



**Arrangements for:
Employability Award
at SCQF level 3**

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1 Introduction

This is the Arrangements Document for the Award in *Employability* at SCQF level 3 Award. It includes the rationale for the Award, its aims, guidance on access, details of the Award structure, and guidance on delivery and assessment.

2 Rationale for the development of the Award

The Award in *Employability* at SCQF level 3 is derived from a number of Scottish government initiatives designed to enhance the development of employability skills in Scotland and to recognise more fully the achievements of learners.

In the Ministerial Foreword for *Skills for Scotland: A Lifelong Learning Strategy* (Scottish Government September 2007), the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning stated, ‘We need to improve employability skills for those without jobs’. This is reinforced by Chapter 4 of the document which points out that, ‘to achieve our vision for skills it is not enough just to provide high quality training and learning to stimulate jobs growth, we must also encourage and support individuals to access learning and employment.’

It defines employability as ‘the combination of factors and processes which enable people to progress towards or get into employment, to stay in employment and move on in the workplace.’ It indicates that employability skills is ‘a term that refers to skills, behaviours, attitudes and personal attributes that are necessary for an individual to seek, gain and sustain employment and function effectively in the workplace and are transferable to a variety of contexts. Employability skills prepare individuals for work rather than for a specific occupation.’

Learning and training providers need to work ‘with colleges, delivering core, employability and vocational skills and training to meet national, regional and local needs.’ The strategy also highlights the need for them to ‘work with Awarding bodies and use SCQF to enable all learning to be recognised.’

The Award also responds to the Scottish Executive Report, *A Curriculum for Excellence* (2004) which called for ‘more skills-for-work options for young people, robustly assessed, to help them progress into further qualifications and work’. As a result, SQA has developed a wide range of ‘Skills for Work’ Courses. These contain aspects of employability but they are set in the context of specific work environments and do not cover employability in the more general sense defined above.

Building the Curriculum 3 encourages curriculum planners to provide more opportunities for vocational education. For many learners, especially those in the ‘more choices, more chances’ cohort, some qualifications may be too rigid and long in duration. This makes it more difficult for all learning to be recognised. In accordance with this wish for flexibility this Award consists of ‘bite-sized’ Units based on smaller amounts of learning. This should make it easier for learners to achieve and to gain recognition for their achievements.

3 Aims of the Award

The Award is designed to prepare candidates to enter the world of work. It aims to enable young people to be successful in making, and sustaining, the transition from non-work environments into employment. As a result, they will be better equipped to channel their aspirations to work into actual employment. The Award is also designed to contribute to the development of the four purposes of the *Curriculum for Excellence*: successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

3.1 Principal aims of the Award

The principal aims of the Award are to enable learners to:

- ◆ identify, and reflect on, achievements from their previous and current experience which will help them to gain employment
- ◆ identify skills and attributes necessary for employment
- ◆ develop appropriate job seeking skills which will enable them to access employment
- ◆ understand the demands and challenges of the workplace
- ◆ recognise differences between the workplace and other contexts with which they may be familiar
- ◆ understand what is involved in being an employee
- ◆ help candidates to understand what skills they need to enter sustained employment
- ◆ identify and take advantage of suitable opportunities for employment

3.2 General aims of the Award

In general, the Award will:

- ◆ build the confidence that learners have about their ability to gain employment
- ◆ develop skills and attitudes necessary for them to seek, gain and sustain employment
- ◆ help them to understand the consequences of actions they take, or have taken, on their ability to seek, gain and sustain employment
- ◆ contribute to enhancing the self esteem and self awareness of learners in relation to employment
- ◆ enable them to become effective contributors to society through employment
- ◆ promote a positive and realistic approach to employment

3.3 Target groups

The Award is targeted at young people who have aspirations to gain employment and are preparing to make the transition into work. This might be a staged process involving further education or training. Members of the target group could be in school, college or in other educational or training programmes. They might also come from other backgrounds and not be in mainstream or full time education.

3.4 Employment opportunities

The Award aims to prepare individuals for employment in general rather than for any specific occupation. It aims to develop skills, attitudes and understanding which will be transferable across all employment contexts. It seeks to help learners to enhance their employability skills which, in turn, should make it easier for them to understand and access specific employment opportunities.

4 Access to the Award

No specific knowledge is required to embark on this Award. Learners might come to it from circumstances in which they have had little or no experience of the world of work. However, they may bring with them their own experience of the world of work. This may have been gained through part time work they have done or through involvement in a work experience programme.

5 Award structure

This Award receives 6 credit points at SCQF level 3 and consists of a mix of mandatory and optional Units. There are two mandatory Units (0.75 credit value) and two optional Units (0.25 credit value each). One of the optional Units has to be completed. The two mandatory Units aim to help prepare candidates for employment and the two optional Units focus on the work environment and the behaviours which are required to sustain employment.

5.1 Framework

Unit title	Mandatory/ Optional	Duration (hours)	Code	SCQF credit points	SCQF level	SQA credit value
Preparing for Employment: First Steps	Mandatory	10	F786 09	1.5	3	0.25
Building Own Employability Skills	Mandatory	20	F787 09	3	3	0.5
Responsibilities of Employment	Optional	10	F788 09	1.5	3	0.25
Dealing with Work Situations	Optional	10	F789 09	1.5	3	0.25

5.2 Mapping information

This Award may be taken as a stand alone Award or it may be part of a wider programme looking at the personal development of learners. It may be used alongside a Unit or Units from the Course in *Personal Development* (C250 09) or the Unit in *Personal Development: Self Awareness* (F2FV 09). Alternatively it might complement Units in *Work Experience* (D36H 09) or *Work Shadowing* (DR3V 09)

This Award provides opportunities for the development of Core Skills but does not carry any embedded Core Skills.

Learners who successfully complete this Award might progress to the National Progression Award in *Employability and Enterprise* at SCQF level 4 (G976 44) or the Unit in *Personal Development: Self and Work* (F37X 09 or F37X 10).

5.3 Articulation, professional recognition and credit transfer

This is a stand-alone Award. It is possible that learners may progress to other Units at this level which help them develop their employability skills such as *Work Experience* (D36H 09) or *Personal Development: Self and Work* (F37X 09). They might also progress to the *Employability Award* at SCQF level 4 (G9CY 44) or go on to the National Progression Award in *Enterprise and Employability* at SCQF levels 4 and 5 (G976 44 and G9AH 45). Others may progress to vocational training or into employment.

6 Approaches to delivery and assessment

The Award has been designed to allow the maximum flexibility in the way it is delivered and assessed. It may be incorporated into school or college timetables where it may be one of a number of subjects or activities in which the learner is involved over a period of time. On the other hand it is equally likely to be found in the context of volunteering or a training programme where the delivery model is more intensive and short term in duration. The flexibility allows Units to be delivered either concurrently or sequentially.

Within this broad approach it is important to emphasise that the Award does not require learners to take part in a work placement or spend time in a working environment but it is strongly recommended that they do visit at least one workplace and/or be provided with first hand information from employers and employees.

Delivery of the Units should take account of the needs and aspirations of each individual learner. Learners will have different levels of knowledge about the world of employment and the demands which are likely to be made of them as they seek to enter employment, and once they are in the workplace. Delivery should recognise these differences and use them as a basis for developing a wider understanding of these skills. Learning activities should be designed to encourage learners to contribute to discussion about these skills. Opportunities should also be taken to allow them to develop and practise these skills by using them in role play or simulated work based scenarios. The recognition of these skills and their development within learners can help them feel good about themselves and help them to achieve a more positive attitude towards employment. Emphasis should be placed on creating learning situations which enable learners to develop self confidence, self esteem and inter-personal skills. Examples might include practising making telephone enquiries, mock interviews, group work activities. Any changes in self confidence and personal attitudes regarding employability can be fragile. Delivery should, therefore, be structured to provide as many opportunities as possible to recognise and reinforce progress.

It is expected that delivery models will include some partnership working with, for example, Skills Development Scotland and employers. Their involvement in the learning process will ensure that learners become engaged with the world of work. This will allow them to develop skills to enter and sustain employment. They will also have the opportunity to focus on aspects of equality in the workplace and appreciate that sustained effort is expected and valued by employers. Partnerships should also provide opportunities for learners to understand the different responsibilities they have in the workplace compared with more familiar environments and that these impact on both themselves and others.

The tasks which learners are required to complete successfully to achieve this Award should be able to be completed within 40 hours but it is quite likely that in some situations the duration of teaching may for any single Unit be longer than the recommended time to provide a wider breadth of knowledge and skills development. It is also possible that Units may be taken at different times and that the credits achieved for these can be accumulated toward the Award over a period of time.

Assessment for the Award will consist of gathering evidence to show that the learner is able to successfully complete all the tasks in the Units. Evidence could be gathered as learners work through the Units and it is likely that the creation of this evidence will take place in an integrated way across the Units. Many centres will choose to adopt this method of gathering evidence rather than seeking to treat each set of evidence independently. Such evidence may be included in a single folio of work although tutors will be expected to identify the specific evidence for each Unit. This assessment evidence can be presented in any form appropriate to the learner and the activity undertaken. Evidence may be paper based, recorded, oral or visual. Where appropriate, this evidence should be supported by performance and product evidence and be supplemented by observation checklists and/or oral questions and answers. Learners may also provide evidence through audio recordings, video diaries, blogs or other electronic means. The table below summarises the nature of the assessment evidence required for each Unit.

Unit title	Nature of evidence		
	Written/ recorded/oral	Product evidence	Performance evidence
Preparing for Employment: First Steps	√	(√)	(√)
Building Own Employability Skills	√	√	√
Responsibilities of employment	√	(√)	(√)
Dealing with Work Situations	√	(√)	(√)

- √ Compulsory
(√) Supporting evidence, where appropriate

Learners providing evidence at Access 3 level will generally have received a large amount of explicit instructions, advice and support from their tutor. They will have shown knowledge of a small number of key facts and nearly all of this evidence will have been produced through the involvement of learners in simple tasks which they are able to carry out in situations which do not regularly take them into unfamiliar situations. Tutors are best placed to judge these criteria in relation to individual learners and their judgement about this is very important in determining the level at which the candidate is working.

Assessment Support Packs are available for all Units in the Award. They include further information on assessment as well as the Evidence Requirements for each Unit. They contain examples of the type and amount of activities that meet the standards of the Units and include sample recording documentation.

7 General information for centres

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.

Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used within this Award should be internally verified, using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

External verification will be carried out by SQA to ensure that internal assessment is within the national guidelines for these qualifications.

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in *SQA's Guide to Assessment and Quality Assurance for Colleges of Further Education* (www.sqa.org.uk).

8 General information for candidates

This Award is designed to prepare you to enter the world of work. It gives you the chance to look at your achievements and experiences so far. It also helps you to work on the skills you need to help you find and apply for a job. Finally you are likely to look at some of the issues you might face in the workplace and have a chance to think about how you will deal with these.

To gain the Award you must successfully complete:

F786 09	<i>Preparing for Employment: First Step</i>	(10 hours)
F787 09	<i>Building Own Employability Skills</i>	(20 hours)

and, one of the following:

F788 09	<i>Responsibilities of Employment</i>	(10 hours)
F789 09	<i>Dealing with Work Situation</i>	(10 hours)

You may find that more than one of the Units in this Award is taught to you at the same time but each one covers different skills and knowledge which will be helpful to you as you develop your employability skills.

In the Unit *Preparing for Employment: First Steps* you will review your previous and current experiences to help you identify the skills you already have which will be required in the workplace. Employers look at what people have achieved when deciding whether to offer jobs to people. If you can show employers what you have done and what you can do you will be in a better position to get a job.

In the Unit *Building Own Employability Skills* you will think about and practice the skills you will need to find out what kinds of jobs are available. You will be looking at which jobs fit in with what you would like to do. You will also think about which jobs fit in with the skills and qualities that you have. Another activity you will be doing in this Unit is finding out what you need to do to help you apply for the jobs you would like to have.

In the Unit *Responsibilities of Employment* you will find out how employers will expect you to behave at work, what they will expect of you as an employee, and how you can expect them to treat you. It is also about realising what might happen to you if you do not do what employers expect.

In the Unit *Dealing with Work Situations* you get a chance to look at the differences between the workplace and places like school and college. This will help you think about how to deal with situations you are not used to. For example, how you work with people of various ages and how to get on with people you don't know.

To complete the Award successfully you must show that you have thought about and completed a number of steps that will develop your employability skills. These things will help prepare you better for entering the workplace.

You will do this by completing assessment activities which could include:

- ◆ describing the skills you already have
- ◆ completing career plans
- ◆ showing some of the skills you need to help you apply for jobs, eg filling in applications forms, making telephone enquiries
- ◆ role play
- ◆ verbal questions from your tutor
- ◆ written questions provided by your tutor
- ◆ observation and recording of you by your tutor as you demonstrate skills during group work and/or role play
- ◆ listening, watching and obtaining information from a DVD

9 Glossary of terms

SCQF: This stands for the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework, which is a new way of speaking about qualifications and how they inter-relate. We use SCQF terminology throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF visit the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk

SCQF credit points: One SCQF credit point equates to 10 hours of learning. NQ Units at SCQF levels 2–6 are worth 6 SCQF credit points, NQ Units at level 7 are worth 8 SCQF points.

SCQF levels: The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2–6 and will normally be made up of National Units which are available from SCQF levels 2–7.

SQA credit value: One credit is equivalent to 40 hours of learning.

Dedicated Unit to cover Core Skills: This is a non-subject Unit that is written to cover one or more particular Core Skills.

Embedded Core Skills: This is where the development of a Core Skill is incorporated into the Unit and where the Unit assessment also covers the requirements of Core Skill assessment at a particular level.

Signposted Core Skills: This refers to the opportunities to develop a particular Core Skill at a specified level that lie outwith automatic certification.