KEY SKILLS UNIT

Information technology

What is this unit about?

This unit is about applying your IT skills to suit different purposes.

You will show you can:

- search for and select information;
- explore and develop information, and derive new information;
- present combined information, including text, images and numbers.

How do I use the information in this unit?

There are three parts to this unit: what you need to know, what you must do and guidance.

Part **A**
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

This part of the unit tells you what you need to learn and practise to feel confident about applying IT skills in your studies, work or other aspects of your life.

Part **B**
WHAT YOU MUST DO

This part of the unit describes the skills you must show. All your work for this section will be assessed. You must have evidence that you can do all the things listed in the bullet points.

Part **C**
GUIDANCE

This part describes some activities you might like to use to develop and show your IT skills. It also contains examples of the sort of evidence you could produce to prove you have the skills required.

LEVEL 2

Part A

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

In searching for and selecting information,

YOU NEED TO KNOW HOW TO:

- identify suitable sources of information *(eg hand-written documents, material to be scanned, files on disks, CD-ROMs, databases, the internet)*;

- search for information using multiple criteria *(eg operators such as 'and', 'greater than' and tools such as search engines)*;

- interpret information and decide what is relevant to your purpose *(eg to respond to an enquiry, write a project report, help solve a problem, design or make something)*.

In developing information,

YOU NEED TO KNOW HOW TO:

- enter and bring together information *(eg 'copy and paste' or import text, images, numbers)*, using formats that help development *(eg using tabs rather than spaces to align text, using tables or frames to position information)*;

- explore information as needed for your purpose *(eg follow lines of enquiry, explore the effects of changing information in a spreadsheet model to make and test predictions)*;

- develop information in the form of text, images and numbers *(eg link information, organise information under headings, restructure tables, generate charts and graphs from data, select records or fields and prepare reports from a database)*;

- derive new information *(eg compare information from different sources to reach a conclusion, use formulae to calculate information such as a total or average)*.

In presenting information,

YOU NEED TO KNOW HOW TO:

- select and use appropriate layouts for presenting combined information, *(eg document structures such as margins, columns and headings, borders for images and text, record structures, tables, spreadsheets)*;

- present information in a consistent way, *(eg paragraph layouts, sizes and styles of images and text, alignments, fonts)*;

- develop the presentation to suit your purpose and types of information, including text, images and numbers, *(eg highlight information to improve its impact, refine layouts, make sure it suits the needs of your audience)*;

- ensure your work is accurate and clear *(eg proof-read, use a spell-checker, seek the views of others)* and is saved appropriately *(eg use suitable folders/directories and file names, avoid loss)*.

You will also need to know: the benefits and disadvantages of using IT; when it is necessary to observe copyright or confidentiality; how to identify errors and their causes and minimise risks from viruses; and how to work safely and minimise health risks.

Part B

WHAT YOU MUST DO

You must:

IT2.1

Search for and select information for **two** different purposes.

Evidence must show you can:

- ■ identify the information you need and suitable sources;
- ■ carry out effective searches; and
- ■ select information that is relevant to your purpose.

IT2.2

Explore and develop information, and derive new information, for **two** different purposes.

- ■ enter and bring together information using formats that help development;
- ■ explore information as needed for your purpose; and
- ■ develop information and derive new information as appropriate.

IT2.3

Present combined information for **two** different purposes.

Your work must include at least **one** example of text, **one** example of images and **one** example of numbers.

- ■ select and use appropriate layouts for presenting combined information in a consistent way;
- ■ develop the presentation to suit your purpose and the types of information; and
- ■ ensure your work is accurate, clear and saved appropriately.

Part C

GUIDANCE

Examples of activities you might use

You will have opportunities to develop and apply your IT skills during your work, studies or other activities. For example when:

- researching and reporting findings from a project or assignment;
- researching and designing a product;
- dealing with enquiries from customers or clients;
- exchanging information and ideas with work colleagues or other students.

You will need time to practise your skills and prepare for assessment. So it is important to plan ahead.

The purpose for using IT can be decided by you or by other people. But you must make sure that the work you produce suits this purpose. Using IT can contribute evidence for other key skills, such as communication and application of number.

You will need to think about the quality of your IT skills and check your evidence covers all the requirements in Part B.

This unit is for use in programmes starting from September 2000.

Examples of evidence

2.1 SEARCH FOR AND SELECT INFORMATION

Print-outs of the relevant information with notes of sources and how you made searches, or a record from an assessor who observed you using IT when searching for information.

2.2 DEVELOP INFORMATION

Printouts, or a record from an assessor who observed you using IT, with notes to show how you explored and developed information and derived new information.

2.3 PRESENT INFORMATION

Working drafts, or a record from an assessor who observed your screen displays, with notes to show how you have developed content and presentation.

Print-outs, or prints of static or dynamic screen displays, of your final work, including examples of text, images and numbers.

Records of how you saved information.

If producing certain types of evidence creates difficulties, through disability or for another reason, you may be able to use other ways to show your achievement. Ask your tutor or supervisor for further information.