluation.

The practical focus of the Unit is designed to encourage resourcefulness and enhance Employability. Dependent on the range and nature of assignments there could be opportunities to develop knowledge and skills in Sustainable Development and Enterprise.

Essential Skills

This Unit is designed to develop skills for the workplace and for career progression. Suggestions have been offered as to how these skills could be developed. Tutors should maximise opportunities to develop employability skills. The following list recaps on earlier guidance and also highlights other skills that have been identified by employers as being essential for the workplace. These are not listed in order of priority.

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- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Interpersonal
- ◆ Creativity
- ◆ Flexibility/ability to adapt to different situations and environments
- ◆ ICT
- ◆ Team work/group work
- ◆ Working independently/self-management
- ◆ Using initiative/being proactive
- ◆ Problem solving, presenting ideas and making decisions
- ◆ Investigation
- ◆ Critically analysing and evaluating
- ◆ Self-evaluating with a view to identifying strengths and weaknesses and setting objectives for improvement
- ◆ Planning and organising
- ◆ Setting goals and making action plans
- ◆ Time management
- ◆ Working effectively to meet deadlines
- ◆ Negotiating/persuading
- ◆ Positive attitude to work
- ◆ Adopting professional standards and working practices
- ◆ Paying attention to detail
- ◆ Work experience/simulation
- ◆ Applying numeracy skills
- ◆ Developing an awareness of the global economy
- ◆ Developing an awareness of international culture
- ◆ Language skills
- ◆ Knowledge of chosen job or career path

Citizenship

Citizenship is the exercise of rights and responsibilities within communities at local, national and global levels. It is about making informed decisions, and taking thoughtful and responsible action, locally and globally.

Coverage of citizenship could include the following:

- ◆ having concern for the environment and for others
- ◆ being aware of rights and responsibilities
- ◆ being aware of the democratic society
- ◆ being outward-looking towards society
- ◆ being able to recognise one's personal role in this context; and
- ◆ being aware of global issues and understanding one's responsibilities within these, and of acting responsibly

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Sustainability

There are three main interconnected strands to sustainable development. Each can be addressed in learning processes.

Social: This strand is about quality of life. Think about educational impacts in terms of citizenship, the ability of groups of people to work together, the impacts of cultural integration, or improving security through crime reduction.

Economic: This strand is about infrastructure. The costs and benefits of sustainability are becoming more prominent for all professions, with many groups now considering the impact of current and future environmental directives. Learners are going to be affected by changes in working practices as a consequence of the implementation of these directives.

Ecological: Animals and plants become endangered or extinct; pollution and emissions are changing the natural systems we all rely on for clean air, water and food. In this strand, the genetic resources, and the systems for food and timber production are considered side by side with metal ore sources, fresh water and clean air. Sustainability recognises that people, and all other living things, depend on these resources being maintained rather than depleted or destroyed.

It is important to recognise that these three strands are not independent of each other, but that they should be viewed as an integrated whole. What is critical to the concept of sustainability is the understanding that all aspects of our lives depend on everything else that exists on Earth: be it people, social systems, earth systems, living things or non-living things. What happens in one place at one time can affect what happens somewhere else immediately or in the future.

Opportunities should be sought within teaching and learning to engage with the principles of sustainable development. Some examples might include:

- ◆ Review buying policies: where materials come from, where they go (eco-friendly products; fair trade products; using sustainable materials; reducing energy and waste bills)
- ◆ Show an awareness of different alternatives for materials or services
- ◆ Consider working practices: use of electronic media to communicate rather than face-to-face meetings
- ◆ Review working practices to ensure that they are environmentally sensitive; recycling, waste reduction; use of clean technologies
- ◆ Review and evaluate current reports or projects which address issues of sustainability
- ◆ Review strategies and recommendations from relevant professional bodies/review articles in current trade and professional journals
- ◆ Look at current environmental legislation and directives

Teaching, learning and assessment themselves can be used to provide evidence for sustainable development. Some work could be undertaken solely using electronic means. For example, electronic media could be used for discussion groups or dialogue between tutor and learner, and work could be submitted via electronic portfolios or blogs.

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History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges have made to the development of SQA Advanced Qualifications.

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General information for learners

Unit title: Workplace Communication in English (SCQF level 6)

This summary explains what Unit HR1C 46 *Workplace Communication in English* is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start the Unit and what you will need to do and achieve whilst undertaking the Unit. It also outlines other opportunities for further learning and employment.

Effective oral and written communication skills are essential to promote good relationships and effective practice in a working environment.

This Unit will focus on the practical approaches needed for successful vocational communication in English. You will read a relevant document critically, examining not just the content, but the language and presentation of the text in terms of its purpose and intended reader. You will show that you can summarise the main points of a written communication on a complex vocational issue, demonstrating both your understanding and your ability to identify and pick out key points and to evaluate the text.

You will go on to produce one or more formal written documents on a complex vocational issue. These will be the type of written communication that you would produce in a workplace, such as a report, proposal, letter or memorandum.

You will consider the types of oral communication that are essential in industry and business today. You will go on to plan and prepare your own oral contribution to a task involving a complex vocational issue, keeping formal written records of the work undertaken. You will present information orally, interact with others formally, listen and work in co-operation to reach decisions and conclusions.

Assessment

Outcome 1 — Summarise and evaluate written information on a complex vocational issue — firstly, you will summarise one text and secondly, you will evaluate the text in no fewer than 200 words. The assessment will be conducted in supervised, open-book conditions.

Outcome 2 — Produce written information on a complex vocational issue — you will produce written information amounting to a minimum of 800 words on a complex vocational issue. The assessment will be conducted in open-book conditions with arrangements in place to ensure that work is your own.

Outcome 3 — Produce and respond to oral communication on a complex vocational issue — you will plan, deliver and sustain an input of at least five minutes in an oral communication about a complex issue. The assessment will be conducted in open-book conditions.

There will be an opportunity to be re-assessed if you do not achieve the Outcomes in the first instance.

Your work will be monitored to ensure the authenticity of all evidence submitted for assessment purposes.

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

Core Skills

The Unit provides the following opportunities to develop Core Skills.

Communication

This Unit embeds all components of the Core Skill of *Communication* at SCQF level 6. You will be certificated for this Core Skill. The general skills for this Core Skill are:

Oral Communication — *Produce and respond to oral communication on a complex topic*

Written Communication (Reading) — *Read, understand, and evaluate complex written communication*

Written Communication (Writing) — *Produce well-structured written communication on complex topics*

Problem Solving

This Unit provides opportunities for the development of all components of the Core Skill of *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 5.

The general skills for this Core Skill are:

Critical Thinking — *Analyse a situation or issue*

Planning and Organising — *Plan, organise, and complete a task*

Reviewing and Evaluating — *Review and evaluate a problem solving activity*

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

This Unit provides opportunities for the development of all components of the Core Skill of *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* at SCQF level 5.

The general skills for this Core Skill are:

Accessing Information — *Use ICT independently, effectively and responsibly to access information within a range of task*

Providing and Creating Information — *Use ICT independently, effectively and responsibly to carry out a range of processing tasks*

Working with Others

This Unit provides opportunities for the development of all components of the Core Skill of *Working with Others* at SCQF level 5.

The general skills for this Core Skill are:

Working Co-operatively with Others — *In interactions, work with others co-operatively on an activity and/or activities*

Reviewing Co-operative Contribution — *Review work with others in a co-operative activity and/or activities*

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

Other Essential Skills

You will be given opportunities to develop key employability skills, as well as develop an awareness and understanding of citizenship and sustainability.

Opportunities may be taken by tutors to develop some of the following employability skills.

- ◆ Interpersonal
- ◆ Creativity
- ◆ Flexibility/ability to adapt to different situations and environments
- ◆ ICT
- ◆ Team work/group work
- ◆ Working independently/self-management
- ◆ Using initiative/being proactive
- ◆ Problem solving, presenting ideas and making decisions
- ◆ Investigation
- ◆ Critically analysing and evaluating
- ◆ Self-evaluating with a view to identifying strengths and weaknesses and setting objectives for improvement
- ◆ Planning and organising
- ◆ Setting goals and making action plans
- ◆ Time management
- ◆ Working effectively to meet deadlines
- ◆ Negotiating/persuading
- ◆ Positive attitude to work
- ◆ Adopting professional standards and working practices
- ◆ Paying attention to detail
- ◆ Work experience/simulation
- ◆ Applying numeracy skills
- ◆ Developing an awareness of the global economy
- ◆ Developing an awareness of international culture
- ◆ Language skills
- ◆ Knowledge of chosen job or career path

The skills developed in this Unit are essential both to you as a learner and to you in your working life.

Progression from this Unit is into further education and training or employment.