Work place Core Skills Unit
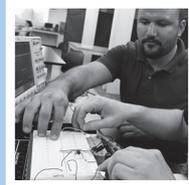
What are Core Skills?

Core Skills are skills and abilities which 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 which you will do in future. Developing your Core Skills helps you deal with today's rapidly changing world and improve your career prospects.

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Part 1: Information for assessors

What is involved?

The Unit is designed for the workplace and the content should involve an activity and/or activities that are suited to the requirements of the candidate's working environment.

The focus of the Unit is on the candidate's behaviour and attitude towards others when working on a shared activity/activities rather than the activity/activities themselves. Candidates will demonstrate their co-operative working skills by:

♦ carrying out an activity and/or activities co-operatively with others

♦ reviewing own co-operative contribution and the contribution of others

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 significant skill and experience in working with others in the workplace. The interactions undertaken in the assessments will be complex, eg at managerial level. The Unit might be suitable for candidates who are currently working towards an SVQ/NVQ at level 4.

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

Guidance on the Unit

Candidates at SCQF level 6 should be able to work co-operatively with others on a workplace activity and/or activities that involve complex interactions. They should require very 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

Carrying out an activity and/or activities co-operatively with others

Analysing the requirements of their role and the roles of others
Candidates must analyse:

♦ their own role within the activity and/or activities

♦ the roles of others

♦ the relationship between these roles

Organising and carrying out their role
Candidates must demonstrate that they can

♦ organise and carry out their own work effectively, eg:
  ♦ setting their own priorities

  ♦ scheduling own work to fit in with others

  ♦ taking responsibility for their own contribution to the co-operative effort

  ♦ adapting their role and behaviour when appropriate, eg by accommodating any difficulties or changing circumstances

Negotiating working methods that are consistent with available resources

Candidates must be able to negotiate working methods with others working on the same activity and/or activities. They will need to consider:

♦ the resources available, eg

  ♦ financial resources

  ♦ the skills and knowledge of the others working on the activity and/or activities

  ♦ whether any additional human resources are available from outside the immediate co-operative working activity and/or activities, eg IT, secretarial, or administrative support

♦ methods of working that will be most effective within the resources available, eg:

  ♦ using central administration support

  ♦ setting travel limitations to stay within budget

Promoting co-operative working towards a consensus

At this level support should go beyond supplying information and giving practical help, eg:

♦ anticipating others' needs: candidates should be alert for occasions when they can help others, even if they have not been asked to do so

♦ being aware of situations where they can make another person's task easier by intervening before a problem occurs; acting tactfully and sensitively

♦ recognising occasions when someone simply needs some time and space to work things out for themselves

♦ recognising and valuing the roles and input of others; demonstrating awareness that people have different skills, strengths, and limitations

♦ sharing resources and equipment

♦ dealing sensitively with any disagreements and, if necessary, dealing with conflict

♦ giving reassurance and encouragement, eg by giving praise

Modifying behaviour to meet the needs of others and of different situations

Candidates must demonstrate their ability to adapt their role in the collaborative activity, eg

♦ others suggest that someone else is better equipped to take on the candidate's role

♦ restrictions on resources mean that roles have to be combined

♦ deadlines have been changed and more people need to co-operate on a particular task

♦ people originally involved in the activity and/or activities have been diverted to other work

Motivating self and others to progress towards a common goal, overcoming any barriers and/or difficulties

Candidates should demonstrate the ability to motivate others:

♦ offering encouragement

♦ giving praise

♦ encouraging open communication with all those working on the co-operative activity: sharing problems and obstacles

♦ sharing good practice and news of good progress

♦ being cheerful: keeping everyone's spirits up by introducing humour when things are difficult

Reviewing co-operative contribution

Candidates must reflect on and review their own performance, and on how well the co-operative working arrangements operated overall. You should encourage them to keep a log or make a recording of their activity and/or activities that they can easily check back to identify the things they think they did well, where they experienced any difficulty, and any areas for

improvement. You should explain that, even if they feel that they had some difficulties, this does not mean that they will not achieve the Unit.

Developing criteria for evaluating own contribution and the contribution of others

The candidates should identify and develop criteria for analysing and evaluating their own contribution to the activity and/or activities, and for the overall co-operative working process. The evaluation criteria should consider:

- how well roles and tasks were organised and carried out, eg:
  - did they and others complete all their activities on time
  - was the common goal achieved effectively?

- the interaction between all those involved in the activity and/or activities, eg:
  - did they negotiate appropriate working methods
  - did they adapt their role/roles to suit any changing circumstances?

- the interpersonal contributions of the candidate and others, eg:
  - did they respond sensitively to others' needs by offering encouragement
  - did they share resources
  - did they recognise and value the diverse strengths of others
  - how did they resolve any difficult issues and deal with disagreement
  - how did they motivate themselves and others, overcoming any difficulties and barriers?

Seeking and considering feedback and advice on their co-operative contribution

Candidates should identify questions to ask others involved in the co-operative working that will help them evaluate the effectiveness of their own contribution to the activity and/or activities. These should relate to the evaluation criteria developed by the candidate.

Using chosen criteria and feedback to evaluate how well they co-operated with others, and how well the co-operative working arrangements operated overall

Candidates must evaluate their own contribution, and the contribution of others, to co-operative working using the criteria they developed and the feedback received from others. They must draw conclusions from this evaluation and justify them with supporting evidence.

Setting personal objectives for improving their own co-operative working skills and future co-operative working arrangements

Candidates must use the reflections and conclusions to:

♦ set objectives for how they could improve their own co-operative working skills

♦ make recommendations for how future co-operative working arrangements could be improved

How do candidates show they have achieved the Unit?

The Unit requires the candidates to provide evidence for both tasks:

Task 1: Work co-operatively with others

Candidates must work co-operatively with at least one other person, who may be a colleague, client, or customer, to achieve a common goal.

Task 2: Checking and evaluating

Candidates must check how well they and others involved contributed to the co-operative working activity and/or activities.

Assessment requirements

Candidates may be working co-operatively with others on various activities as part of their existing job role. Evidence from more than one co-operative working activity can be used as evidence against either of the Unit tasks. The activity and/or activities should have a clear aim and be capable of being broken down into separate roles, which may be complex.

The roles and relationships will not be obvious and the candidate should be able to identify emerging role changes and adapt own behaviour to accommodate changing dynamics.

The interpersonal skills needed will be varied, some of which may be challenging.

In assessing this Unit, your focus should be on the way the candidates went about the activity and/or activities, rather than whether or not the activity and/or activities were completely successful.

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 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.

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 Working with Others with other Units being undertaken by the candidate, it may be possible to assess Working with Others 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. The exemplar in this pack 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

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

Note for assessors

You can use the exemplar assessments given in this section in several 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 help you to identify/create an assessment task related to the candidate's own work environment

♦ as an off-the-shelf assessment, although every effort should be made to source/provide candidates with assessment materials that relate to their specific area of work

Exemplar assessments

At this level there should be sufficient opportunity for candidates to work with a variety of situations that challenge them in the way they work with others, their adaptability, and range of interpersonal skills.

Where opportunities are limited, you should consider developing a tailored assessment activity that involves collaborative working with one or more companies engaged in similar work.

Some suggested activities might include:

1   organising an open day; either for your own or linked companies

2   running a skills competition for your company and similar businesses in your local area

3   setting up a training event for your skill area, inviting all local companies to participate

4   investigating and making a half-day presentation on a range of issues affecting the profitability of your company or industry sector

5   organising and managing a showcase event to promote your company's products or services

Part 3: Exemplar recording documentation

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

You are encouraged to adapt these materials to suit you and your candidate's 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

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

Assessors could use the assessment checklists to record assessment decisions and any relevant comments.

Summary checklist

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

Assessment plan

Working with Others (SCQF level 6)

Candidate: _____

Task to be assessed: _____

Proposed date of assessment: _____

Proposed method of assessment	Tick	Notes
Assignment or project		
Observed performance		
Witness testimony		
Written questions		
Oral questioning		
Product evaluation, eg written document		
Previous evidence		
Other evidence		

Details agreed and signed by:

Assessor _____

Candidate _____

Line manager (if required) _____

Date _____

Assessment checklist

Working with Others (SCQF level 6)

Task 1: Working
co-operatively with others

Candidate name:_____   Date:_____

Task 1: Work co-operatively with at least one other person, who may be a colleague, client, or customer, to achieve a common goal			
	Evidence	**Assessor initials and date**	**Comments**
Analysed the requirements of their own role and the roles of others within the co-operative activity and/or activities and the relationship between them			
Organised own role to contribute effectively to the co-operative activity and/or activities, adapting it as necessary			
Negotiated realistic working methods that were consistent with the resources available			
Promoted co-operative working towards a consensus, eg offering encouragement, valuing diversity, sharing resources, and dealing sensitively with disagreement			
Modified behaviour to meet the needs of others and different situations			
Motivated self and others to progress towards a common goal, overcoming any barriers and/or difficulties			

Assessment checklist

Working with Others (SCQF level 6)

Task 2: Reviewing co-operative contribution

Candidate name:_____   Date:_____

Task 2: Check how well you and others involved contributed to the co-operative working activity and/or activities			
	Evidence	**Assessor initials and date**	**Comments**
Developed criteria to evaluate their own contribution and the contribution of others involved			
Sought and considered feedback and advice on overall effectiveness of the co-operative activity and/or activities			
Used their chosen criteria and feedback to evaluate how well they co-operated with others, and how well the co-operative working arrangements operated overall, justifying their conclusions with supporting evidence			
Used conclusions and reflection to set objectives for how they could improve their own co-operative working skills and made recommendations on any future co-operative working arrangements			

Summary checklist

Working with Others (SCQF level 6)

Candidate name:_____

Candidate number:_____

Centre:_____

Task	Date achieved
1 Working co-operatively with others	
2 Reviewing co-operative contribution	
Assessor's signature:_____	Date:_____