



**COMMUNICATION**  
**SCQF Level 6**

# **WORKPLACE CORE SKILLS UNIT**

## **What are Core Skills?**

Core Skills are skills and abilities that everyone needs in their work. This is true for every job in every workplace.

The Core Skills are:

- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Numeracy
- ◆ Information and Communication Technology
- ◆ Problem Solving
- ◆ Working with Others

Employers look for Core Skills when they are appointing new staff. They also expect their existing staff to have these skills.

Core Skills are important because they help you work effectively in your present job and also prepare you for jobs that you will do in future. Developing your Core Skills helps you deal with today's rapidly changing world and improve your career prospects.

## What is this Core Skills Unit about?

This Unit is about using your skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening in workplace situations.

Your assessor will explain anything in this Unit that you do not understand.

## What should I know or be able to do before I start this Unit?

You should either:

- ◆ have achieved the Core Skills Unit in Communication at SCQF level 5 or an equivalent qualification

or

- ◆ be able to show that you have some experience of communicating in the workplace, for example writing minutes, reading detailed instructions, giving a presentation to colleagues

## What do I need to do?

You will need to carry out each of the following three tasks:

### Task 1: Reading and understanding

Read, understand, and evaluate a complex document related to your work. The document must contain either a set of facts and an analysis of them or a sustained argument. It will be a substantial and detailed text with complex sentences, specialist words, and concepts that may be unfamiliar to you. It is likely to have more than one purpose. To do this you will have to:

- ◆ understand the purpose of the document:
  - ◆ your assessor will advise you about purpose as part of the assessment instructions
  - ◆ this will help you understand purpose in the document when you evaluate it
- ◆ identify and summarise all the important ideas, key points, and supporting detail in the document
- ◆ evaluate the document's effectiveness in meeting its purpose and readers needs by commenting on content, style, and format, for example:
  - ◆ is it clear and easy to read?
  - ◆ does it contain all the information a reader needs?
  - ◆ does it present all aspects of a difficult issue?
  - ◆ is it well structured?
  - ◆ does it contain appropriate vocabulary, including technical/specialised words where necessary?
  - ◆ is the writing style appropriate?
  - ◆ does the style of the document, e.g. the kind of language, pictures, layout, graphics, support the purpose?
  - ◆ could it be improved in any way?

## Task 2: Writing

Produce a well-structured document or a collection of related documents that convey several items of complex information, opinions, or ideas. To do this you will have to:

- ◆ decide who will read your document and your reason for producing it
- ◆ choose a format for your piece of writing that is appropriately adapted to the readers and the subject matter, for example a complex project proposal or a trade magazine article
- ◆ choose effective layout, structure, vocabulary, and graphics (if appropriate) that make your piece of writing clear, suit your topic, and are appropriate for your readers
- ◆ vary your sentence structure, paragraphing, and vocabulary to suit the purpose of your writing and your intended readers
- ◆ gather, select, and present the information/ideas with supporting detail in a logical order, linking related information/ideas, emphasising the main points to assist with the clarity and impact of your piece of writing
- ◆ use spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure that are consistently accurate
- ◆ select alternative words for variety and effect, using a dictionary or thesaurus if needed

### Task 3: Speaking and listening

Either make a substantial contribution to a discussion on a complex topic related to your work or give a short presentation on a complex work-related topic to one or more people. To do this you will have to:

- ◆ judge the degree of formality needed in a discussion or presentation and respond accordingly
- ◆ express your ideas clearly when speaking, for example choosing language that fits the topic and that your listeners will understand
- ◆ present your information or ideas in a logical order, linking related information or ideas to maximise impact
- ◆ vary tone, pace, and volume to emphasise the main points in what you are saying in order to help keep listeners' interest
- ◆ use your body language to improve your spoken communication, for example using open gestures, facial expressions, stance
- ◆ listen carefully to any questions from listeners and respond accordingly, for example by synthesising points of view expressed
- ◆ adapt your speaking to take account of sensitive issues or audiences, for example by giving examples to clarify certain points and avoiding jargon words
- ◆ pick out the main points another speaker is making on a complex topic
- ◆ interpret the way other speakers use their voices and body language to help get their message across, for example the tone of voice that they use, nuances, and inconsistencies that may be present
- ◆ listen carefully to what is being said and ask questions to clarify anything you do not understand

## How will I show that I have achieved this Unit?

You will need to show evidence that you have achieved all assessment standards in all three tasks in this Unit.

**For Task 1 Reading and understanding:** you might have produced written evidence after reading a document, such as a short report or a presentation, or your assessor may ask you questions about what you have read and make notes or a recording of what you said.

**For Task 2 Writing:** you may be able to use the document you have produced for Task 1 as evidence. Your document(s) is likely to total 700 words or more.

**For Task 3 Speaking and listening:** your assessor will observe you and take notes or a recording of the activity, which should last a minimum of four minutes, including time for questions. You should also keep brief notes made in preparation for the task, for example:

- ◆ what was the subject, who was present, what was the purpose of the speaking event?
- ◆ your plan, your presentation or discussion notes
- ◆ a self-evaluation of how well you think you performed.

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.

## What might be involved?

This Unit may be achieved in many ways. Examples of tasks you might do are:

- ◆ summarise and evaluating a substantial research report from a trade or professional journal
- ◆ analyse and evaluate the annual report of a competitor company; inferring the readership and purpose; commenting on the effectiveness of the presentation
- ◆ write a detailed report to management on the incidence and causes of recent accidents in the workplace, with suggestions as to how the accident rate could be reduced in future
- ◆ produce a well-structured report of a complex laboratory investigation that draws detailed conclusions from the research evidence
- ◆ give a work briefing for performance of a complex task or procedure, responding to questions
- ◆ make a formal presentation that collates and analyses information and data and presents conclusions on findings from a substantial work project that encourages discussion with colleagues

## What can I do next?

You could consider doing other Core Skills Units in:

- ◆ Numeracy
- ◆ Information and Communication Technology
- ◆ Problem Solving
- ◆ Working with Others

Your assessor can advise you about this.

## Guidance for assessors

Further information about delivery, assessment, and evidence requirements for this Unit can be found in the corresponding Assessment Support Pack. In addition, the *Guide to Assessing Workplace Core Skills* provides further information on assessment.

## Disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative competence standards for Units.

Additional advice and guidance for learners with disabilities and/or additional support needs should initially be discussed with the centre where the learner is registered.

If the centre is unable to offer a satisfactory solution then the learner, usually in conjunction with the centre, should contact the External Verifier of the Awarding Body where the learner is registered for certification.

## Becoming an approved awarding body

Workplace core skills may only be offered by an SQA approved awarding body. Information on how to become an 'approved' Awarding Body is published on SQA Accreditation's website.

[http://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/Awarding\\_Body\\_Approval/Awarding\\_Body\\_Approval](http://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/Awarding_Body_Approval/Awarding_Body_Approval)

## Unit reference codes

This workplace core skills unit is offered by a number of different awarding bodies. The unit reference codes for each awarding body offering this workplace core skills unit are as follows:

[http://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/Qualifications/Workplace\\_Core\\_Skills/Workplace\\_Core\\_Skills](http://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/Qualifications/Workplace_Core_Skills/Workplace_Core_Skills)



## ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

### Credit value

6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6



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**Tel:** 0345 213 5249  
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**Website:** [http://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/Qualifications/Workplace\\_Core\\_Skills/Workplace\\_Core\\_Skills](http://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/Qualifications/Workplace_Core_Skills/Workplace_Core_Skills)

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