

WORKPLACE CORE SKILLS ASSESSMENT SUPPORT PACK



COMMUNICATION SCQF Level 5

Part 1: Information for assessors

Part 2: Exemplar assessment tasks

Part 3: Exemplar recording documentation

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Part 1: Information for assessors

What is involved?

The Unit is designed for the workplace and the content should involve tasks and skills that are suited to the requirements of the candidate's working environment.

The focus of the Unit is on transferable communication skills:

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

These skills should be useful to candidates in their current and future jobs, as well as in their social and personal lives.

The Unit is designed for those who have a reasonable level of skill and experience in communicating within the workplace. The work undertaken in the assessments may have some complex aspects and will require knowledge or experience of formal workplace communication, eg at intermediate or supervisor level. The Unit might be suitable for candidates who are currently working towards an SVQ/NVQ at level 3 or level 4.

Communication tasks can be combined with the other Core Skills Units: Numeracy, Working with Others, Problem Solving, and Information and Communication Technology. If you adopt this approach, records must be kept for each Core Skills Unit.

Guidance on the Unit

Candidates at SCQF level 5 are expected to be able to communicate with others through extended documents and discussions. They will deal with language that is sometimes complex and conveys different strands of information or ideas, not all of which will be familiar from the everyday working context. They should require little support in completing their tasks.

The 'What do I need to do' section of the Unit lists the knowledge, understanding, and competence that candidates must have and what they need to do to prove this. You may want to discuss these with the candidates. The following notes give detailed pointers on the things candidates need to know and be able to do.

What candidates need to do Reading and understanding

Reading skills can be developed and assessed by using or adapting material related to the working context of the candidate. Available documents might include reports, advertising materials, letters or e-mails with attachments, and workplace policies and procedures. Appropriate reading texts may not occur naturally in some workplaces, and you may have to design a suitable task that should relate to the everyday working experience of the candidates.

Understanding the purpose of a document

Candidates are not required to work out the purpose of the piece of writing in order to pass. You can tell them this as part of the assessment instruction. However, they do need to know the purpose in order to evaluate successfully. In their evaluation of how well the document achieves its purpose, candidates' understanding of purpose will be assessed.

Picking out important points from the document

Candidates must identify:

the main points that the writer is making

- points that back up the main idea
- action or information that the writer is looking for in response to the communication
- Candidates should be aware of different arguments and of the information that is being given to justify them.

Make links between the key information and ideas and the supporting detail

Candidates must demonstrate their ability to identify the links between supporting detail and the key information in the document. This may involve identifying information or details of the document's style that support or emphasise main ideas in the text.

Evaluating if the document is effective in meeting its purpose and readers' needs by commenting on content, style, and format

Candidates must be able to evaluate a document, eg by identifying whether:

- it is clear and easy to read
- it contains all the information the reader needed
- both sides of an issue are fairly represented
- it is well structured
- it contains appropriate vocabulary, including technical/specialised words if necessary
- the style of the document, e.g. the kind of language, pictures, layout, graphics, supports purpose and meaning.

When evaluating the piece of writing, the candidates must consider the aim or purpose. For example, if the purpose was to give instructions, these should have been set out clearly, in a logical order, and in language that could be understood by the intended reader. If the purpose was to give information or advice, was this complete, either in the main body of the text or in supplementary material? In a discussion paper, were both sides of the argument fairly represented or was a bias detected? Did headings in bold text or bullet points draw your attention to important or persuasive ideas?

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Candidates must give reasons for their decisions by making reference to the text.

Writing

At this level candidates will normally produce written communications as part of their working routine. However, if suitable writing tasks do not occur naturally in the workplace, you may have to set a special assessment. Written tasks should relate to the working experience of the candidates.

Writing for the reader

Candidates must decide who they are writing for and why, eg to inform, instruct, advise, or persuade. They should be clear about the main messages, and make sure that the way they write is appropriate for the readers, both in content and style, eg a report for the managing director will normally be more formal than an article for the staff magazine. They should demonstrate some awareness of the reading ability of the intended readership.

Candidates must be able to state clearly and unambiguously their reason for producing the written piece, eg:

- giving instructions
- presenting information
- explaining a point of view
- to advise or persuade

There may possibly be more than one purpose, eg to explain and persuade, or to inform and advise.

Choosing an appropriate format

Different formats are appropriate for different situations. The subject matter and readership of the document will influence the choice of format, eg:

- minutes of a meeting
- blog article
- short report

Candidates must choose an appropriate format. The choice of subject will also influence whether the communication is completed in handwriting or produced electronically. In today's workplaces, most written communications are produced electronically.

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Choosing layout, structure, vocabulary, and graphics

Thinking about the potential readers, the content, and the format will help candidates select an appropriate structure and layout. In a workplace context, there may well be a prescribed way of writing reports, letters, and e-mails, in which case this should be adhered to, although sometimes the writer may be allowed to influence the appearance of the finished piece. Candidates must:

- write in a logical order
- use paragraphs and headings if appropriate
- express the main idea first, or give it prominent placing, with supplementary information following
- use vocabulary familiar to the reader
- include other items, eg maps, diagrams, pie charts, and photographs, in support of the text if appropriate; these may be selected from a bank of images or created by the candidates

Emphasising the main points

Candidates must be able to use common conventions to emphasise the main points:

- prominence can be given to significant words or phrases by their order within the document or their placement in relation to other words
- repetition
- use of large or bold type, bullets, underlining

Selecting and including relevant information

Candidates must demonstrate the ability to:

- select information or ideas that are relevant to the main messages
- avoid including any material that may be interesting but has little bearing on their aim in writing the piece

Information will be presented and analysed, with selection and highlighting of the most significant details. Ideas and opinions will be developed and supported by evidence. Candidates may find it useful to prepare for this

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writing task by asking colleagues for the information they need, using existing internal documents as background, and by consulting textbooks, journals, the library, and the internet for source material.

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

Candidates must be able to:

- write in a clear, logical order, eg linking introduction, main body, and conclusion
- use paragraphs and headings as appropriate to the format of the document

At this level candidates may wish to separate out detailed supporting material as an appendix.

Using consistently accurate spelling and punctuation

It is important that words are spelled consistently and accurately so that the document looks professional. Candidates should check any words they are not sure of, which at this level may include some technical and specialist words, abbreviations, and terms, using a dictionary, spellchecker, or thesaurus.

Speaking and listening

The working environment should offer naturally occurring opportunities for discussions; the candidate should make a substantial contribution.

Alternatively, candidates may wish to give a short talk or demonstration about a particular project, product, or service, fielding questions from the listeners.

Judging the degree of formality needed

The candidate should be aware of, and respond to, the nature of the audience or discussion group, and make appropriate choices regarding the formality of the language used. An open discussion of staff welfare issues would require a more informal register than when making a presentation to management on the same topic.

Expressing ideas clearly, choosing appropriate language

Candidates should know how to prepare for important conversations or discussions, making sure they know what they want to say. They must choose vocabulary that is:

- appropriate to the topic
- generally familiar to listeners: if technical words or abbreviations are used that are unfamiliar to the listener, eg in a workplace briefing, these should be explained

Presenting and linking information/ideas in a logical order

Candidates must be able to present spoken information logically by constructing a speech or presentation with a recognisable structure, ie beginning, middle, and conclusion. Sometimes a summary can be an effective way of drawing the discussion or presentation to a close.

Vary tone, pace, and volume to emphasise the main points

Candidates must be able to use some of the most common spoken conventions to aid understanding and help keep listeners interested, eg:

- speaking slowly, clearly, and loudly enough
- varying speed and tone for emphasis
- pausing to allow for a response from the listener

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Using body language

Body language is a valuable clue to the mood and intention of the speaker. It is the unspoken supplement to the spoken words, and the speaker should be aware of and make use of this. Candidates should be encouraged to try to look as relaxed as possible (even if they are nervous) and smile (if it is appropriate to do so). The main indicators are:

- posture
- eye contact
- facial expression
- gesture, eg opening the hands in welcome, nodding or shaking the head

Adapting speaking to take account of sensitive issues or audiences

Candidates must take account of sensitive issues or audiences, for example avoiding jargon words or providing examples if addressing a non-specialist audience, or clarifying vocabulary for listeners whose first language is not English.

Listening carefully and responding to questions from others

It is important that candidates allow listeners/other speakers the opportunity to ask questions or to offer points of view. It is often appropriate to pause at intervals while speaking to allow time for explanation or repetition. However, if this does not happen, then the speaker should specifically ask for questions or opinions. The speaker must be prepared to provide clarification on:

- vocabulary
- specific topics
- the general sense of what has been said, repeating or rephrasing if necessary to aid understanding

Picking out the main points when listening to others

Candidates must identify the main points of the spoken communication not only by listening to the general sense of what is being said, but also by understanding some of the basic spoken conventions, eg:

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- usually the most important idea is presented first and sometimes repeated at the end for emphasis
- speakers will often stress key words and phrases by speaking more loudly or slowly at those points

Listening carefully and asking questions

It is important for candidates to make a significant contribution to any discussion by interacting with the other speakers and asking pertinent questions at suitable times during or after the spoken communication. They must:

- ask for clarification on any words or technical terms they have not understood
- be prepared to ask for additional information if they need it
- enter into discussion

Interpreting the way other speakers use voice and body language

Candidates must be able to interpret the ways that other speakers get their messages across. This may be from, eg:

- body language
- tone of voice

How do candidates show they have achieved the Unit?

The Unit requires the candidates to provide evidence for each of the three tasks.

Task 1: Reading and understanding

Candidates have to read, understand, and evaluate a document related to their work that presents and analyses factual content or a sustained point of view or central argument. They must then show their understanding of the document by identifying key information, ideas and supporting detail; and must evaluate the effectiveness of the document in meetings its purpose. This can be in a written or oral response.

Task 2: Writing

Candidates have to produce a well-structured document or a collection of documents totalling at least 500 words concerned with the presentation and analysis of information and/or with developing an opinion or argument.

Task 3: Speaking and listening

Candidates must either make a substantial contribution to a discussion on a work-related topic with one or more people (lasting a minimum of four minutes) or make a short presentation on a work-related topic to one or more people (lasting a minimum of three minutes with additional time for questions).

Candidates must produce evidence of all assessment standards from a single assessment activity for each task, although there are no time restrictions within reasonable limits.

They must not gather evidence from other assessment activities for different parts of the same task.

The three communication tasks can also be combined in a single strand of work, eg the candidate may have to read a complex document, write a report on the topic, and discuss it with colleagues.

Assessment requirements

Reading and understanding

You should choose reading material on a non-fiction topic that conveys several sets of information and/or a distinct point of view with some supporting detail. The reading material should combine factual content with analysis or present a sustained point of view. It may sometimes feature unfamiliar, abstract ideas and complexity in tone, point of view, or central argument. The reading material may have more than one purpose, eg to inform and report and evaluate, to express a reaction, or to persuade. The topic should be one that candidates may reasonably be expected to encounter through their workplace experiences. The reading material may include images as well as words. It may use some specialist/technical vocabulary and complex grammar. The structure, layout, and use of graphics and language should match the writer's purpose and the intended reader. The length of the chosen reading text should be appropriate to level 5, i.e. between 500 and 800 words.

Writing

You should use a task for assessment that is relevant to the candidates in their workplace. Documents may include images such as maps, sketches, diagrams, or photographs in support of the written text. These may be created by the candidate or selected from a bank of images. The candidate will use appropriate vocabulary, including specialist or technical terms, and sentence structures. The document will have a clearly defined purpose and audience. Information will be presented and analysed, with selection and highlighting of the most significant points. Ideas and opinions will be developed and supported by evidence. Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be consistently accurate.

Speaking and listening

The oral communication must be one spoken interaction between the candidate and one or more people. A discussion should have a clear purpose, be on a relevant topic, and allow for exploration and the reaching of a consensus. The candidate must make a substantial contribution. A presentation must include significant interaction with the audience. It may be

supported by images using IT software or multimedia tools. The topic should be one that is relevant to the candidate's workplace experiences.

Gathering evidence

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

You may wish instead to observe the candidate carrying out a task and use oral questioning. This requires you to create and complete a record of questions asked and candidate responses. You should use the assessment checklists in this pack to record that all standards have been met.

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

If you have chosen to integrate the communication work with other Units being undertaken by the candidate, it may be possible to assess the communication as part of a larger single activity. In this case you must keep separate records for this Unit.

You should try to identify naturally occurring opportunities for assessment where possible. There is exemplification for Task 1 in this pack as guidance, and there are some of the examples for Tasks 2 and 3 that could be used or contextualised for this purpose.

The assessment process is likely to involve one or more of the following:

- observation
- recording
- oral questioning

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

Planning

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You should work out where opportunities for meeting the Unit standards are likely to arise. Where possible, these should be built into the assessment process. You should explain and discuss this assessment process with the candidates so that they are clear about what is expected of them.

Part 2: Exemplar assessment tasks

Exemplar assessments are useful in the following ways:

- to illustrate to candidates the type of materials that could be used to generate evidence
- to help identify the type and amount of evidence that candidates should have gathered in their portfolio
- to help identify the level of complexity in evidence required for the Core Skill at this level
- to show what a good pass looks like in Task 1: Reading and understanding
- to help you to identify/create an assessment task related to the candidate's own work environment by adapting, or using directly, the exemplars in Task 2: Writing and Task 3: Speaking and Listening. These exemplars are in the form of a set of instructions.

Exemplar assessments

Task 1: Reading and understanding

The reading task should be a workplace document. The text used should present and analyse factual information or present a sustained point of view or argument.

Appropriate material might include an article on customer service or health and safety; a staff training briefing paper; a leaflet advertising a new product range; revised company policy and procedures.

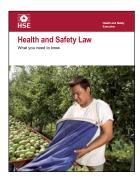
The following reading text and Exemplar Reading Report are examples of a good assessment in Task 1: Reading and Understanding at this level.

These exemplars should be used as guidance only. Centres should not use these materials for their own summative assessment.



Health and Safety Law

What you need to know



This is a web-friendly version of the *Health and Safety Law* leaflet published 04/09 All workers have a right to work in places where risks to their health and safety are properly controlled. Health and safety is about stopping you getting hurt at work or ill through work. Your employer is responsible for health and safety, but you must help.

What employers must do for you

- Decide what could harm you in your job and the precautions to stop it. This is part of risk assessment.
- 2 In a way you can understand, explain how risks will be controlled and tell you who is responsible for this.
- 3 Consult and work with you and your health and safety representatives in protecting everyone from harm in the workplace.
- 4 Free of charge, give you the health and safety training you need to do your job.
- 5 Free of charge, provide you with any equipment and protective clothing you need, and ensure it is properly looked after.
- 6 Provide toilets, washing facilities and drinking water.
- 7 Provide adequate first-aid facilities.
- 8 Report major injuries and fatalities at work to our Incident Contact Centre on 0345 300 9923. Report other injuries, diseases and dangerous incidents online at www.hse.gov.uk.
- 9 Have insurance that covers you in case you get hurt at work or ill through work. Display a hard copy or electronic copy of the current insurance certificate where you can easily read it.
- 10 Work with any other employers or contractors sharing the workplace or providing employees (such as agency workers), so that everyone's health and safety is protected.

What you must do

- 1 Follow the training you have received when using any work items your employer has given you.
- 2 Take reasonable care of your own and other people's health and safety.
- 3 Co-operate with your employer on health and safety.
- 4 Tell someone (your employer, supervisor, or health and safety representative) if you think the work or inadequate precautions are putting anyone's health and safety at serious risk.

If there's a problem

- 1 If you are worried about health and safety in your workplace, talk to your employer, supervisor, or health and safety representative.
- You can also look at our website for general information about health and safety at work.
- 3 If, after talking with your employer, you are still worried, you can find the address of your local enforcing authority for health and safety and the Employment Medical Advisory Service via HSE's website: www.hse.gov.uk.

Fire safety

You can get advice on fire safety from the Fire and Rescue Services or your workplace fire officer.

Employment rights

Find out more about your employment rights at www.gov.uk.

Further information

This leaflet is available at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/lawleaflet.htm. The information in this leaflet is available in a number of formats.

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Exemplar Reading Report

This is a leaflet that gives information in simple terms about Health and Safety Law to help people in the workplace. This is intended for all workers in all workplaces.

Look through the reading piece and produce a report about it following guidance that your assessor gives you. Here is a link to the text: https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/lawleaflet.pdf

1. Understand the Purpose

This Leaflet is about Health and Safety law and it is for anyone in the workplace.

2. Main ideas

Try to use your own words as far you can.

- Workers have the right to be protected from harm by their bosses but workers have to help them with this.
- Bosses have to do risk assessments of all the dangers in work and then explain it clearly so that everyone understands and then they have to give you free health and safety training and free PPE.
- Bosses have to provide toilets and places to wash in.
- Bosses have to insure you in case you get hurt at work.
- Workers have to do the free training and be careful when they work and you must tell someone if you think there is danger at work.
- You can talk to your boss or your H&S rep at work about the danger. Or you Can go to the HSE website for more information and help.

Supporting Detail: it's obvious that this is about health and safety law because there is a big bold title at the top of the leaflet saying that. This is surrounded by a lot of space, so it stands out. Also, you know it's about help because in the middle of the first list of the employer responsibilities, there is a phone number and website in bold so you can report any work dangers quicker.

Evaluation

This is quite a useful leaflet that gives good information clearly to all kinds of worker. It is helpful because it shows what bosses should do and what workers should do to make everyone safe at work.

The layout of the leaflet isn't very good. The writing is very cramped and anyone who finds it tough to read might be put off. The language is fine because it uses mostly simple words that most people will know, like "Follow the training you have received when using any work items".

Overall, the leaflet does a good job because the information is clear, but it would be better if it wasn't cramped, and it had a few more pictures to make more people want to read it. That way, more people would get the help.

Signature: Jamie Blair Date: 1 April, 2023

Task 2: Writing

Produce a report for your training manager about a training event you attended recently. Your report should include:

- the details of the programme and timetable
- who the speakers were and what the main points were
- how many delegates attended
- the topics covered in any workshops or discussion groups
- how useful the training event was for you
- whether or not you would recommend your organisation sending staff to a similar event and why

You may include as supportive material:

- any notes you made at the event
- the original programme and timetable
- a delegate list
- copies of slide shows used by speakers

You must write at least 500 words, not including any information that you did not create yourself, eg the original programme and delegate list, and slide shows used by speakers. Refer to Task 2 of the Unit to help you produce this report.

Task 3: Speaking and listening

Choose either a discussion or a presentation.

Discussion

You want to encourage your work team to take responsibility for a range of duties in the department, so are inviting them to contribute to an open and frank discussion to air any issues there may be. You are asking them to choose **one** of these topics:

- There have been considerable problems with the operation of a monthly rota for overtime working. Your line manager believes that the system is fair, since everyone was asked to agree in advance to the system currently operating. Some team members are not happy with their timetable, saying that they do not understand exactly what hours they are supposed to work within any one week. You need people to identify their problems and decide what should be done to get everyone working together.
- Staff members want senior management to consider rewarding good performance with quarterly bonuses. You all need to discuss how to present this idea in a way most likely to achieve the result you want. You will need to reach an agreement and make a note summarising your decisions.
- There are a number of issues across the organisation about health and safety. Your team has been designated the task of discussing the various points and deciding what should be done. These are:
 - Should there be a health and safety representative from each team?
 - What should the responsibilities of the representatives be?
 - Should health and safety policy, procedures, and information be made available to all staff?
 - How might information and updates be disseminated?

When you have chosen your topic, each of you should prepare for the discussion by taking time apart from the others to decide just what your opinions are, exactly what points you want to make, and how you will ensure

that the other speakers understand your opinions, ideas, and arguments. Task 2 of the Unit can help you with this.

The discussion should last at least four minutes. You should keep a brief record explaining the situation (eg who was present; what was being discussed; what was the purpose of the discussion). Your record might include any plan that you developed for your discussion.

Presentation

The colleagues in your team have asked you to represent them at the next senior management team meeting.

After lengthy discussion involving all team members, they have agreed that nursery facilities should be made available near the premises.

They want you to present their views to management and try to persuade them to agree to their proposal. They believe that there would be benefits to individuals and the organisation, eg reduction in time lost due to difficulties with existing childcare arrangements; saving on travelling time; contented staff.

Staff would be happy to pay the going rate for childcare.

Your presentation should be clear and identify:

- the reasons for your proposal
- the advantages to the organisation and staff
- the numbers of staff and children to be served by this facility

It would be an advantage if you used some support materials, eg:

- location map of some suitable premises
- minutes/notes of any of your team meetings where this was discussed

These could be produced as a PowerPoint slide show to supplement your speech. Task 2 of the Unit can help you plan your presentation.

You should speak for at least three minutes and allow extra time for questions.

You should keep a brief record explaining the situation (eg who was present; what the topic was; what was the purpose of your presentation). Your record might include any plan that you developed for your presentation.

Part 3: Exemplar recording documentation

This section gives some examples of forms that could be used by candidates and/or assessors to gather evidence and record assessment decisions.

You are encouraged to adapt these materials to suit you and your candidates' preferred approach, ie boxes can be made bigger, format can be changed to a non-table format, font size etc.

Assessment plan

You should work out where naturally occurring opportunities for meeting the standards are likely to arise and, where possible, build them into the assessment process.

You should explain and discuss the assessment process with candidates so they are clear about what is expected of them.

Assessment checklists

Assessment checklists contain all standards for each task in the left-hand column.

Candidates must produce evidence of all standards in their work in order to pass summative assessment.

Assessors should use assessment checklists to record assessment decisions for all standards in each task, and any relevant comments.

Candidates could use the assessment checklists as a means of crossreferencing evidence in their portfolio to the Unit.

Summary checklist

The summary checklist could be used to record the assessment decisions from the assessment checklists on a single form.

Assessment plan

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Assessment checklist

Communication (SCQF level 5)	understanding
Candidate	Date:
name:	Date

Task 1: Read, understand and evaluate a work-related document.			
	Evidence	Assessor initials and date	Comments
Understood the purpose of the document			
Picked out all important ideas and key points in the document			
Linked key information and ideas to supporting detail			
Evaluated the document's effectiveness in meeting its purpose and readers' needs by referring to:			
◆ content			
◆ style			
◆ format			

Assessment checklist

Communication (SCQF level 5)	Task 2: Writing
Candidate	Data
name:	Date:

Task 2: Produce a well-structured document or a collection of related documents totalling 500 words or more that presents and analyses information and/or develops an opinion or argument.

	Evidence	Assessor initials and date	Comments
Identified who will read the document and reasons for producing it			
Used a format that was appropriate to the readers and subject matter			
Used layout, structure, vocabulary, words, and appropriate graphics that made the piece of writing clear, emphasising the main points and varying sentence structure to suit purpose and audience			
Selected and included relevant information and ideas			
Presented information and ideas with some supporting detail in a logical and effective order			

Used spelling and		
punctuation that was		
consistently accurate		

Assessment checklist

Communication (SCQF level 5)	Task 3: Speaking and listening
Candidate	Date:
name:	

Task 3: Make a substantial contribution to a discussion on a work-related topic (lasting a minimum of four minutes) or give a short presentation on a work-related topic to one or more people (lasting a minimum of three minutes with additional time for questions).

Speaking	Evidence	Assessor initials and date	Comments
Judged appropriate degree of formality			
Expressed ideas clearly when speaking by using language that fitted the topic and that listeners understood			
Presented information and ideas in a logical order, linking related information and ideas			
Varied tone, pace, and voice to emphasise the main points and help keep listeners interested			
Used body language that improved communication			
Adopted speaking to take account of sensitive issues/audience			

Listening	Evidence	Assessor initials and date	Comments
Picked out the main points the speaker was making			
Interpreted the way the speaker used their voice and body language to help get their message across			
Listened carefully and asked questions to clarify anything			

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Summary checklist

Communication (SCQF level 5)	
Candidate name:	
Candidate number:	
Centre:	
	
Task	Date achieved
1 Reading and understanding	
2 Writing	
3 Speaking and listening	
Assessor's signature:	Date:

ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION Credit value

6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5



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