

Curriculum for English and Soft Skills component for all NVQ courses

This course is intended to provide students on other courses with basic employment skills. The curriculum ensures development of competencies, in addition to those related to their field of employment, that will enable them to work productively.

All recent studies make it clear that one of the greatest problems noted with regard to the employability of students in this sector is with regard to English. The need of more soft skills has also been accepted. However it should also be noted that the latest ILO study indicates that wider cognitive skills too are lacking, in the sense of conceptualization skills.

This curriculum, which is to be used on all NVQ courses, and is advised for other courses in the sector too, is divided into five sections, which cover English as well as two aspects of soft skills. At least a third of the course should deal with development of soft skills. Teachers are advised to start each lesson in this curriculum with an ice-breaker exercise, for instance to strengthen concentration, ensure responsiveness, encourage speaking and self-confidence.

A textbook has been prepared for the course, and against learning outcomes the page on which exercises to promote these are available is noted. Teachers however are encouraged to develop other exercises to fulfil the purpose, and to adapt these as appropriate. Students should also be requested to maintain individual portfolios in which they record what they have learnt. Teachers should also ensure study and practice outside class hours, and also introduce project work which should be done in groups outside the classroom.

Students should work on as much of the prescribed textbook as is possible, with judicious selection of what can be omitted, and what needs greater time allocation. It should be possible to ensure in the time allotted that the basic competencies given here are acquired, though entrenching them may be more difficult because there will be little time to practice. However, given that many courses are of more than 3 months duration, even at Level 3, it is hoped that students will derive the benefits anticipated.

Level 3 Courses

At the end of course, students should be able to

- Understand and use simple expressions to communication, so as to
 - Introduce themselves
 - Pronounce words and letters clearly
 - Interact with others politely and appropriately
 - Frame and respond to simple questions
 - Ask for and offer help
 - Make suggestions and requests
 - Give dates
 - Follow simple instructions
 - Describe tools and workplaces
 - Describe daily routines
 - Describe processes
 - Discuss costs
 - Give directions
 - Participate in conversations
 - Express likes and dislikes with reasons
- Read with understanding and write effectively at appropriate levels by
 - Forming capital and simple letters correctly and using basic punctuation correctly
 - Paying due attention to spelling
 - Finding specific information from a text or manual
 - Understanding the main points of a text or manual
 - Understanding simple notes and notices, instructions and information
 - Following a simple story and answering questions about it
 - Taking down a short message
 - Describing processes
 - Writing personal letters
 - Presenting estimates

- Understand the structure of English so as to use it effectively, with regard to
 - The simple present and past tenses of the verb to be and other verbs
 - Common nouns in singular and plural (regular and irregular)
 - Simple adjectives and adverbs and their opposites
 - Determiners - a, the, all, some, none
 - Pronouns , subject and object forms and possessive adjective
 - Basic prepositions

- Be introduced to the following cognitive skills with regard to effective work
 - Identifying patterns and systems
 - Thinking clearly and in sequence
 - Assessing quality
 - Developing visual thinking capacity
 - Noting differences and similarities and recognizing what is relevant
 - Understanding the concept of variables, what changes occur in a pattern
 - Reading and understanding maps, plans, construction sites and organizational charts
 - Classification and categorization
 - Calculating systematically
 - Comparing visual data
 - Giving and collating information systematically
 - Presenting information in reports and charts
 - Preparing estimates

- Students should develop the capacity to work effectively on their own and in harmony with others, with particular attention to
 - Developing confidence to speak about themselves
 - Engaging in planning, prioritization and time management
 - Planning a group activity, allocating responsibilities and reporting results
 - Understanding routine and identifying their own routine
 - Understanding different points of view
 - Grooming and self presentation

Social norms

Learning to concentrate and react swiftly

Ability to identify themselves and express their skills and abilities

Trying to learn about the world and practices elsewhere

Developing social commitment

Engaging in reference work for specific tasks

Students will also be introduced to the tools of Information Technology

Textbook – Building Career Skills, TVEC

Assessment

The course will be assessed through formative assessments for 75% of the total mark. This will include

10% for classroom participation

20% for oral responses to questions

20% for short quizzes testing English as well as cognitive skills

There should be several tests during the course and the best three marks should be taken into account

15% for a group project

10% for the report on the group project

- A summative test for 25% inclusive of an oral component for 10% will be conducted at the end of the course.

NVQ level 4 courses

This course builds on NVQ Level 1 to develop career skills further. Their knowledge of English is enhanced while they also learn more about the world at large. More open attitudes are developed along with practical skills, and cognitive abilities and skills that will allow them to make connections and conceptualize more effectively. This course will also act as a precursor to one of the employment oriented Level 3 courses which introduce them to basic knowledge regarding careers in different sectors.

In addition to the five sections covered in the NVQ Level 1 course, this course also includes a module in computing, and will require two group projects that relate to environmental concerns and sustainability as well as to enhancing social sensitivity.

Note that before the course begins revision of the competencies that were prescribed for NVQ Level 3 courses is necessary. At the end of this course students should be able to

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- Understand and use simple expressions of communication, so as to
 - Express individual ideas, emotions, preferences
 - Explain and describe simple processes
 - Frame and answer questions with regard to reasons and methods
 - Understand and respond to complex instructions
 - Make and respond to introductions
 - Recognize the different vowel sounds, and complicated consonant sounds and use them correctively
 - Use phrasing correctly in speaking to maximize effect
 - Use pauses and emphases for effective speaking
 - Describe occupations
 - Describe pictures and images in detail
 - Use linking words correctly and informatively
 - Express ability and inability and regrets with reasons

Identify locations and their features

Describe past situations

Continue a given narrative in logical sequence

- Read with understanding and write effectively at appropriate levels by

Writing short introductions (self, friends, places)

Write about how they feel, and give reasons why, in simple sentences

Write short dialogues such as in speech bubbles, picture stories or comics

Describe processes depicted visually

Understand and respond to signs and simple notices

Infer the meaning of words

Read and write simple texts and notes, including information about times, dates and places. E.g. they can:

- a. Write about what they like doing in their free time

- b. Understand texts with the help of pictures

Continue a story or text that has been started or add words that are missing

Connect sentences meaningfully

Read and carry out instructions

Understand/produce arguments

Read/write longer texts

Make up a story in English using ideas, pictures or words the teacher gives them

Write reports

Prepare charts

Take notes from a text

Write formal letters

Fill forms Consult dictionaries and prepare a personal dictionary

Use glossaries

Write and respond to emails and memos

Keep a diary

- Students should understand the structure of English so as to use it effectively, with regard to

Question forms

The Past Continuous Tense

Transitive and Intransitive Verbs

Prefixes

Conjunctions expressing time relations and reasons and results, including unexpected ones

The Perfect Tense

The Past Participle

The Future Tense

Demonstrative pronouns / Adjectives

Possessive Pronouns

Conjunctions of time, reasons and results

Modal verbs

Determiners - each, every, several, many, either, neither, both

Linking Verbs

Prepositional Phrases, adjectival and adverbial

Relative Pronouns and Clauses

Reflexive Pronouns and Reflexive Verbs

- Students should be introduced to the following cognitive skills with regard to effective work

Organizing information systematically

Recording and assessing information to solve problems systematically

Understanding chronological order

Developing the concepts of mind and task mapping and applying them

Classification with different variables

Understanding governmental structures and coordination mechanisms

Collecting information and preparing development plans

Making Chronological Charts

Moving from the known to the unknown

Organising their own time management

Access work related information from the internet and other sources

Being aware of their own strengths and weaknesses

Thinking laterally and outside the box

Checking hypotheses and estimates

Assessing data

- Students should develop the capacity to work effectively on their own and in harmony with others, with particular attention to

Presenting themselves positively

The advantages of working together

Understanding of team process – different responsibilities, consultation, consensus

Speaking persuasively

Understanding the characteristics of different people and the impact these have

Abide by commitments

Understand the need to apologize, and to explain any failures

Understanding and working with maps

- Work with computers so as to enter information swiftly and store it systematically, retrieve it easily, communicate on email, and use social media and messenger systems with due attention to ethics

- Plan and implement two group projects, one with regard to environmental protection / conservation, the other a social service project in response to identified community needs. Students should plan the project systematically, target specific outcomes, report on progress, present results to an audience and evaluate the project on completion.

Textbook – Developing Career Skills, TVEC

Assessment

The course will be assessed through formative assessments for 75% of the total mark. This will include

10% for classroom participation

20% for oral responses to questions

20% for short quizzes testing English as well as cognitive skills

There should be several tests during the course and the best three marks should be taken into account

5% for a group project

10% for the report on the group project

10% for a diary and personal dictionary

A summative test for 25% inclusive of an oral component for 10% will be conducted at the end of the course.

Curriculum for English and Soft Skills component for all NVQ level 5 courses

This course is designed to facilitate students entering the world of work with the basic competencies necessary to enable them to move swiftly to positions of responsibility requiring initiative and good presentation skills. Note that before the course begins revision of the competencies that were prescribed for NVQ Level 3 and 4 courses is necessary.

This course should also be used for students on NVQ Level 6 courses, pending curriculum review of that Level.

At the end of this course students should be able to

- Communicate effectively through understanding and practice of the most effective way of
 - Expressing opinions, agreeing and disagreeing
 - Listening productively
 - Focusing attention
 - Making effective presentations, including through Power Point, and interactive means and software
 - Conducting and participating in discussions
 - Consulting so as to prepare programmes and itineraries

- Read with understanding and write effectively at appropriate levels and in particular effectively
 - Write CVs
 - Reply to advertisements and inquiries
 - Prepare an itinerary
 - Fill forms
 - Take notes and keep minutes/ records
 - Understand and use conditional sentences

- Students should understand the structure of English so as to use it effectively, with regard to
 - Passive voice
 - The Perfect Tense
 - Reported Speech
 - Noun Clauses
 - Use of Participles
 - Less common tenses – Past Continuous, Past Perfect
 - Phrasal verbs
 - Prepositional Phrases, Adjectival and Adverbial
 - Participial Phrases
 - Gerunds
 - Conditional Sentences

- Students should further develop cognitive abilities and skills with regard to effective work, with strengthening of the capabilities developed at previous levels. They should also
 - Identify appropriate skills for particular tasks
 - Understand and be able to practise categorization with appreciation of differences
 - Work with maps and graphic information, in particular digital information streamed via the Internet and in digital fashion

- Students should develop the capacity to work effectively on their own and in harmony with others, with strengthening of the capabilities developed at previous levels. They should develop heightened awareness of the need to
 - Fulfil responsibilities
 - Do reference work
 - Practice Presentation Skills, alone and in teams
 - Coordinate with others, while understanding different priorities
 - Understand the need for conflict resolution and develop appropriate negotiating skills

Have goals in mind and evaluate degree of success

Textbook – Advancing Career Skills

Assessment

The course will be assessed through formative assessments for 50% of the total mark. This will include

10% for classroom participation

10% for oral responses to questions

10% for short quizzes testing English as well as cognitive skills

There should be several tests during the course and the best three marks should be taken into account

10% for a group project with a report

10% for an individual project with a report

A summative test for 50% inclusive of an oral component for 20% will be conducted at the end of the course.