

**The Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC)  
was set up as a statutory body on 11 June 2001  
by the Minister for Education and Science.  
Under the Qualifications (Education & Training) Act, 1999,  
FETAC now has responsibility for making awards  
previously made by NCVA.**



## **Module Descriptor**

# **Communications**

**Level 3    GF0001**

**[www.fetac.ie](http://www.fetac.ie)**

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### *Key to Level 3 Module Descriptors*

## Introduction

A **module** is a self-contained unit of learning. Modules may be followed and assessed alone or in association with other modules.

The FETAC offers certification to candidates who achieve the standards specified in modules approved by FETAC.

This module descriptor describes:

- The purpose and aims of the module
- The knowledge, skills and attitudes which successful learners will achieve on completion of the module
- The standard of work required
- The range of work which candidates are required to submit to FETAC as evidence of their achievements
- How the work should be presented for assessment.

The purpose of this module descriptor is to:

- Provide clear guidelines for centre staff to assist them in planning programmes
- Provide a system of assessment which will allow candidates to demonstrate their achievements.

The overall content of the module and the method of delivery should be planned by centre staff, where possible in consultation with learners, taking into account the assessment requirements outlined in the module descriptor.

<b>1</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Communications</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>GF0001</b>
3	Level	3
<b>4</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>1 credit</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<p>This module descriptor defines the learning outcomes which candidates at pre-vocational level should achieve in order to communicate in a range of social, vocational and learning situations.</p> <p>Course providers are encouraged to design programmes which are consistent with these learning outcomes and are relevant to learners' needs and interests. Level 3 Communications may be offered as a stand-alone module or may be integrated with other Level 3 modules.</p> <p>Candidates who are successful at Level 3 will demonstrate an ability to communicate effectively in a variety of situations appropriate to their personal, social and cultural needs.</p>
<b>6</b>	<b>Preferred Entry Level</b>	No previous qualifications are required.
<b>7</b>	<b>Special Requirements</b>	None.
<b>8</b>	<b>General Aims</b>	<p><i>Candidates who successfully complete this module will:</i></p> <p><b>8.1</b> apply communication skills relevant to personal and social development</p> <p><b>8.2</b> demonstrate interactive skills and qualities such as self-confidence, assertiveness, empathy and consideration</p> <p><b>8.3</b> reflect on personal educational and vocational experience and engage in independent learning</p> <p><b>8.4</b> become aware of the impact of key developments in communication, eg mass communications, information technology and the processes of communication.</p>

**9 Units** The Specific Learning Outcomes are grouped as seven units. However, it is desirable that these be delivered and assessed in an integrated manner.

- 1 Learning to Learn**
- 2 Non-verbal Communication**
- 3 Personal Interaction**
- 4 Reading**
- 5 Writing**
- 6 Media Awareness and Visual Communication**
- 7 Introduction to Information Technology**

**10 Specific Learning Outcomes**

*Candidates must achieve all of the following Specific Learning Outcomes:*

**Unit 1 Learning to Learn**

- 1.1** Develop a personal learning plan.
- 1.2** Review and adapt the learning plan as necessary.
- 1.3** Practise different ways of learning in different situations.

**Unit 2 Non-verbal Communication**

- 2.1** Interpret common signs and symbols.
- 2.2** Interpret common non-verbal messages.
- 2.3** Use non-verbal signals to convey a specific message.

**Unit 3 Personal Interaction**

- 3.1** Extract the main facts, ideas and opinions from a variety of spoken sources.
- 3.2** Start and maintain conversation in different settings.
- 3.3** Describe events, procedures and processes.
- 3.4** Tell a story or anecdote.
- 3.5** Express personal opinions.

**Unit 4 Reading**

- 4.1** Use a range of suitable reading techniques.
- 4.2** Respond appropriately to everyday visual and written materials.
- 4.3** Locate information in a range of reference sources.

## **Unit 5**

### **Writing**

- 5.1 Use writing to carry out everyday tasks.
- 5.2 Write personal and formal correspondence.
- 5.3 Write simple instructions.
- 5.4 Write expressively in a range of forms.
- 5.5 Use correct punctuation, spelling and sentence structure.
- 5.6 Draft, proof-read and edit work.

## **Unit 6**

### **Media Awareness and Visual Communication**

- 6.1 Discuss media-related issues.
- 6.2 Interpret and evaluate visual images.
- 6.3 Construct a visual aid to illustrate a point.

## **Unit 7**

### **Introduction to Information Technology**

- 7.1 Discuss ways in which information technology affects everyday personal, social, and vocational life.
- 7.2 Read from a Visual Display Unit and follow instructions.

**11 Assessment** Candidates present a portfolio of coursework which shows that they have achieved all of the Specific Learning Outcomes.

**Portfolio** The portfolio must contain the following:

**reading material** (3 pieces of text)

**written material** (10 pieces of writing)

**visual material** (3 images and 1 personally-constructed visual aid)

**Reading Material:** a selection of three texts, each piece approximately one A4 sheet in length, which they have used to practise the range of reading techniques specified.

**Written Material:** a selection of ten handwritten pieces:

- three pieces of correspondence, to include one personal letter and one formal letter, each at least two paragraphs in length
- three pieces of expressive writing, two at least 100 words in length and one short piece of less than 100 words
- two sets of written instructions or directions, each containing at least four steps
- two other pieces, each approximately 100 words in length, selected from the following:

summary of learning goals; diary entry for one week; personal study plan for one week; 'opinion' column discussing a topic of choice.

Evidence of planning and redrafting should be attached to each finished piece, i.e. rough notes/early drafts.

Final drafts should contain no more than three errors of spelling or punctuation and should observe all appropriate conventions of format, sentence structure and paragraphing.

**Visual Material:** three sample images and one personally-constructed visual aid.

Candidates with specified disabilities may submit typewritten or word-processed work and, where necessary, material produced using assistive technology.

- 12 Performance Criteria** Performance Criteria provide guidelines on Specific Learning Outcomes and describe the standards which successful candidates must achieve. Generally, candidates who fulfil **80% or more** of the Performance Criteria are deemed to be successful in the relevant Specific Learning Outcome.

For ease of reference, Performance Criteria are itemised alongside the relevant Specific Learning Outcome.

## Unit 1

### Learning to Learn

<b>Specific Learning Outcomes</b> <i>The learner should be able to:</i>	<b>Performance Criteria</b>
<b>1.1 Develop a personal learning plan</b>	identify and express learning goals  list the tasks involved in achieving specific goals  determine the sequence in which tasks should be carried out  list any equipment, materials or special conditions required.
<b>1.2 Review and adapt the learning plan as necessary</b>	check progress against original plan  identify and explain areas of success  identify and explain problematic areas  suggest solutions to any problems  suggest alternative ways of achieving learning goals.
<b>1.3 Practise different ways of learning in different situations</b>	practise observation, listening, questioning, responding, in <i>group learning situations</i>  practise planning, working to deadlines, carrying out tasks, reviewing progress during <i>self-directed personal study</i>  practise observation, listening, questioning, responding, in <i>one-to-one learning situations</i> .

## Unit 2

### Non-verbal Communication

<b>Specific Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Performance Criteria</b>
<i>The learner should be able to:</i>	
<b>2.1 Interpret common signs and symbols</b>	explain the meaning of at least three of the following:  selected traffic and road signs selected quality marks care labels other common signs and symbols.
<b>2.2 Interpret common non-verbal messages</b>	explain at least three messages which may be conveyed by different types of non-verbal signals, eg  facial expression, eye contact, choice of clothing, posture, gesture, colour, tone of voice, touch, environment.
<b>2.3 Use non-verbal signals to convey a specific message</b>	give at least three clear messages using non-verbal signals, eg  facial expression, eye contact, choice of clothing, posture, gesture, colour, tone of voice, touch, environment.

## Unit 3

### Personal Interaction

<b>Specific Learning Outcomes</b> <i>The learner should be able to:</i>	<b>Performance Criteria</b>
<b>3.1 Extract the main facts, ideas and opinions from a variety of spoken sources</b>	pay attention to different spoken communications, eg conversations, instructions, TV programmes  ask relevant questions  give the principal message contained in at least three everyday spoken communications  act appropriately on the information obtained, eg correctly follow instructions.
<b>3.2 Start and maintain conversation in different settings</b>	initiate and maintain interaction with one other person on two occasions  initiate and maintain interaction in a group on two occasions.
<b>3.3 Describe events, procedures and processes</b>	accurately describe an event or process  give accurate instructions for a simple task, eg directions  communicate with reasonable fluency  present content in a structured way, including a beginning, middle and end  ensure that content and delivery are suitable for audience and situation.
<b>3.4 Tell a story or anecdote</b>	give a brief, unaccompanied account of a story, anecdote or joke  communicate with reasonable fluency  present content in a structured way, including a beginning, middle and end  ensure that content and delivery are suitable for audience and situation.
<b>3.5 Express personal opinions</b>	communicate a personal opinion with reasonable fluency  present content in a structured way, including a beginning, middle and end  ensure that content and delivery are suitable for audience and situation.

## Unit 4

### Reading

#### Specific Learning Outcomes

*The learner should be able to:*

#### 4.1 Use a range of suitable reading techniques

#### Performance Criteria

*scan* to locate at least one specific piece of information, eg time of TV programme, sports results

*skim* to gain an overall impression of at least one text, eg magazine article, leaflet

*locate* at least one specific piece of information from graphic text, eg chart, table, price list

*read* a short text (at least one page of standard prose) for interest or leisure

*read* a short text for learning purposes.

read materials relevant to own needs, interests and circumstances, eg

forms, letters, articles  
poems, scripts, stories  
instructions, directions, labels  
signs, charts, maps  
graphs, timetables  
work-related text

use appropriate reading technique

answer oral or written questions on at least three pieces

take suitable action in response to at least three pieces, eg correctly follow written instructions.

#### 4.2 Respond appropriately to everyday visual and written materials

look up an alphabetic index, eg find name in telephone directory

find days and dates in a diary and calendar

look up arrival and departure times in a travel timetable

#### 4.3 Locate information in a range of reference sources

find an item listed on a table of contents page

find an item listed on an index page.

## Unit 5

### Writing

<b>Specific Learning Outcomes</b> <i>The learner should be able to:</i>	<b>Performance Criteria</b>
<b>5.1 Use writing to carry out everyday tasks</b>	write one list, rough note or reminder  make a note of appointments, time commitments, timetables, important days and dates in a diary or planner, to cover a period of at least one week  make a note of names, addresses and telephone numbers in a personal or work address book  complete simple forms.
<b>5.2 Write personal and formal correspondence</b>	write at least one brief note, message or telephone message, eg note to teacher  write at least one holiday postcard to a friend, using correct format and greetings  write a personal letter to a friend or relative, eg a thank you letter, at least two paragraphs long, using correct format and greetings  write a formal letter, eg a complaint or job application, using correct format and greetings.
<b>5.3 Write simple instructions</b>	give written directions to a known location  write two sets of instructions on how to carry out everyday tasks, eg recipe, change a lightbulb, fill petrol tank  give at least four steps for each set of instructions or directions  give steps in correct order.

<p><b>5.4 Write expressively in a range of forms</b></p>	<p>write at least <i>three</i> pieces in one or more of these forms:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">story, article, poem dialogue, sketch, play caption</p> <p>write at least 100 words for two of the pieces</p> <p>write at least one short piece of less than 100 words</p> <p>include own real or imagined experiences, responses or interests.</p>
<p><b>5.5 Use correct punctuation, spelling and sentence structure</b></p>	<p>use correct punctuation</p> <p>spell common words correctly and check others</p> <p>write continuous prose in paragraphs</p> <p>make no more than three errors in final drafts of work.</p>
<p><b>5.6 Draft, proof-read and edit work</b></p>	<p>make rough notes</p> <p>write first draft</p> <p>correct content, spelling, punctuation and paragraphs</p> <p>edit and rewrite piece, as necessary</p> <p>ensure that handwriting is legible.</p>

## Unit 6

### Media Awareness and Visual Communication

<b>Specific Learning Outcomes</b> <i>The learner should be able to:</i>	<b>Performance Criteria</b>
<b>6.1 Discuss media-related issues</b>	identify orally or in writing at least three key issues relating to mass-media, eg  mass dissemination of information raising public consciousness manipulation, bias and censorship use of images with and without text.
<b>6.2 Interpret and evaluate visual images</b>	find two examples of images from each of the following categories:  (i) advertisements, photographs, humorous images, music videos  (ii) diagrams, signs and labels, trade marks, charts, maps, graphics, symbols  record examples in a scrapbook or folder  interpret images  comment on the success of each image.
<b>6.3 Construct a visual aid to illustrate a point</b>	ensure that the visual aid is appropriate to medium, target audience and purpose  communicate a message or idea through the visual aid, eg directions, plan of room, instruction to mix food, dissemination of information or promotion of a cause.

## Unit 7

### Introduction to Information Technology

#### Specific Learning Outcomes

*The learner should be able to:*


- 7.1 Discuss ways in which information technology affects everyday personal, social and vocational life**
  
- 7.2 Read from a visual display unit and follow instructions**

#### Performance Criteria

identify at least three areas of everyday life which are affected by information technology

explain how these areas are affected.

follow screen instructions on VDU found in everyday situations, eg computer game, bank ATM, shopping centre VDU, tourist information VDU, etc.

<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Individual Candidate Marking Sheet</b>	<b>Communications GF0001</b>	
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*This form is to be copied, completed and attached to the front of each candidate's portfolio.*

**Candidate's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **PPSN:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Specific Learning Outcome</b> <i>The learner can:</i>	<b>SLO</b> (✓)	<b>Evidence</b> <b>Explanatory Information*</b>
1.1 Develop a personal learning plan.		
1.2 Review and adapt the learning plan as necessary.		
1.3 Practise different ways of learning in different situations.		
2.1 Interpret common signs and symbols.		
2.2 Interpret common non-verbal messages.		
2.3 Use non-verbal signals to convey a specific message.		
3.1 Extract the main facts, ideas and opinions from a variety of spoken sources.		
3.2 Start and maintain conversation in different settings.		
3.3 Describe events, procedures and processes.		
3.4 Tell a story or anecdote.		
3.5 Express personal opinions.		

(✓) indicates that the candidate has achieved the SLO.

\*see Appendix, paragraphs 1, 2 and 3.

CONTINUED OVER

Specific Learning Outcome <i>The learner can:</i>	SLO (✓)	Evidence Explanatory Information*
4.1 Use a range of suitable reading techniques.		
4.2 Respond appropriately to everyday visual and written materials.		
4.3 Locate information in a range of reference sources.		
5.1 Use writing to carry out everyday tasks.		
5.2 Write personal and formal correspondence.		
5.3 Write simple instructions.		
5.4 Write expressively in a range of forms.		
5.5 Use correct punctuation, spelling and sentence structure.		
5.6 Draft, proof-read and edit work.		
6.1 Discuss media-related issues.		
6.2 Interpret and evaluate visual images.		
6.3 Construct a visual aid to illustrate a point.		
7.1 Discuss ways in which information technology affects everyday personal, social and vocational life.		
7.2 Read from a Visual Display Unit and follow instructions.		

(✓) indicates that the candidate has achieved the SLO. \*see Appendix, paragraphs 1, 2 and 3.

**This is to state that the evidence presented in the attached portfolio is complete and is the work of the named candidate.**

**Candidate's signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Assessor's signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**External Authenticator's signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix

### *Guidelines for presentation and recording of evidence for assessment at Level 3.*

#### **1 Description of Portfolio**

Level 3 portfolios may contain a wide range of evidence which relates to different Specific Learning Outcomes. Evidence may consist of different types of work, such as:

- written assignments, completed worksheets, cloze exercises
- articles, short answer questions
- personal journals, logs, notes of class sessions
- graphics, logos, drawings, diagrams, montage
- photographs, storyboards, maps, plans
- charts, computer print-outs
- objective test answers, questionnaires, checklists
- audio tapes, audio reviews, video tapes
- completed items or artefacts

*and*

- Assessor verification of tasks accomplished and activities carried out.

All evidence presented in the portfolio should be the candidate's own work. Independent achievement of the presented work is encouraged; however, where Assessors have assisted in the production of final evidence, this should be clearly indicated on the finished piece.

#### **2 Completion of Marking Sheets**

The Individual Candidate Marking Sheet should be copied from this module descriptor, completed by the Assessor and presented along with other evidence of the candidate's achievements. Specific Learning Outcomes attained by the candidate should be identified with a tick (✓).

The completed marking sheet should be signed by the candidate and the Assessor, indicating that the portfolio contains the candidate's own work.

### 3 **Assessor Verification of Achievements**

All the Specific Learning Outcomes achieved by the candidate should be verified by the Assessor. In most cases, where evidence of the candidate's achievements is contained in the portfolio, this will consist of a tick (✓).

However, some work cannot be included in the portfolio, for example:

- if the evidence consists of a demonstration of skill, execution of a task, role play, live performance or other behaviour observed by the Assessor
- if the evidence is perishable, for example foodstuffs.

A brief note from the Assessor in the '*Evidence*' column of the Individual Candidate Marking Sheet should describe the relevant activity, for example 'satisfactory role-play observed'; 'took part in weekly soccer games'.

In some cases the evidence may need to be described in more detail. If so, the written verification should consist of a note in the candidate's portfolio. If the Assessor verification applies to activities carried out by a group of candidates, one note will cover the whole group.

Some Assessors may encourage candidates to complete their own Marking Sheets. This is acceptable provided that their accuracy is verified and guaranteed by the Assessor.

Assessor verification is accepted as the **sole evidence** of a candidate's achievement **only if no other work can be submitted: that is, if the Specific Learning Outcome refers to an observed task or practical activity; or if the evidence is perishable.**

### 4 **Submission of Evidence**

All Specific Learning Outcomes in which the candidate has achieved success must be verified by suitable evidence which shows that the learner has reached the required standard. Guidelines on the specifications of evidence for individual modules are given in the **Assessment** section above.

In some cases, a single piece of work can demonstrate that the candidate has succeeded in several Specific Learning Outcomes. This should be clearly indicated on the Individual Candidate Marking Sheet in the '*Evidence*' column.

**5**      **Group Activity  
and  
Group Projects**

If the candidate has participated in a group activity, this may be submitted as evidence of achievement, provided that the individual's contribution is summarised on the Individual Candidate Marking Sheet in the column headed '*Evidence*'.

In cases where a group project is undertaken as part of the assessment procedure, the portfolio of each group member should record or contain supporting evidence of their individual contribution to the group task, such as notes, plans, costings, sketches, drafts.

**6**      **Volume of  
Evidence**

Work submitted for assessment should consist of the candidate's *best efforts*. It should demonstrate that s/he has achieved the Specific Learning Outcomes and should comply with specifications outlined in the *Assessment* section. In many instances, it will be unnecessary to submit all the work produced by a candidate during the course.

**7**      **Assessment  
Procedures**

**Centre-based assessment:** portfolios of coursework are assessed by the course Assessor in his/her own centre. Portfolios which have reached the required standard are submitted for external monitoring on designated dates throughout the year. It is important that Assessors judge carefully that candidates' portfolios are ready to be submitted for external monitoring, since those which do not meet the standard will be referred back to the candidate.

**External monitoring:** Assessors present the portfolios which they judge have reached the required standard. Portfolios which do not yet meet the requirements are referred back to the candidate for further work.

The process of external monitoring ensures that a national standard is defined and applied to work submitted by all candidates.

## Integrating Communications and Personal Effectiveness

This table gives a general guide to those areas where Communications and Personal Effectiveness may be readily integrated for delivery and/or assessment. This is not an exhaustive guide: Assessors and learners may design activities which integrate Communications and Personal Effectiveness in other areas.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Personal Effectiveness S.L.O.S</b>	Draw up a personal learning plan	Gather information needed to carry out task(s)	Review and adapt the learning plan, if necessary	Practise different ways of learning in different situations	Evaluate the quality of work completed	Work as a member of a team	Evaluate the work of the team	Maintain a safe and efficient working environment	Observe safe work practices	Observe hygienic work practices
<b>Communications S.L.O.s</b> 1.1	•	•								
1.2			•		•					
1.3				•		•				
2.1		•		•				•	•	•
2.2		•		•		•	•			
2.3					•	•	•			
3.1		•		•						
3.2				•						
3.3										
3.4										
3.5							•			
4.1		•		•						
4.2		•		•						
4.3		•		•						
5.1										
5.2										
5.3						•				
5.4				•						
5.5										
5.6			•		•					
6.1				•		•				
6.2		•		•						
6.3	•		•	•	•					
7.1						•				
7.2		•								

## Key to Level 3 Module Descriptors

- 1 **Module Title:** gives an indication of the module content. This appears on the candidate's Certificate.
- 2 **Module Code:** a code for each module is assigned by FETAC.
- 3 **Level:** This module descriptor outlines the requirements for Level 3.
- 4 **Value:** most modules have a value of 1 credit. A small number of modules have a value of 0.5 credit or 2 credits.
- 5 **Purpose:** this is a general statement which describes the rationale and context for the module.
- 6 **Preferred Entry Level:** indicates the level of previous achievement or experience which a learner should have in order to start work on the module. No previous qualifications are required for Level 3 modules.
- 7 **Special Requirements:** describes any specific conditions which the centre must provide in order to present candidates for assessment in this module.
- 8 **General Aims:** these are broad statements of the key areas of competence (knowledge, skills, aptitudes) which the learner should develop as a result of following the module.
- 9 **Units:** some modules are sub-divided into groups of related Specific Learning Outcomes.
- 10 **Specific Learning Outcomes:** these describe in detail what the learner should be able to do when s/he has completed the module. These may include practical skills, behaviour, specific knowledge or understanding.
- 11 **Assessment:** this describes the range of work which candidates present as evidence of their achievements.  
**Technique:** at Level 3, assessment is carried out through a portfolio of coursework. Each candidate presents a portfolio containing a selection of work which demonstrates that s/he has achieved success in **all the Specific Learning Outcomes listed**. The type of evidence which may be presented varies according to the module.
- 12 **Performance Criteria:** these provide guidelines on the Specific Learning Outcomes and describe the standards which successful candidates must reach in order to gain credit. For ease of reference, Performance Criteria are listed alongside the relevant Specific Learning Outcomes.
- 13 **Grading:** At Level 3, the achievement of the required standard is indicated by the grade 'successful'.