

SCQF LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

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FOREWORD

Ray Harris

Chair SCQF Partnership Quality Committee



The Level Descriptors are the building blocks with which the SCQF is constructed and, as the Framework itself seeks to be utilised in the widest possible range of assessed learning in Scotland, they need to be inclusive. Clearly they must also be fit for purpose in terms of ensuring the integrity of the Framework and be internally consistent and educationally sound.

The original Descriptors had been in use for over a decade and so the SCQF Partnership Board, as guardians of the Framework, agreed that it was timely to undertake a review. Not only has the range of contexts in which they are being used broadened significantly, but also best practice would indicate that regular review considering a range of factors and drivers is helpful. On the

advice of their Quality Committee, the Board assessed that a radical overhaul was not needed and indeed concluded that the number of levels should not be part of the review since they still successfully 'mapped' into the Scottish educational landscape.

The Quality Committee was asked to oversee the review and appointed consultants to support that process. The first phase of the consultation indicated that there was indeed no appetite or need for radical review and indicated that we should retain the five underpinning characteristics. However those using the Framework did feel that there was a real need and opportunity to ensure that the language reflected more fully both the occupational and professional sectors. In addition there was support to tighten up on the consistency and progression of terminology across levels and to generally tidy up any possible anomalies.

Several versions of the revised Descriptors were consulted on widely with stakeholders and users of the Framework over a 12 month period and the final version was tested in detail by a number of Credit Rating Bodies to ensure that the revised Descriptors did not alter the level or credit rating of their existing portfolio. A number of times during the consultation the notion of a glossary of terms was mooted, not an exhaustive one but sufficient to allow users to understand the progressive use of terminology, and this has been developed to be published alongside the revised Descriptors.

The Quality Committee and the Partnership Board have now approved the revised Level Descriptors and are grateful to the many colleagues who participated in the consultations both online and face-to-face in interviews and at the various events held during the process. They would also like to thank the consultants who worked throughout the process checking and rechecking understanding and buy-in from the wide range of stakeholders which led to this final version.

LEVEL DESCRIPTORS INTRODUCTION

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) supports individual learners and exists to sustain a vibrant lifelong learning culture in Scotland. It is our aim to include, where appropriate, all qualifications and assessed learning in Scotland within the SCQF so that learners can identify their current position in relation to the Framework and can plan their future learning pathways. The Framework supports all of Scotland's citizens, learning providers and employers by:

- helping people of all ages and circumstances to understand how to progress through appropriate education and training over their lifetime, so as to fulfil their personal, social and economic potential;
- enabling employers, learners and the public in general to understand:
 - the full range of Scottish qualifications;
 - how qualifications relate to each other and to other forms of assessed learning;
 - how different types of qualification can contribute to improving the development and utilisation of the skills of the workforce;
 - how Scottish qualifications relate to qualifications in other countries;
 - how using SCQF Level Descriptors can assist with qualifications development and benchmarking skills and experience in all sectors.
- providing a Framework which can support the aims of fair work and social justice by ensuring that it provides tools and resources which can recognise prior learning, support progression and improve social inclusion.

The SCQF has 12 levels which provide an indication of the complexity of qualifications and learning programmes. SCQF levels are based on a single set of Level Descriptors that are the common reference points and definitions which provide a way of recognising learning that is outcome-based and quality-assured, irrespective of whether that learning is academic, vocational, non-formal or informal.

THE SCQF LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

Level descriptors are fundamental to the SCQF. The SCQF Level Descriptors describe in broad terms what learners should be able to do or demonstrate at a particular level. Within an integrated framework, these level descriptors provide a common vocabulary to assist with the comparison of qualifications and learning programmes.

Each level descriptor has five characteristics which provide a reference point for determining the level of a qualification, learning programme, module and unit of learning or for the recognition of prior learning (RPL). They are not intended to give precise or comprehensive statements of required learning for individual qualifications. The five characteristics are:

- Knowledge and understanding;
- Practice: Applied knowledge, skills and understanding;
- Generic cognitive skills;
- Communication, numeracy and ICT skills; and
- Autonomy, accountability and working with others.

USING THE SCQF LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

The following key points are important to remember when you are using the SCQF Level Descriptors:

- the SCQF Level Descriptors should be seen as a useful guide to be used with other reference documents such as subject benchmarks, arrangements documents and other relevant programmes on the Framework;
- the characteristics of the Level Descriptors are generic in nature and may not all be relevant for every qualification or learning programme;
- they provide a general overview of what would be expected of a typical learner at a specified SCQF level. As some of the characteristics may not be relevant it is not necessary that all are met;
- when deciding an appropriate level for a qualification or learning programme, it is helpful to look at descriptors across a range of levels to determine the “best fit”; and
- the vocabulary of the SCQF Level Descriptors may provide appropriate wording that can be used to describe learning for programme descriptions, learning outcomes and assessment evidence.

THE 2012 REVISIONS

These revised Level Descriptors (August 2012) supersede all previous versions. More detailed information regarding the specific amendments that have been introduced with this version can be accessed at www.scqf.org.uk, where it is possible to compare the original and 2012 versions to track the differences.

GLOSSARY

Following an extensive and rigorous review process, the SCQF Level Descriptors were revised in 2012. This glossary provides an explanation of terms used in describing them.

Consultation during the review indicated a general consensus amongst users and practitioners that a glossary of key terminology used in the Descriptors would be extremely helpful, serving to assist and clarify interpretation in context.

This glossary draws on pre-existing SCQF glossaries, standard dictionary definitions and, crucially, the context in which the term is being used. It is designed as a pragmatic tool to assign meanings to words in a highly specific context – that of the SCQF Level Descriptors. As such, its definitions are not absolute; rather, they are intended to amplify and decode the Descriptors.

The review was conducted on the basis that any change to the Descriptors must not be made simply for its own sake. This has had implications for the glossary which, in seeking to standardise and explain usage within the Descriptors, works with the grain of terms already in use rather than import new ones which could, potentially, destabilise the Descriptors.

The glossary is not comprehensive: only the terms which require contextualisation, explanation or mitigation regarding their use or meaning in the context of the SCQF Level Descriptors have been included. However, further terms could be added in a subsequent edition, subject to demand.

In using the glossary four key factors should be kept in mind:

- the Level Descriptors are for guidance only – it is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered;
- context is absolutely key - much depends on the focus of the Characteristic and/or Level Descriptor in which the term is applied;
- the terms are used in a broadly linear manner from least to most advanced across the Level Descriptors for each Characteristic, but no term is exclusively the domain of one particular level; and
- from the point of view of the terminology used, each Characteristic is a separate strand and the sequencing described in the glossary does not automatically work between the Characteristics.

USING THE DEFINITE OR INDEFINITE ARTICLE

When applied to Characteristic 1:

Knowledge and understanding, ie specific knowledge, the Level Descriptors refer to 'the' subject/discipline/sector.

When applied to Characteristic 2:

Practice: applied knowledge, skills and understanding, the Level Descriptors refer to 'the' subject/discipline/sector.

BUT:

When applied to Characteristic 3:

Generic cognitive skills, ie generic skills and knowledge, the Level Descriptors refer to 'a' subject/discipline/sector.

When applied to Characteristic 4:

Communication, ICT and numeracy skills, the Level Descriptors refer to 'a' subject/discipline/sector.

When applied to Characteristic 5:

Autonomy, accountability and working with others, the Level Descriptors refer to 'a' subject/discipline/sector.

GLOSSARY

STANDARDISATION AND SEQUENCING

The usage of terms in the revised Level Descriptors has been standardised where possible, but there is some slight variation in the interests of maintaining helpful continuity from the original Descriptors.

Examples include:

'simple' and 'basic'

'basic' knowledge and 'simple' facts appear together at Characteristic 1, Level 2

and 'routine' and 'straightforward'

Characteristic 2, Level 4 has 'straightforward' with 'non-routine', and Level 5 'routine' with 'non-routine'.

In addition, a few terms, such as 'routine' and 'some', can reappear at a higher level when modified by others. For example, at Characteristic 2, Level 3, 'routine skills' are used 'to undertake familiar and routine tasks', whereas at Level 5 it is skills 'associated with the subject/discipline/sector' that are used 'to complete some routine...tasks'.

Context is absolutely key - much depends on the focus of the Characteristic and/or Level Descriptor to which the term is applied.

Across each Characteristic, terms progress from the least to the most advanced from the point of view of the extent of the demands required by the Level being described. No term is the domain of a particular level (for example, 'routine' activity can occur at both basic and advanced levels, as appropriate - see below), and there is no automatic commonality of terms between the Characteristics. Some indicative examples of the sequencing of terms through the Levels from low to high include:

information ... data

facts ... ideas ... theories ... concepts

a few ... some ... a limited range ... a range ... a wide range ... a significant range

simple ... basic ... routine ... straightforward with non-routine ... advanced and specialised

personal ... everyday/commonplace ... familiar/straightforward ... unfamiliar/new ... routine ... forefront

an appreciation ... an overall appreciation ... a knowledge ... an understanding ... a critical understanding

ORGANISATION

The key terms used in the Level Descriptors are explained below. Terms are presented with an eye to the user/practitioner who will generally be focusing on a sequence with a view to making a judgement or expressing an outcome. Accordingly, where feasible, they are presented in a group or sequence relating to Characteristic and/or Level rather than in strict alphabetical order.

Word	Meaning in context of 2012 Level Descriptors
simple	Undemanding activity not necessarily part of a formal structure - not as advanced as 'basic'.
basic	Activity is early stepping stone on a structure or framework that can be built upon – more advanced than 'simple'.
routine	Used as an adjective throughout and applied to terms including skills, tasks, elements, practices, contexts, methods and problems where it describes activity that is standard, usual, unvarying, customary, common.
personal	An experience relating only or primarily to the person – one would expect to start here then widen out into the rest of the world, so not as advanced as 'familiar'.
everyday	Slightly more advanced and beyond personal but a known experience/activity encountered/applied regularly - less advanced than 'familiar'.
familiar	Often encountered or experienced; common; something one has a good knowledge of - more advanced than 'personal' and 'everyday', not as advanced as 'routine'.
unfamiliar	New territory for an activity.
straightforward	Clear and uncomplicated activity, but not as demanding or systematic and therefore not as advanced as 'routine'.
awareness	Consciousness, including a background consciousness. Can be a starting point for further exploration.
appreciation	A sense, perception, a hold, fix or grasp of one or more of the various aspects of a subject/discipline/sector.
knowledge	Facts, ideas, theories and concepts in a subject/discipline/sector acquired through experience and/or education – a surer grasp than appreciation so more advanced.
understanding	A thorough and firm grasp of a subject/discipline/sector or an element or elements of it, derived from education/study, experience and reasoning in appropriate combination. Can be defined as 'know why', as opposed to 'know that'. More holistic knowledge of processes and contexts, so more advanced than appreciation and knowledge.
authority	Appears at Level 12 only where it is used in the phrase 'demonstrate substantial authority', reflecting a recognised high level and depth of expertise/expert knowledge and understanding, along with confidence. It does not mean 'exercise authority over staff and resources' etc, as that could clearly apply at earlier levels.
discerning	Using judgement to recognise differences but not fully equipped/informed to analyse and discuss them in depth, so less advanced than critical.
critical	Fully informed, capable of supporting in-depth analysis and assessment.
hypothetical	Supposed, assumed for the sake of argument.
analysis	Examine in detail with a view to explanation and interpretation.
synthesis	Combine discrete elements into a coherent whole.
originality	Often used in combination with 'creativity'. There is overlap in definition, but the defining characteristic of originality appears to be independence.
creativity	Often used in combination with 'originality'. There is overlap in definition, but the defining characteristic of creativity appears to be imagination.
professional	Used throughout as an adjective and applied to terms including level, skills, techniques, practices, contexts, and issues where it bears broad interpretation as 'behaving appropriately/doing things properly and well and to notions of accepted, (including externally) prescribed standards', as well as narrow, relating to a specific occupation designated as a profession. In this latter sense, the term applies in all contexts including academic study, eg footnoting properly.
graphical data	Encompasses maps, plans, diagrams, tables and graphs.
present	Set out, put forward, deliver information using a variety of mediums as appropriate.
directive	Applied to 'supervision', signifies a task or activity that is guided.
exercise	Used in connection with management and/or supervisory responsibility, denotes a requirement of a formal, substantive role.

CHARACTERISTIC 1: KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

The following descriptions are for guidance only – it is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

LEVEL 1

- SCQF Level 1 recognises learning development and achievement that ranges from participation in experiential situations to the achievement of basic tasks, with varying degrees of support.

LEVEL 2

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - Basic knowledge.
 - Simple facts and ideas.

LEVEL 3

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - Basic knowledge.
 - Simple facts and ideas in, and associated with, a subject/discipline/sector.

LEVEL 4

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - Basic knowledge.
 - Some simple facts and ideas in, about, and associated with, a subject/discipline/sector.
 - Knowledge of basic processes, materials and terminology.

LEVEL 5

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - Basic knowledge.
 - A range of simple facts, ideas and theories in, about, and associated with, a subject/discipline/sector.
 - Knowledge and understanding of basic processes, materials and terminology.

LEVEL 6

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - An appreciation of the body of knowledge that constitutes a subject/discipline/sector.
 - A range of knowledge, facts, theories, ideas, properties, materials, terminology, practices and techniques about, and associated with, a subject/discipline/sector.
 - Relating the subject/discipline/sector to a range of practical and/or commonplace applications.

LEVEL 7

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - An overall appreciation of the body of knowledge that constitutes a subject/discipline/sector.
 - Knowledge that is embedded in the main theories, concepts and principles of the subject/discipline/sector.
 - An awareness of the dynamic nature of knowledge and understanding.
 - An understanding of the difference between explanations based on evidence and/or research and other sources, and of the importance of this difference.

LEVEL 8

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - A knowledge of the scope, defining features, and main areas of the subject/discipline/sector.
 - Specialist knowledge in some areas.
 - A discerning understanding of a defined range of core theories, concepts, principles and terminology.
 - Awareness and understanding of some major current issues and specialisms.
 - Awareness and understanding of research and equivalent scholarly/academic processes.

LEVEL 9

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - An understanding of the scope and defining features of a subject/discipline/sector, and an integrated knowledge of its main areas and boundaries.
 - A critical understanding of a range of the principles, principal theories, concepts and terminology of the subject/discipline/sector.
 - Knowledge of one or more specialisms that is informed by forefront developments.

LEVEL 10

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - Knowledge that covers and integrates most of the principal areas, features, boundaries, terminology and conventions of a subject/discipline/sector.
 - A critical understanding of the principal theories, concepts and principles.
 - Detailed knowledge and understanding in one or more specialisms, some of which is informed by, or at the forefront of, a subject/discipline/sector.
 - Knowledge and understanding of the ways in which the subject/discipline/sector is developed, including a range of established techniques of enquiry or research methodologies.

LEVEL 11

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - Knowledge that covers and integrates most, if not all, of the main areas of the subject/discipline/sector – including their features, boundaries, terminology and conventions.
 - A critical understanding of the principal theories, concepts and principles.
 - A critical understanding of a range of specialised theories, concepts and principles.
 - Extensive, detailed and critical knowledge and understanding in one or more specialisms, much of which is at, or informed by, developments at the forefront.
 - A critical awareness of current issues in a subject/discipline/sector and one or more specialisms.

LEVEL 12

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - A critical overview of a subject/discipline/sector, including critical understanding of the principal theories, concepts and principles.
 - A critical, detailed and often leading knowledge and understanding at the forefront of one or more specialisms.
 - Knowledge and understanding that is generated through personal research or equivalent work that makes a significant contribution to the development of the subject/discipline/sector.

CHARACTERISTIC 2: PRACTICE: APPLIED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING

The following descriptions are for guidance only – it is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

LEVEL 1

- SCQF Level 1 recognises learning development and achievement that ranges from participation in experiential situations to the achievement of basic tasks, with varying degrees of support.

LEVEL 2

- Relate knowledge to a few simple everyday contexts with prompting.
- Use a few very simple skills.
- Carry out, with guidance, a few familiar tasks.
- Use, under supervision, basic tools and materials.

LEVEL 3

- Relate knowledge to personal and/or everyday contexts with some prompting.
- Use a few basic, routine skills to undertake familiar and routine tasks.
- Complete pre-planned tasks.
- Use, with guidance, basic tools and materials safely and effectively.

LEVEL 4

- Relate knowledge to personal and/or practical contexts.
- Use a few skills to complete straightforward tasks with some non-routine elements.
- Prepare for familiar and routine tasks.
- Select and use, with guidance, appropriate tools and materials safely and effectively.

LEVEL 5

- Relate knowledge and ideas to personal and/or practical contexts.
- Use a range of skills associated with the subject/discipline/sector to complete some routine and non-routine tasks.
- Plan and organise both familiar and unfamiliar tasks.
- Select appropriate tools and materials and use them safely and effectively.
- Adjust tools where necessary following safe practices.

LEVEL 6

- Apply knowledge, skills and understanding:
 - In known, practical contexts.
 - In using some of the basic, routine practices, techniques and/or materials associated with the subject/discipline/sector.
 - In exercising these in routine contexts that may have non-routine elements.
 - In planning how skills will be used to address set situations and/or problems and adapt these as necessary.

LEVEL 7

- Apply knowledge, skills and understanding:
 - In practical contexts.
 - In using some of the basic and routine professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with the subject/discipline/sector.
 - To practise these in both routine and non-routine contexts.

LEVEL 8

- Apply knowledge, skills and understanding:
 - In using a range of professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with the subject/discipline/sector, a few of which are advanced and/or complex.
 - In carrying out routine lines of enquiry, development or investigation into professional level problems and issues.
 - To adapt routine practices within accepted standards.

LEVEL 9

- Apply knowledge, skills and understanding:
 - In using a range of the principal professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with the subject/discipline/sector.
 - In using a few skills, techniques, practices and/or materials that are specialised and/or advanced.
 - In practising routine methods of enquiry and/or research.
 - To practise in a range of professional level contexts that include a degree of unpredictability.

LEVEL 10

- Apply knowledge, skills and understanding:
 - In using a wide range of the principal professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with the subject/discipline/sector.
 - In using a few skills, techniques, practices and/or materials that are specialised, advanced and/or at the forefront of a subject/discipline/sector.
 - In executing a defined project of research, development or investigation and in identifying and implementing relevant outcomes.
 - To practise in a range of professional level contexts that include a degree of unpredictability and/or specialism.

LEVEL 11

- Apply knowledge, skills and understanding:
 - In using a significant range of the principal professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with the subject/discipline/sector.
 - In using a range of specialised skills, techniques, practices and/or materials that are at the forefront of, or informed by forefront developments.
 - In applying a range of standard and specialised research and/or equivalent instruments and techniques of enquiry.
 - In planning and executing a significant project of research, investigation or development.
 - In demonstrating originality and/or creativity, including in practices.
 - To practise in a wide and often unpredictable variety of professional level contexts.

LEVEL 12

- Apply knowledge, skills and understanding:
 - In using a significant range of the principal professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with the subject/discipline/sector.
 - In using and enhancing a range of complex skills, techniques, practices and/or materials that are at the forefront of one or more specialisms.
 - In applying a range of standard and specialised research and/or equivalent instruments and techniques of enquiry.
 - In designing and executing research, investigative or development projects to deal with new problems and issues.
 - In demonstrating originality and creativity in the development and application of new knowledge, understanding and practices.
 - To practise in the context of new problems and circumstances.

CHARACTERISTIC 3: GENERIC COGNITIVE SKILLS

The following descriptions are for guidance only – it is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

LEVEL 1

- SCQF Level 1 recognises learning development and achievement that ranges from participation in experiential situations to the achievement of basic tasks, with varying degrees of support.

LEVEL 2

- Use rehearsed stages for solving problems.
- Operate in personal and/or everyday contexts.
- Take some account, with prompting, of identified consequences of action.

LEVEL 3

- Identify with some prompting a process to deal with a situation or issue.
- Operate in familiar contexts using given criteria.
- Take account of some identified consequences of action.

LEVEL 4

- Use, with guidance, given stages of a process to deal with a problem, situation or issue.
- Operate in straightforward contexts.
- Identify and/or take account of some of the consequences of action/inaction.

LEVEL 5

- Use a process to deal with a problem, situation or issue that is straightforward.
- Operate in a familiar context, but where there is a need to take account of or use additional information of different kinds, some of which will be theoretical or hypothetical.

LEVEL 6

- Obtain, organise and use factual, theoretical and/or hypothetical information in problem solving.
- Make generalisations and predictions.
- Draw conclusions and suggest solutions.

LEVEL 7

- Present and evaluate arguments, information and ideas that are routine to a subject/discipline/sector.
- Use a range of approaches to address defined and/or routine problems and issues within familiar contexts.

LEVEL 8

- Undertake critical analysis, evaluation and/or synthesis of ideas, concepts, information and issues that are within the common understandings in a subject/discipline/sector.
- Use a range of approaches to formulate and critically evaluate evidence-based solutions/responses to defined and/or routine problems and issues.

LEVEL 9

- Undertake critical analysis, evaluation and/or synthesis of ideas, concepts, information and issues in a subject/discipline/sector.
- Identify and analyse routine professional problems and issues.
- Draw on a range of sources in making judgements.

LEVEL 10

- Critically identify, define, conceptualise and analyse complex/professional problems and issues.
- Offer professional insights, interpretations and solutions to problems and issues.
- Demonstrate some originality and creativity in dealing with professional issues.
- Critically review and consolidate knowledge, skills, practices and thinking in a subject/discipline/sector.
- Make judgements where data/information is limited or comes from a range of sources.

LEVEL 11

- Apply critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis to forefront issues, or issues that are informed by forefront developments in the subject/discipline/sector.
- Identify, conceptualise and define new and abstract problems and issues.
- Develop original and creative responses to problems and issues.
- Critically review, consolidate and extend knowledge, skills, practices and thinking in a subject/discipline/sector.
- Deal with complex issues and make informed judgements in situations in the absence of complete or consistent data/information.

LEVEL 12

- Apply a constant and integrated approach to critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas, information and issues.
- Identify, conceptualise and offer original and creative insights into new, complex and abstract ideas, information and issues.
- Develop original and creative responses to problems and issues.
- Deal with complex and/or new issues and make informed judgements in the absence of complete or consistent data/information.

CHARACTERISTIC 4: COMMUNICATION, ICT AND NUMERACY SKILLS

The following descriptions are for guidance only – it is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

LEVEL 1

- SCQF Level 1 recognises learning development and achievement that ranges from participation in experiential situations to the achievement of basic tasks, with varying degrees of support.

LEVEL 2

- Use simple skills with assistance, for example:
 - Produce and respond to a limited range of very simple written and oral communication in familiar/routine contexts.
 - Carry out a limited range of simple tasks to process and access information.
 - Use a limited range of simple numerical and graphical data in familiar and everyday contexts.

LEVEL 3

- Use simple skills, for example:
 - Produce and respond to simple written and oral communication in familiar/routine contexts.
 - Carry out simple tasks to process and access information.
 - Use simple numerical and graphical data in everyday contexts.

LEVEL 4

- Use some routine skills, for example:
 - Produce and respond to simple but detailed written and oral communication in familiar contexts.
 - Use the basic features of familiar ICT applications to process and obtain information.
 - Use basic numerical and graphical data in straightforward and familiar contexts.

LEVEL 5

- Use a range of routine skills, for example:
 - Produce and respond to detailed written and oral communication in familiar contexts.
 - Use standard ICT applications to process, obtain and combine information.
 - Use a range of numerical and graphical data in routine contexts that may have some non-routine elements.

LEVEL 6

- Use a wide range of skills, for example:
 - Produce and respond to detailed and relatively complex written and oral communication in both familiar and unfamiliar contexts.
 - Select and use standard ICT applications to process, obtain and combine information.
 - Use a wide range of numerical and graphical data in routine contexts which may have non-routine elements.

LEVEL 7

- Use a wide range of routine skills and some advanced skills associated with a subject/discipline/sector, for example:
 - Convey complex ideas in well-structured and coherent form.
 - Use a range of forms of communication effectively in both familiar and unfamiliar contexts.
 - Select and use standard ICT applications to process and obtain a variety of information and data.
 - Use a range of numerical and graphical skills in combination.
 - Use numerical and graphical data to measure progress and achieve goals/targets.

LEVEL 8

- Use a wide range of routine skills and some advanced and specialised skills associated with a subject/discipline/sector, for example:
 - Convey complex information to a range of audiences and for a range of purposes.
 - Use a range of standard ICT applications to process and obtain data.
 - Use and evaluate numerical and graphical data to measure progress and achieve goals/targets.

LEVEL 9

- Use a wide range of routine skills and some advanced and specialised skills in support of established practices in a subject/discipline/sector, for example:
 - Present or convey, formally and informally, information on standard/mainstream topics in the subject/discipline/sector to a range of audiences.
 - Use a range of ICT applications to support and enhance work.
 - Interpret, use and evaluate numerical and graphical data to achieve goals/targets.

LEVEL 10

- Use a wide range of routine skills and some advanced and specialised skills in support of established practices in a subject/discipline/sector, for example:
 - Present or convey, formally and informally, information about specialised topics to informed audiences.
 - Communicate with peers, senior colleagues and specialists on a professional level.
 - Use a range of ICT applications to support and enhance work at this level and adjust features to suit purpose.
 - Interpret, use and evaluate a wide range of numerical and graphical data to set and achieve goals/targets.

LEVEL 11

- Use a wide range of routine skills and a range of advanced and specialised skills as appropriate to a subject/discipline/sector, for example:
 - Communicate, using appropriate methods, to a range of audiences with different levels of knowledge/expertise.
 - Communicate with peers, more senior colleagues and specialists.
 - Use a wide range of ICT applications to support and enhance work at this level and adjust features to suit purpose.
 - Undertake critical evaluations of a wide range of numerical and graphical data.

LEVEL 12

- Use a wide range of routine skills and a significant range of advanced and specialised skills as appropriate to a subject/discipline/sector, for example:
 - Communicate at an appropriate level to a range of audiences and adapt communication to the context and purpose.
 - Communicate at the standard of published academic work and/or critical dialogue and review with peers and experts in other specialisms/sectors.
 - Use a range of ICT applications to support and enhance work at this level and specify software requirements to enhance work.
 - Critically evaluate numerical and graphical data.

CHARACTERISTIC 5: AUTONOMY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND WORKING WITH OTHERS

The following descriptions are for guidance only – it is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

LEVEL 1

- SCQF Level 1 recognises learning development and achievement that ranges from participation in experiential situations to the achievement of basic tasks, with varying degrees of support.

LEVEL 2

- Work alone or with others on simple routine, familiar tasks under frequent directive supervision.
- Identify, given simple criteria, some strengths and/or weaknesses of the work.

LEVEL 3

- Work alone or with others on simple tasks under frequent directive supervision.
- Participate in the setting of goals, timelines, etc.
- Participate in the review of completed work and the identification of ways of improving practices and processes.
- Identify, given simple criteria, own strengths and weaknesses relative to the work.

LEVEL 4

- Work alone or with others on tasks with regular, directive supervision.
- Contribute to the setting of goals, timelines, etc.
- Contribute to the review of completed work and offer suggestions for improving practices and processes.
- Identify own strengths and weaknesses relative to the work.

LEVEL 5

- Work alone or with others on tasks with minimum directive supervision.
- Agree goals and responsibilities for self and/or work team.
- Take lead responsibility for some tasks.
- Show an awareness of own and/or others' roles, responsibilities and requirements in carrying out work and contribute to the evaluation and improvement of practices and processes.

LEVEL 6

- Take responsibility for carrying out a range of activities where the overall goal is clear, under non-directive supervision.
- Exercise some supervisory responsibility for the work of others and lead established teams in the implementation of routine work within a defined and supervised structure.
- Manage limited resources within defined and supervised areas of work.
- Take account of roles and responsibilities related to the tasks being carried out and take a significant role in the evaluation of work and the improvement of practices and processes.

LEVEL 7

- Exercise some initiative and independence in carrying out defined activities at a professional level in practice or in a subject/discipline/sector.
- Accept supervision in less familiar areas of work.
- Exercise some managerial or supervisory responsibility for the work of others within a defined and supervised structure.
- Manage limited resources within defined areas of work.
- Take the lead in implementing agreed plans in familiar or defined contexts.
- Take account of own and others' roles and responsibilities when carrying out and evaluating tasks.
- Work, under guidance, with others to acquire an understanding of current professional practice.

LEVEL 8

- Exercise autonomy and initiative in some activities at a professional level in practice or in a subject/discipline/sector.
- Exercise managerial responsibility for the work of others within a defined structure.
- Manage resources within defined areas of work.
- Take the lead on planning in familiar or defined contexts.
- Practise in ways that show awareness of own and others' roles, responsibilities and contributions when carrying out and evaluating tasks.
- Work, under guidance, with others to acquire an understanding of current professional practice.
- Manage, under guidance, ethical and professional issues in accordance with current professional and/or ethical codes or practices.

LEVEL 9

- Exercise autonomy and initiative in some activities at a professional level in practice or in a subject/discipline/sector.
- Exercise managerial responsibility for the work of others and for a range of resources.
- Practise in ways that show awareness of own and others' roles and responsibilities.
- Work, under guidance, with specialist practitioners.
- Seeking guidance where appropriate, manage ethical and professional issues in accordance with current professional and/or ethical codes or practices.

LEVEL 10

- Exercise autonomy and initiative in professional/equivalent activities.
- Exercise significant managerial responsibility for the work of others and for a range of resources.
- Practise in ways that show awareness of own and others' roles and responsibilities.
- Work, under guidance, in a peer relationship with specialist practitioners.
- Work with others to bring about change, development and/or new thinking.
- Manage complex ethical and professional issues in accordance with current professional and/or ethical codes or practices.
- Recognise the limits of these codes and seek guidance where appropriate.

LEVEL 11

- Exercise substantial autonomy and initiative in professional and equivalent activities.
- Take responsibility for own work and/or significant responsibility for the work of others.
- Take significant responsibility for a range of resources.
- Work in a peer relationship with specialist practitioners.
- Demonstrate leadership and/or initiative and make an identifiable contribution to change and development and/or new thinking.
- Practise in ways which draw on critical reflection on own and others' roles and responsibilities.
- Manage complex ethical and professional issues and make informed judgements on issues not addressed by current professional and/or ethical codes or practices.

LEVEL 12

- Demonstrate substantial authority and exercise a high level of autonomy and initiative in professional and equivalent activities.
- Take full responsibility for own work and/or significant responsibility for the work of others.
- Take significant responsibility for a range of resources.
- Demonstrate leadership and/or originality in tackling and resolving problems and issues.
- Practise in ways which are reflective, self-critical and based on research/evidence.
- Manage complex ethical and professional issues and make informed judgements on new and emerging issues not addressed by current professional and/or ethical codes or practices.

A white speech bubble graphic with the text 'LEVEL 1' inside, set against a blue background.

LEVEL 1

CHARACTERISTIC 1: KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- SCQF Level 1 recognises learning development and achievement that ranges from participation in experiential situations to the achievement of basic tasks, with varying degrees of support.
-

CHARACTERISTIC 2: PRACTICE: APPLIED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING

- SCQF Level 1 recognises learning development and achievement that ranges from participation in experiential situations to the achievement of basic tasks, with varying degrees of support.
-

CHARACTERISTIC 3: GENERIC COGNITIVE SKILLS

- SCQF Level 1 recognises learning development and achievement that ranges from participation in experiential situations to the achievement of basic tasks, with varying degrees of support.
-

CHARACTERISTIC 4: COMMUNICATION, ICT AND NUMERACY SKILLS

- SCQF Level 1 recognises learning development and achievement that ranges from participation in experiential situations to the achievement of basic tasks, with varying degrees of support.
-

CHARACTERISTIC 5: AUTONOMY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND WORKING WITH OTHERS

- SCQF Level 1 recognises learning development and achievement that ranges from participation in experiential situations to the achievement of basic tasks, with varying degrees of support.

LEVEL 2

The following descriptions are for guidance only – it is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

CHARACTERISTIC 1: KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - Basic knowledge.
 - Simple facts and ideas.

CHARACTERISTIC 2: PRACTICE: APPLIED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING

- Relate knowledge to a few simple everyday contexts with prompting.
- Use a few very simple skills.
- Carry out, with guidance, a few familiar tasks.
- Use, under supervision, basic tools and materials.

CHARACTERISTIC 3: GENERIC COGNITIVE SKILLS

- Use rehearsed stages for solving problems.
- Operate in personal and/or everyday contexts.
- Take some account, with prompting, of identified consequences of action.

CHARACTERISTIC 4: COMMUNICATION, ICT AND NUMERACY SKILLS

- Use simple skills with assistance, for example:
 - Produce and respond to a limited range of very simple written and oral communication in familiar/routine contexts.
 - Carry out a limited range of simple tasks to process and access information.
 - Use a limited range of simple numerical and graphical data in familiar and everyday contexts.

CHARACTERISTIC 5: AUTONOMY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND WORKING WITH OTHERS

- Work alone or with others on simple routine, familiar tasks under frequent directive supervision.
- Identify, given simple criteria, some strengths and/or weaknesses of the work.

LEVEL 3

The following descriptions are for guidance only – it is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

CHARACTERISTIC 1: KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - Basic knowledge.
 - Simple facts and ideas in, and associated with, a subject/discipline/sector.
-

CHARACTERISTIC 2: PRACTICE: APPLIED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING

- Relate knowledge to personal and/or everyday contexts with some prompting.
 - Use a few basic, routine skills to undertake familiar and routine tasks.
 - Complete pre-planned tasks.
 - Use, with guidance, basic tools and materials safely and effectively.
-

CHARACTERISTIC 3: GENERIC COGNITIVE SKILLS

- Identify with some prompting a process to deal with a situation or issue.
 - Operate in familiar contexts using given criteria.
 - Take account of some identified consequences of action.
-

CHARACTERISTIC 4: COMMUNICATION, ICT AND NUMERACY SKILLS

- Use simple skills, for example:
 - Produce and respond to simple written and oral communication in familiar/routine contexts.
 - Carry out simple tasks to process and access information.
 - Use simple numerical and graphical data in everyday contexts.
-

CHARACTERISTIC 5: AUTONOMY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND WORKING WITH OTHERS

- Work alone or with others on simple tasks under frequent directive supervision.
- Participate in the setting of goals, timelines, etc.
- Participate in the review of completed work and the identification of ways of improving practices and processes.
- Identify, given simple criteria, own strengths and weaknesses relative to the work.

LEVEL 4

The following descriptions are for guidance only – it is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

CHARACTERISTIC 1: KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - Basic knowledge.
 - Some simple facts and ideas in, about, and associated with, a subject/discipline/sector.
 - Knowledge of basic processes, materials and terminology.

CHARACTERISTIC 2: PRACTICE: APPLIED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING

- Relate knowledge to personal and/or practical contexts.
- Use a few skills to complete straightforward tasks with some non-routine elements.
- Prepare for familiar and routine tasks.
- Select and use, with guidance, appropriate tools and materials safely and effectively.

CHARACTERISTIC 3: GENERIC COGNITIVE SKILLS

- Use, with guidance, given stages of a process to deal with a problem, situation or issue.
- Operate in straightforward contexts.
- Identify and/or take account of some of the consequences of action/inaction.

CHARACTERISTIC 4: COMMUNICATION, ICT AND NUMERACY SKILLS

- Use some routine skills, for example:
 - Produce and respond to simple but detailed written and oral communication in familiar contexts.
 - Use the basic features of familiar ICT applications to process and obtain information.
 - Use basic numerical and graphical data in straightforward and familiar contexts.

CHARACTERISTIC 5: AUTONOMY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND WORKING WITH OTHERS

- Work alone or with others on tasks with regular, directive supervision.
- Contribute to the setting of goals, timelines, etc.
- Contribute to the review of completed work and offer suggestions for improving practices and processes.
- Identify own strengths and weaknesses relative to the work.

LEVEL 5

The following descriptions are for guidance only – it is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

CHARACTERISTIC 1: KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - Basic knowledge.
 - A range of simple facts, ideas and theories in, about, and associated with, a subject/discipline/sector.
 - Knowledge and understanding of basic processes, materials and terminology.

CHARACTERISTIC 2: PRACTICE: APPLIED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING

- Relate knowledge and ideas to personal and/or practical contexts.
- Use a range of skills associated with the subject/discipline/sector to complete some routine and non-routine tasks.
- Plan and organise both familiar and unfamiliar tasks.
- Select appropriate tools and materials and use them safely and effectively.
- Adjust tools where necessary following safe practices.

CHARACTERISTIC 3: GENERIC COGNITIVE SKILLS

- Use a process to deal with a problem, situation or issue that is straightforward.
- Operate in a familiar context, but where there is a need to take account of or use additional information of different kinds, some of which will be theoretical or hypothetical.

CHARACTERISTIC 4: COMMUNICATION, ICT AND NUMERACY SKILLS

- Use a range of routine skills, for example:
 - Produce and respond to detailed written and oral communication in familiar contexts.
 - Use standard ICT applications to process, obtain and combine information.
 - Use a range of numerical and graphical data in routine contexts that may have some non-routine elements.

CHARACTERISTIC 5: AUTONOMY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND WORKING WITH OTHERS

- Work alone or with others on tasks with minimum directive supervision.
- Agree goals and responsibilities for self and/or work team.
- Take lead responsibility for some tasks.
- Show an awareness of own and/or others' roles, responsibilities and requirements in carrying out work and contribute to the evaluation and improvement of practices and processes.

LEVEL 6

The following descriptions are for guidance only – it is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

CHARACTERISTIC 1: KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - An appreciation of the body of knowledge that constitutes a subject/discipline/sector.
 - A range of knowledge, facts, theories, ideas, properties, materials, terminology, practices and techniques about, and associated with, a subject/discipline/sector.
 - Relating the subject/discipline/sector to a range of practical and/or commonplace applications.

CHARACTERISTIC 2: PRACTICE: APPLIED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING

- Apply knowledge, skills and understanding:
 - In known, practical contexts.
 - In using some of the basic, routine practices, techniques and/or materials associated with the subject/discipline/sector.
 - In exercising these in routine contexts that may have non-routine elements.
 - In planning how skills will be used to address set situations and/or problems and adapt these as necessary.

CHARACTERISTIC 3: GENERIC COGNITIVE SKILLS

- Obtain, organise and use factual, theoretical and/or hypothetical information in problem solving.
- Make generalisations and predictions.
- Draw conclusions and suggest solutions.

CHARACTERISTIC 4: COMMUNICATION, ICT AND NUMERACY SKILLS

- Use a wide range of skills, for example:
 - Produce and respond to detailed and relatively complex written and oral communication in both familiar and unfamiliar contexts.
 - Select and use standard ICT applications to process, obtain and combine information.
 - Use a wide range of numerical and graphical data in routine contexts which may have non-routine elements.

CHARACTERISTIC 5: AUTONOMY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND WORKING WITH OTHERS

- Take responsibility for carrying out a range of activities where the overall goal is clear, under non-directive supervision.
- Exercise some supervisory responsibility for the work of others and lead established teams in the implementation of routine work within a defined and supervised structure.
- Manage limited resources within defined and supervised areas of work.
- Take account of roles and responsibilities related to the tasks being carried out and take a significant role in the evaluation of work and the improvement of practices and processes.

LEVEL 7

The following descriptions are for guidance only – it is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

CHARACTERISTIC 1: KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - An overall appreciation of the body of knowledge that constitutes a subject/discipline/sector.
 - Knowledge that is embedded in the main theories, concepts and principles of the subject/discipline/sector.
 - An awareness of the dynamic nature of knowledge and understanding.
 - An understanding of the difference between explanations based on evidence and/or research and other sources, and of the importance of this difference.

CHARACTERISTIC 2: PRACTICE: APPLIED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING

- Apply knowledge, skills and understanding:
 - In practical contexts.
 - In using some of the basic and routine professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with the subject/discipline/sector.
 - To practise these in both routine and non-routine contexts.

CHARACTERISTIC 3: GENERIC COGNITIVE SKILLS

- Present and evaluate arguments, information and ideas that are routine to a subject/discipline/sector.
- Use a range of approaches to address defined and/or routine problems and issues within familiar contexts.

CHARACTERISTIC 4: COMMUNICATION, ICT AND NUMERACY SKILLS

- Use a wide range of routine skills and some advanced skills associated with a subject/discipline/sector, for example:
 - Convey complex ideas in well-structured and coherent form.
 - Use a range of forms of communication effectively in both familiar and unfamiliar contexts.
 - Select and use standard ICT applications to process and obtain a variety of information and data.
 - Use a range of numerical and graphical skills in combination.
 - Use numerical and graphical data to measure progress and achieve goals/targets.

CHARACTERISTIC 5: AUTONOMY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND WORKING WITH OTHERS

- Exercise some initiative and independence in carrying out defined activities at a professional level in practice or in a subject/discipline/sector.
- Accept supervision in less familiar areas of work.
- Exercise some managerial or supervisory responsibility for the work of others within a defined and supervised structure.
- Manage limited resources within defined areas of work.
- Take the lead in implementing agreed plans in familiar or defined contexts.
- Take account of own and others' roles and responsibilities when carrying out and evaluating tasks.
- Work, under guidance, with others to acquire an understanding of current professional practice.

LEVEL 8

The following descriptions are for guidance only – it is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

CHARACTERISTIC 1: KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - A knowledge of the scope, defining features, and main areas of the subject/discipline/sector.
 - Specialist knowledge in some areas.
 - A discerning understanding of a defined range of core theories, concepts, principles and terminology.
 - Awareness and understanding of some major current issues and specialisms.
 - Awareness and understanding of research and equivalent scholarly/academic processes.

CHARACTERISTIC 2: PRACTICE: APPLIED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING

- Apply knowledge, skills and understanding:
 - In using a range of professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with the subject/discipline/sector, a few of which are advanced and/or complex.
 - In carrying out routine lines of enquiry, development or investigation into professional level problems and issues.
 - To adapt routine practices within accepted standards.

CHARACTERISTIC 3: GENERIC COGNITIVE SKILLS

- Undertake critical analysis, evaluation and/or synthesis of ideas, concepts, information and issues that are within the common understandings in a subject/discipline/sector.
- Use a range of approaches to formulate and critically evaluate evidence-based solutions/responses to defined and/or routine problems and issues.

CHARACTERISTIC 4: COMMUNICATION, ICT AND NUMERACY SKILLS

- Use a wide range of routine skills and some advanced and specialised skills associated with a subject/discipline/sector, for example:
 - Convey complex information to a range of audiences and for a range of purposes.
 - Use a range of standard ICT applications to process and obtain data.
 - Use and evaluate numerical and graphical data to measure progress and achieve goals/targets.

CHARACTERISTIC 5: AUTONOMY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND WORKING WITH OTHERS

- Exercise autonomy and initiative in some activities at a professional level in practice or in a subject/discipline/sector.
- Exercise managerial responsibility for the work of others within a defined structure.
- Manage resources within defined areas of work.
- Take the lead on planning in familiar or defined contexts.
- Practise in ways that show awareness of own and others' roles, responsibilities and contributions when carrying out and evaluating tasks.
- Work, under guidance, with others to acquire an understanding of current professional practice.
- Manage, under guidance, ethical and professional issues in accordance with current professional and/or ethical codes or practices.

LEVEL 9

The following descriptions are for guidance only – it is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

CHARACTERISTIC 1: KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - An understanding of the scope and defining features of a subject/discipline/sector, and an integrated knowledge of its main areas and boundaries.
 - A critical understanding of a range of the principles, principal theories, concepts and terminology of the subject/discipline/sector.
 - Knowledge of one or more specialisms that is informed by forefront developments.

CHARACTERISTIC 2: PRACTICE: APPLIED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING

- Apply knowledge, skills and understanding:
 - In using a range of the principal professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with the subject/discipline/sector.
 - In using a few skills, techniques, practices and/or materials that are specialised and/or advanced.
 - In practising routine methods of enquiry and/or research.
 - To practise in a range of professional level contexts that include a degree of unpredictability.

CHARACTERISTIC 3: GENERIC COGNITIVE SKILLS

- Undertake critical analysis, evaluation and/or synthesis of ideas, concepts, information and issues in a subject/discipline/sector.
- Identify and analyse routine professional problems and issues.
- Draw on a range of sources in making judgements.

CHARACTERISTIC 4: COMMUNICATION, ICT AND NUMERACY SKILLS

- Use a wide range of routine skills and some advanced and specialised skills in support of established practices in a subject/discipline/sector, for example:
 - Present or convey, formally and informally, information on standard/mainstream topics in the subject/discipline/sector to a range of audiences.
 - Use a range of ICT applications to support and enhance work.
 - Interpret, use and evaluate numerical and graphical data to achieve goals/targets.

CHARACTERISTIC 5: AUTONOMY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND WORKING WITH OTHERS

- Exercise autonomy and initiative in some activities at a professional level in practice or in a subject/discipline/sector.
- Exercise managerial responsibility for the work of others and for a range of resources.
- Practise in ways that show awareness of own and others' roles and responsibilities.
- Work, under guidance, with specialist practitioners.
- Seeking guidance where appropriate, manage ethical and professional issues in accordance with current professional and/or ethical codes or practices.

LEVEL 10

The following descriptions are for guidance only – it is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

CHARACTERISTIC 1: KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - Knowledge that covers and integrates most of the principal areas, features, boundaries, terminology and conventions of a subject/discipline/sector.
 - A critical understanding of the principal theories, concepts and principles.
 - Detailed knowledge and understanding in one or more specialisms, some of which is informed by, or at the forefront of, a subject/discipline/sector.
 - Knowledge and understanding of the ways in which the subject/discipline/sector is developed, including a range of established techniques of enquiry or research methodologies.

CHARACTERISTIC 2: PRACTICE: APPLIED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING

- Apply knowledge, skills and understanding:
 - In using a wide range of the principal professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with the subject/discipline/sector.
 - In using a few skills, techniques, practices and/or materials that are specialised, advanced and/or at the forefront of a subject/discipline/sector.
 - In executing a defined project of research, development or investigation and in identifying and implementing relevant outcomes.
 - To practise in a range of professional level contexts that include a degree of unpredictability and/or specialism.

CHARACTERISTIC 3: GENERIC COGNITIVE SKILLS

- Critically identify, define, conceptualise and analyse complex/professional problems and issues.
- Offer professional insights, interpretations and solutions to problems and issues.
- Demonstrate some originality and creativity in dealing with professional issues.
- Critically review and consolidate knowledge, skills, practices and thinking in a subject/discipline/sector.
- Make judgements where data/information is limited or comes from a range of sources.

CHARACTERISTIC 4: COMMUNICATION, ICT AND NUMERACY SKILLS

- Use a wide range of routine skills and some advanced and specialised skills in support of established practices in a subject/discipline/sector, for example:
 - Present or convey, formally and informally, information about specialised topics to informed audiences.
 - Communicate with peers, senior colleagues and specialists on a professional level.
 - Use a range of ICT applications to support and enhance work at this level and adjust features to suit purpose.
 - Interpret, use and evaluate a wide range of numerical and graphical data to set and achieve goals/targets.

CHARACTERISTIC 5: AUTONOMY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND WORKING WITH OTHERS

- Exercise autonomy and initiative in professional/equivalent activities.
- Exercise significant managerial responsibility for the work of others and for a range of resources.
- Practise in ways that show awareness of own and others' roles and responsibilities.
- Work, under guidance, in a peer relationship with specialist practitioners.
- Work with others to bring about change, development and/or new thinking.
- Manage complex ethical and professional issues in accordance with current professional and/or ethical codes or practices.
- Recognise the limits of these codes and seek guidance where appropriate.

LEVEL 11

The following descriptions are for guidance only – it is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

CHARACTERISTIC 1: KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - Knowledge that covers and integrates most, if not all, of the main areas of the subject/discipline/sector – including their features, boundaries, terminology and conventions.
 - A critical understanding of the principal theories, concepts and principles.
 - A critical understanding of a range of specialised theories, concepts and principles.
 - Extensive, detailed and critical knowledge and understanding in one or more specialisms, much of which is at, or informed by, developments at the forefront.
 - A critical awareness of current issues in a subject/discipline/sector and one or more specialisms.

CHARACTERISTIC 2: PRACTICE: APPLIED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING

- Apply knowledge, skills and understanding:
 - In using a significant range of the principal professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with the subject/discipline/sector.
 - In using a range of specialised skills, techniques, practices and/or materials that are at the forefront of, or informed by, forefront developments.
 - In applying a range of standard and specialised research and/or equivalent instruments and techniques of enquiry.
 - In planning and executing a significant project of research, investigation or development.
 - In demonstrating originality and/or creativity, including in practices.
 - To practise in a wide and often unpredictable variety of professional level contexts.

CHARACTERISTIC 3: GENERIC COGNITIVE SKILLS

- Apply critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis to forefront issues, or issues that are informed by forefront developments in the subject/discipline/sector.
- Identify, conceptualise and define new and abstract problems and issues.
- Develop original and creative responses to problems and issues.
- Critically review, consolidate and extend knowledge, skills, practices and thinking in a subject/discipline/sector.
- Deal with complex issues and make informed judgements in situations in the absence of complete or consistent data/information.

CHARACTERISTIC 4: COMMUNICATION, ICT AND NUMERACY SKILLS

- Use a wide range of routine skills and a range of advanced and specialised skills as appropriate to a subject/discipline/sector, for example:
 - Communicate, using appropriate methods, to a range of audiences with different levels of knowledge/expertise.
 - Communicate with peers, more senior colleagues and specialists.
 - Use a wide range of ICT applications to support and enhance work at this level and adjust features to suit purpose.
 - Undertake critical evaluations of a wide range of numerical and graphical data.

CHARACTERISTIC 5: AUTONOMY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND WORKING WITH OTHERS

- Exercise substantial autonomy and initiative in professional and equivalent activities.
- Take responsibility for own work and/or significant responsibility for the work of others.
- Take significant responsibility for a range of resources.
- Work in a peer relationship with specialist practitioners.
- Demonstrate leadership and/or initiative and make an identifiable contribution to change and development and/or new thinking.
- Practise in ways which draw on critical reflection on own and others' roles and responsibilities.
- Manage complex ethical and professional issues and make informed judgements on issues not addressed by current professional and/or ethical codes or practices.

LEVEL 12

The following descriptions are for guidance only – it is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

CHARACTERISTIC 1: KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- Demonstrate and/or work with:
 - A critical overview of a subject/discipline/sector, including critical understanding of the principal theories, concepts and principles.
 - A critical, detailed and often leading knowledge and understanding at the forefront of one or more specialisms.
 - Knowledge and understanding that is generated through personal research or equivalent work that makes a significant contribution to the development of the subject/discipline/sector.

CHARACTERISTIC 2: PRACTICE: APPLIED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING

- Apply knowledge, skills and understanding:
 - In using a significant range of the principal professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with the subject/discipline/sector.
 - In using and enhancing a range of complex skills, techniques, practices and/or materials that are at the forefront of one or more specialisms.
 - In applying a range of standard and specialised research and/or equivalent instruments and techniques of enquiry.
 - In designing and executing research, investigative or development projects to deal with new problems and issues.
 - In demonstrating originality and creativity in the development and application of new knowledge, understanding and practices.
 - To practise in the context of new problems and circumstances.

CHARACTERISTIC 3: GENERIC COGNITIVE SKILLS

- Apply a constant and integrated approach to critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas, information and issues.
- Identify, conceptualise and offer original and creative insights into new, complex and abstract ideas, information and issues.
- Develop original and creative responses to problems and issues.
- Deal with complex and/or new issues and make informed judgements in the absence of complete or consistent data/information.

CHARACTERISTIC 4: COMMUNICATION, ICT AND NUMERACY SKILLS

- Use a wide range of routine skills and a significant range of advanced and specialised skills as appropriate to a subject/discipline/sector, for example:
 - Communicate at an appropriate level to a range of audiences and adapt communication to the context and purpose.
 - Communicate at the standard of published academic work and/or critical dialogue and review with peers and experts in other specialisms/sectors.
 - Use a range of ICT applications to support and enhance work at this level and specify software requirements to enhance work.
 - Critically evaluate numerical and graphical data.

CHARACTERISTIC 5: AUTONOMY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND WORKING WITH OTHERS

- Demonstrate substantial authority and exercise a high level of autonomy and initiative in professional and equivalent activities.
- Take full responsibility for own work and/or significant responsibility for the work of others.
- Take significant responsibility for a range of resources.
- Demonstrate leadership and/or originality in tackling and resolving problems and issues.
- Practise in ways which are reflective, self-critical and based on research/evidence.
- Manage complex ethical and professional issues and make informed judgements on new and emerging issues not addressed by current professional and/or ethical codes or practices.

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AUGUST 2012

