



National Unit Specification

General information

Unit title: Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement (SCQF level 6)

Unit code: J472 46

Superclass: PA

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Unit purpose

This unit is designed to enable learners to develop their knowledge and understanding of palliative and end of life care. This includes supporting families and carers during a time of loss, supporting them during the transitional stages of grief and helping them to manage changes resulting from bereavement. The unit also looks at the importance of reflective practice and supervision in improving the support and experience of individuals facing loss, grief and bereavement.

Outcomes

On successful completion of the unit the learner will be able to:

- 1 Explain theories of loss and grief and recognise the impact loss, grief and bereavement have on families/significant others and carers.
- 2 Describe the impact loss, grief and bereavement may have at different stages of life.
- 3 Explain models of reflection and the importance of reflection in improving care practice.

Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 6 (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6)

Recommended entry to the unit

Whilst access to the unit is at the discretion of the centre, it is recommended that learners have good communication skills, both written and oral.

National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

Unit title: Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement (SCQF level 6)

Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of:

- ◆ *Communication* at SCQF level 6
- ◆ *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* at SCQF level 6
- ◆ *Numeracy* at SCQF level 6
- ◆ *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6
- ◆ *Working with Others* at SCQF level 6

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the support notes for 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.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard. A list of existing ASPs is available to download from SQA's website (<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46233.2769.html>).

Equality and inclusion

This unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

National Unit Specification: Statement of standards

Unit title: Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement (SCQF level 6)

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

Outcome 1

Explain theories of loss and grief and recognise the impact loss, grief and bereavement have on families/significant others and carers.

Performance criteria

- (a) Describe types of loss and grief.
- (b) Describe models of loss and grief.
- (c) Explain the impact of loss and grief on families and carers.
- (d) Describe the factors that may increase vulnerability and difficulties in coping with grief and bereavement.

Outcome 2

Describe the impact loss, grief and bereavement may have at different stages of life.

Performance criteria

- (a) Describe the needs of people experiencing loss, grief and bereavement at different stages of life.
- (b) Describe how loss, grief and bereavement may affect the behaviour of individuals at different stages of life.
- (c) Explain the range of support mechanisms available to the individual experiencing loss, grief and bereavement.

Outcome 3

Explain models of reflection and the importance of reflection in improving care practice.

Performance criteria

- (a) Explain models of reflection.
- (b) Describe the importance of reflection in improving care practice.
- (c) Describe the importance of personal limitations and vulnerabilities when working with people experiencing loss, grief and bereavement.
- (d) Describe the importance of reflective practice and supervision for a professional when working with people experiencing loss, death and bereavement.

National Unit Specification: Statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement (SCQF level 6)

Evidence requirements for this unit

Evidence is required to demonstrate that learners have achieved all outcomes and performance criteria.

Evidence can be gathered in a range of ways which will assess learners' knowledge, understanding, and application across the learning outcomes and performance criteria.

Where learners have worked in a group, there should be evidence of their individual contribution.

The Assessment Support Pack for this unit provides sample assessment material. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the Assessment Support Pack to ensure a comparable standard.

Outcome 1

Explain theories of loss and grief and recognise the impact loss, grief and bereavement have on families/significant others and carers.

To achieve outcome 1 learners must produce evidence to show they can:

- ◆ describe two types of loss and the impact of grief on families/significant others and carers.
- ◆ describe two models of loss and grief.
- ◆ describe three factors that may increase vulnerability and difficulties in coping with grief and bereavement.

Outcome 2

Describe the impact loss, grief and bereavement may have at different stages of life.

To achieve outcome 2 learners must produce evidence to show they can:

- ◆ describe three needs of two individuals experiencing loss, grief and bereavement at two different stages of life.
- ◆ describe three changes in behaviour that may occur in the needs of individuals experiencing loss, grief and bereavement.
- ◆ explain one formal and one informal support mechanism for individuals experiencing loss, grief and bereavement.

National Unit Specification: Statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement (SCQF level 6)

Outcome 3

Explain models of reflection and the importance of reflection in improving care practice.

To achieve outcome 3 learners must produce evidence to show they can:

- ◆ explain two models of reflection.
- ◆ describe two personal limitations and vulnerabilities which could impact the carer when working with people experiencing loss, grief and bereavement.



National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement (SCQF level 6)

Unit support notes are offered as guidance and 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 unit is a mandatory unit in the National Progression Award (NPA) Palliative and End of Life Care at SCQF level 6. The unit can also be studied on a stand-alone basis.

This unit is designed to enable learners to develop their knowledge and understanding of palliative and end of life care. This includes supporting families and carers during a time of loss, supporting them during the transitional stages of grief and helping them to manage changes resulting from bereavement. The unit also looks at the importance of reflective practice and supervision in improving the support and experience of individuals facing loss, grief and bereavement.

Outcome 1

Learners should be encouraged to think of loss and grief in the wider context. Types of loss could include: death of partner, friend, child, terminal illness, long-term illness, loss of limb, hearing, eyesight, bodily function, hair, appearance, security, faith, trust, dignity, unexpected death, anticipated death.

Learners should also be made aware that everyone is individual and will have their own experience. It is important to understand the financial, social, emotional, physical and practical impact on the individual and those closest to them.

The learner should be introduced to models of loss and grief so they can understand there is a recognised process that individuals may go through.

Models may include:

- 1 Elizabeth Kubler Ross — Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression and Acceptance.
- 2 Colin Murray Parkes — Numbness, Searching and Pining, Depression and Recovery.
- 3 William Worden — Four Task Model: (1) To accept the reality of the loss; (2) To work through the pain of grief; (3) To adjust to the environment in which the dead person is missing; (4) Emotionally to relocate the deceased person and move on with life.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement (SCQF level 6)

Factors that may increase vulnerability and difficulties in grief and bereavement could include:

Vulnerability:

- ◆ cognitively impaired, impaired intelligence
- ◆ young children
- ◆ people who have suffered multiple bereavements within a short period of time
- ◆ experience of traumatic loss, suicide, murder
- ◆ the co-occurrence of two or more disorders in the same individual at the same point in time
- ◆ living alone, no family support

Difficulties:

- ◆ complicated grief
- ◆ limited social support
- ◆ access to services and resources
- ◆ cultural differences
- ◆ grief may not be noticed or understood by caregivers — no recognising signs of grief, physical symptoms unresolved

Outcome 2

Learners will be introduced to a general understanding of an individual's ongoing needs. These needs will cover the spectrum of social, physical, emotional, cognitive and cultural. Culture may include religion and spiritual beliefs. It is important to ensure the person is able to have all needs met.

Learners should understand the changing needs which may occur for an individual experiencing loss, grief and bereavement. Once this is established then learners should be encouraged to describe the changes to these needs and the change in behaviour by the person experiencing loss, grief and bereavement at different ages and stages of life.

Learners should identify a range of formal and informal support systems that may be available to the person experiencing loss. Informal support could include family, friends, neighbours and the wider community support. Formal aspects of support may be signposted by the individual's GP and include a range of health and social care services. Learners should investigate what is available in their local community and how these services can be accessed.

Outcome 3

Reflective practice can be defined as the process of making sense of events, situations and actions that occur in practice. A large number of models of reflective practice are available to choose from: Ghaye and Lilyman, 2006; Driscoll, 2000; Gibbs, 1988.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement (SCQF level 6)

Learners should understand the importance of personal limitation and vulnerabilities when working with people experiencing loss, death and bereavement. Personal limitations and vulnerabilities could include experience of:

- ◆ recent/previous loss, grief and bereavement.
- ◆ similar circumstances, ie your own physical health and wellbeing.
- ◆ limited knowledge and practical experience and/or training.
- ◆ formal and informal support mechanisms.
- ◆ attachment and awareness of professional boundaries.

Vulnerabilities could be displayed as:

- ◆ expression of grief at inappropriate times.
- ◆ emotional instability, for example, loss of interest, loss of meaning, loss of faith, restlessness, loss of confidence, low self-esteem, anguish, depression, anxiety, loneliness, difficulties in concentration.
- ◆ physical symptoms, for example, inappropriate use of alcohol, drugs, disturbed sleep pattern, altered appetite.

Learners should understand the importance of supporting team members with loss, grief and bereavement. Helpful forms of support could include:

- ◆ creating a safe place for staff to talk openly about loss.
- ◆ offer practical help and acknowledge that staff may need ongoing support.
- ◆ demonstrate effective communication and interpersonal skills through the promotion of empathy, unconditional positive regard and congruence.
- ◆ signposting to counselling if required.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

Teachers/lecturers and learners are encouraged to use the internet and appropriate reading materials to offer current thinking in relation to grief and loss. It is important that the teacher/lecturer offers appropriate website addresses and reading material to direct the learner so they spend more time discussing the issues.

In delivering this unit, there should be a balance between teacher/lecturer led presentation and learner centred learning. It is important for the learner to be able to take some control of their own learning experience.

The content of this unit can be taught using a variety of methods which may include:

- ◆ group exercises
- ◆ group discussion
- ◆ use of case studies
- ◆ individual and/or group research
- ◆ use of videos
- ◆ lectures
- ◆ use of ICT such as web-based material
- ◆ external speakers from specialist teams

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement (SCQF level 6)

Learners should be introduced to the government frameworks and policy guidance including palliative and end of life care; enriching and improving experiences.

<https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/2450/palliative-and-end-of-life-care-enriching-and-improving-experience>

The framework promotes a consistent, inclusive and flexible approach to learning and development on palliative and end of life care for the health and social service workforce. It is aspirational and values previous learning, and existing knowledge and skills. It acknowledges the place of informal and formal learning in supporting the workforce to develop knowledge and skills, and recognises sector and discipline-specific standards and frameworks, such as National Occupational Standards and the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework.

The framework's flexibility enables it to be used in different ways to support learning and development at individual, service-provider and organisational levels.

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

The Assessment Support Pack for this unit provides sample assessment material. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the Assessment Support Pack to ensure a comparable standard.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

An integrated approach to assessment is recommended.

This unit may be assessed as one complete written assignment or it is possible to incorporate a range of assessment methods for this unit. Written assignments, case studies, role play and oral presentation.

Outcomes 1 and 2 may be assessed by an individual or group presentation.

Outcome 3 may be assessed as a report.

Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the evidence requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement (SCQF level 6)

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of:

- ◆ *Communication* at SCQF level 6
- ◆ *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* at SCQF level 6
- ◆ *Numeracy* at SCQF level 6
- ◆ *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6
- ◆ *Working with Others* at SCQF level 6

Communication — may be evidenced via the learner's work with individuals and groups as well as within written assessments.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) — may be evidenced by the learner's ability to accessing, processing, and presenting information.

Numeracy — may be evidenced by the learner's ability to use graphical information to support research, presentations as well as within written assessments.

Problem Solving — may be evidenced through facilitated group discussion about the most appropriate course of action for care delivery.

Working with Others — may be evidenced in the learner's ability to interact, communicate and negotiate with those with whom they come into contact, and to work collaboratively with other professionals and individuals, recognition of professional boundaries and professional conduct in practice.

History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for learners

Unit title: Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement (SCQF level 6)

This section will help you decide whether this is the unit for you by explaining what the unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

The unit is designed to enable you to develop knowledge and understanding to care for families and carers during a time of loss, supporting them during the transitional stages of grief and helping them to manage changes resulting from bereavement. The unit also looks at the importance of reflective practice and supervision in improving the support and experience of individuals facing loss, grief and bereavement.

This unit is a mandatory unit in the National Progression Award (NPA) Palliative and End of Life Care at SCQF level 6. The unit can also be studied on a stand-alone basis. The unit is suitable for care students and or individuals employed in the care sector.

The unit consists of three outcomes. On successful completion of these, you will be able to:

- 1 Explain theories of loss and grief and recognise the impact loss, grief and bereavement have on families/significant others and carers.
- 2 Describe the impact loss, grief and bereavement may have at different stages of life.
- 3 Explain models of reflection and the importance of reflection in improving care practice.

You will learn/do whilst working through the unit:

- ◆ Understand loss and grief in the wider context.
- ◆ Develop an awareness that everyone is individual and will have their own experience.
- ◆ Appreciate the financial, social, emotional, physical and practical impact on the individual and those closest to them.
- ◆ Explain models of grief and loss whilst recognising the process that individuals may go through.
- ◆ Recognise changing needs which may occur for an individual experiencing loss, grief and bereavement.
- ◆ Identify a range of support available to the person experiencing loss.
- ◆ Describe how reflective practice can support personal development including team members with loss, grief and bereavement.

You will be assessed by a combination of approaches, for example: a presentation as an individual or as part of a group, and a report.

You will be introduced to the government frameworks and policy guidance including palliative and end of life care; enriching and improving experiences.

<https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/2450/palliative-and-end-of-life-care-enriching-and-improving-experience>

The framework promotes a consistent, inclusive and flexible approach to learning and development on palliative and end of life care for the health and social service workforce. It is aspirational and values workers' previous learning, and existing knowledge and skills. It acknowledges the place of informal and formal learning in supporting the workforce to develop knowledge and skills, and recognises sector and discipline-specific standards and frameworks, such as National Occupational Standards and the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework.

General information for learners (cont)

Unit title: Understanding Loss, Grief and Bereavement (SCQF level 6)

The framework's flexibility enables it to be used in different ways to support learning and development at individual, service-provider and organisational levels.

You will have the opportunity to develop the Core Skills of:

Communication at SCQF level 6 — may be evidenced by your work with individuals and groups as well as within written assessments.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) — may be evidenced by accessing, processing, and presenting information.

Numeracy — may be evidenced by the use of graphical information to support research, presentations as well as within written assessments.

Problem Solving at SCQF level 6 — may be evidenced through facilitated group discussion about the most appropriate course of action for care delivery.

Working with Others at SCQF level 6 — may be evidenced by your ability to interact, communicate and negotiate with those with whom you come into contact, and to work collaboratively with other professionals and individuals, recognition of professional boundaries and professional conduct in practice.

The unit will facilitate the development of citizenship and includes; concern for others; being aware of rights and responsibilities; being aware of the democratic society; being outward-looking towards society; being able to recognise one's personal role in this context, and of acting responsibly. You will develop employability skills including the development of care specific knowledge and also an understanding of employment skills such as appropriate attitudes and behaviours.