



Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Trade Union Organising and Representation: Introduction to Health and Safety Legislation

Unit code: H2XD 34

Superclass: PL

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Unit purpose

This Unit is designed for trade union health and safety representatives who are new to their role or may have not undertaken this level of training in the subject. In this Unit candidates will develop their knowledge and understanding of current health and safety legislation to enable them to help maintain and improve conditions in the workplace.

This is a specialist mandatory Unit of the HNC in Trade Union Organising and Representation and is also one of the three Units that comprise the Professional Development Award in Trade Union Organising for Health and Safety at SCQF level 7. It can also be delivered as a standalone Unit, perhaps for the purposes of continued professional development.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- 1 Explain current relevant health and safety legislation with reference to workplace practice.
- 2 Evaluate the relevance of sector or occupation specific health and safety legislation to current workplace practices.
- 3 Evaluate an employer's health and safety policy.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Although entry is at the discretion of the centre, it is strongly recommended that candidates possess good communication and interpersonal skills. Candidates should be able to demonstrate the support of their nominating union. It would be beneficial if the candidate had undertaken some previous trade union or health and safety training.

General information (cont)

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Core Skills

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

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

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.

This Unit is designed to develop candidate's knowledge and understanding of current health and safety legislation to enable them to contribute to the maintenance and improvement of conditions in the workplace.

This is a mandatory Unit in the Professional Development Award in Trade Union Organising for Health and Safety and is also contained within the HNC in Trade Union Organising and Representation.

It can also be undertaken as a standalone Unit, perhaps for the purposes of continued professional development.

It is recommended that it be delivered as part of a trade union's education programme.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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The section of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or Skills and Evidence Requirements are Mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Explain current relevant health and safety legislation with reference to workplace practice.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Health And Safety At Work Act (HASAWA).
- ◆ Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations (SRSCR).
- ◆ Management of Health and Safety At Work Regulations (MHSAWR).
- ◆ Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).
- ◆ Relevant Codes of Practice and Guidance Notes.
- ◆ Current workplace health and safety issues and practices.
- ◆ Workplace safety committees.

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ explain relevant parts of the Health and Safety at Work Act (HASAWA) with reference to current workplace practices
- ◆ explain the Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations (SRSCR), relevant Codes of Practice and Guidance Notes with reference to examples of workplace practices regarding the role and function of the Safety Representative
- ◆ describe the duties imposed upon employers under the Management of Health And Safety At Work Regulations (MHSAWR) and assess an employer's compliance
- ◆ explain the requirements of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) with reference to a range of examples of incidents of injuries, diseases or dangerous occurrences
- ◆ explain the functioning of a workplace safety committee with reference to the Safety Committees and Safety Representatives Regulations (SRSCR)

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 2

Evaluate the relevance of sector or occupation specific health and safety legislation to current workplace practices.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Current relevant health and safety legislation, policies and agreements.
- ◆ Current relevant sector or occupation specific regulations, eg Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), Display Screen Equipment (DSE), Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), etc.
- ◆ Examples of serious health and safety problems at work.
- ◆ Workplace health and safety issues and practices.
- ◆ Evaluation skills.

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ relate current relevant legislation to a minimum of three workplace health and safety issues
- ◆ describe duties placed upon an employer under relevant health and safety regulations
- ◆ evaluate the extent to which current regulations can help resolve examples of serious health and safety problems at work

Outcome 3

Evaluate an employer's health and safety policy.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ What should be covered by employer health and safety policies.
- ◆ Current employer health and safety policies.

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ explain best practice in employer health and safety policies
- ◆ evaluate an employer's health and safety policy and where necessary make appropriate recommendations for improvement

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Trade Union Organising and Representation: Introduction to Health and Safety Legislation

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The Support Notes 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 is a specialist mandatory Unit of the HNC in Trade Union Organising and Representation and is also one of the three units that comprise the Professional Development Award in Trade Union Organising for Health and Safety. It can also be delivered as a standalone Unit, perhaps for the purposes of continued professional development. It is intended for Trade Union Health and Safety Representatives.

Trade union health and safety representatives require up-to-date knowledge and understanding of health and safety legislation to help them defend and seek to improve working conditions. This Unit is intended to provide a contextualised introduction to the subject and its practical application.

Guidance on the delivery of this Unit

It is envisaged that initial delivery will be as part of the relevant specialist PDA and that candidates will progress to further Units of the HNC in Trade Union Organising and Representation.

Candidates will be practising trade union health and safety representatives active in the workplace. Course participants are likely to attend in groups drawn either from a single workplace or sector or from a variety of workplaces and sectors. Courses incorporating this unit are therefore best delivered in short blocks or via day release, attended by cohorts of between ten and twenty participants. The tutor should be an experienced trade unionist with knowledge and understanding of trade union structures, policy and practice as well as health and safety legislation and practice.

Participant-centred, co-operative group work is highly recommended. Candidates will bring a range of valuable existing knowledge and experience, whether from trade union involvement, work, previous study or life in general and it is important to promote exchange of knowledge, experience and views in a mutually respectful, mutually supportive environment. Guidelines for working together should be agreed from the outset.

By the end of Outcome 1 candidates should be able to explain current relevant health and safety legislation with reference to workplace practice. A good introduction might be group discussion of current workplace health and safety issues, focused not only on the most apparent hazards, eg slips, trips, falls, working at height, poor lighting, working with chemicals and so on but also on the way work is organised in terms of pace, intensity, hours of work and shift patterns and the employer's approach to health and safety.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

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Participants could then be asked to identify and relate relevant parts of the Health and Safety at Work Act to the problems they have highlighted. This approach would help them to begin to relate legislation to workplace health and safety problems and familiarise them with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act. It could also be used as an introduction to common law duties, civil law duties and court systems.

It is important that Trade Union Health and Safety Representatives are aware of the Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations (SRSCR) and by the end of Outcome 1 candidates should be able to explain the Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations with reference to workplace practices. Case studies might be useful here or participants could be provided with examples of the sorts of misunderstandings that can arise in the workplace over the function and rights of the Safety Representative and devise possible responses with reference to the SRSCR, quoting which regulation, section of the code of practice and guidance notes apply.

Trade union health and safety representatives should also be aware of the duties imposed upon employers under the Management of Health and Safety At Work Regulations (MHSAWR) and in a position to assess an employer's compliance. To this end, participants could be guided to make brief notes on employers' duties (eg in respect of risk assessment; principles of protection; health and safety arrangements; health surveillance; health and safety assistance; serious and imminent danger; information for employees, co-operation and co-ordination; capabilities and training; employees responsibilities; temporary workers; new or expectant mothers and young persons) and asked to compare each of these to the current situation at work. Their findings and potential strategies for ensuring compliance could be discussed in groups before being reported back for wider discussion.

The use of a range of case studies might help ensure that participants are able to explain the requirements of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) with reference to a range of examples of incidents. Participants could work in groups using the HSE Guide to RIDDOR to decide whether a variety of cases should be reported and what records should be kept by the employer.

By the end of Outcome 1 candidates should also be able to evaluate the functioning of a workplace safety committee. It is therefore important that delivery includes activity designed to clarify what the SRSC Regulations identify as the functions of the safety committee and affords opportunity to compare this to how the safety committees of the participants actually function.

By the end of Outcome 2 candidates should be able to evaluate the relevance of sector or occupation specific health and safety legislation to workplace practices. There are many regulations relevant to health, safety and welfare at work in the UK and this Outcome is intended to ensure that participants are familiar at least with regulations that are of relevance to their own occupations or sectors. Delivery should aim to provide an opportunity for participants to become familiar with relevant regulations and gain practice in using them in relation to workplace problems.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

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HSE publications to which course participants will need access could include but are certainly not limited to Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations, Work With Display Screen Equipment, Personal Protective Equipment Regulations, Manual Handling Regulations, Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations and so on. One approach would be for participants to work in groups to identify what the employer should do to comply with relevant legislation in the case of either one of the most serious problems highlighted in Outcome 1 or a case study provided by the tutor. They should then be well placed to evaluate the extent to which relevant regulations can help resolve examples of serious health and safety problems at work.

Outcome 3 requires candidates to evaluate an employer's health and safety policy. Course participants should therefore be encouraged to obtain and bring copies of their own employers' policies. Delivery might include an opportunity to compare policies and develop a checklist of what should be covered, (eg statement of intent; details of responsibilities for health and safety in the organisation; details of safe systems of work/ working practices; identification of related procedures; arrangements for review; role of safety representatives; consultation arrangements; constitution and authority of the safety committee and so on). Participants could then compare their employers' policies to best practice and where necessary, identify any improvements that need to be made.

Guidance on the assessment of this Unit

This Unit could be assessed holistically with evidence to cover all three Outcomes stored in a portfolio or workbook.

Assessment could comprise several separate tasks and it would be possible for a candidate to combine and submit these as one complete assignment. Evidence for assessment can be in any appropriate format as long as the minimum Evidence Requirements are met. For example, assessment may include case studies, group discussion, role play, presentations, written or oral reports and/ or diagrammes.

Assessment Guidelines

Outcome 1

Outcome 1 assessment could comprise short answers or reports in any appropriate format in response to a series of questions.

Outcome 2

Outcome 2 assessment could comprise short answers or reports in any appropriate format in response to a series of questions or case studies.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Outcome 3

Outcome 3 assessment could comprise an evaluation report based on employer policies and best practice checklists in any appropriate format

Online and Distance Learning

This Unit could be delivered by open learning; however it would require careful planning by the centre to ensure the sufficiency and authenticity of candidate evidence.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

The Core Skill of *Communication at SCQF level 6* will be developed by candidates through a range of activities (both written and oral) as well as class and group discussions.

The Core Skill of *Problem Solving at SCQF level 6* will be developed as the candidate will be dealing with various complex workplace issues and will also learn about the trade union approach to problem solving.

The Core Skill of *Working with Others at SCQF level 6* will be developed as the candidate will be involved in group discussions and group tasks, participate in union team building activities, theory and practice.

The Core Skill of *Information and Communication Technology at SCQF level 5* will be developed as the candidate will likely utilise computer search engines when carrying out research.

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for candidates

Unit title: Trade Union Organising and Representation: Introduction to Health and Safety Legislation

This Unit is for you if you are new to the role of trade union health and safety representative or wish to undertake further training in this subject. The Unit is designed to provide you with the knowledge and understanding of current health and safety legislation to enable you to help maintain and improve conditions in the workplace.

To undertake this Unit you must be able to demonstrate the support of your nominating union. The Unit is mandatory within the PDA in Trade Union Organising for Health and Safety at SCQF level 7 and is also contained within the HNC in Trade Union Organising and Representation.

There are three Outcomes in this Unit.

In Outcome 1 you will learn about current health and safety legislation and how this relates to workplace practice.

In Outcome 2 you will examine the relevance of health and safety legislation policy and agreements and evaluate how current legislation can help resolve health and safety issues at work.

For Outcome 3 you will explain best practice in employer health and safety policies and evaluate an employer's health and safety policy against that best practice — making appropriate recommendations for improvement where appropriate.

Assessment for the Unit is varied, with a mix of your responses to questions and set assignments which can include diagrammes, checklists and evaluation reports.

There may be opportunities during the Unit for you to also develop your Core Skills in *Communication, Problem Solving, Information and Communication Technology* and *Working with Others*.