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.

FETAC

Further Education and Training Awards Council

Comhairle na nDámhachtainí Breisoideachais agus Oiliúna

Module Descriptor

Communications

Level 5 G20001

September 2001

www.fetac.ie

Level 5 Module Descriptor

Summary of Contents

Introduction	Describes how the module functions as part of the national vocational certificate framework.
Module Title	Indicates the module content. This title appears on the learner's certificate. It can be used to download the module from the website www.fetac.ie.
Module Code	An individual code is assigned to each module; a letter at the beginning denotes a vocational or general studies area under which the module is grouped and the first digit denotes its level within the national vocational certificate framework.
Level	Indicates where the module is placed in the national vocational certificate framework, from Foundation to Level 6.
Credit Value	Denotes the amount of credit that a learner accumulates on achievement of the module.
Purpose	Describes in summary what the learner will achieve on successfully completing the module and in what learning and vocational contexts the module has been developed. Where relevant, it lists what certification will be awarded by other certification agencies.
Preferred Entry Level	Recommends the level of previous achievement or experience of the learner.
Special Requirements	Usually 'none' but in some cases detail is provided here of specific learner or course provider requirements. There may also be reference to the minimum safety or skill requirements that learners must achieve prior to assessment.
General Aims	Describe in 3-5 statements the broad skills and knowledge learners will have achieved on successful completion of the module.
Units	Structure the learning outcomes; there may be no units.
Specific Learning Outcomes	Describe in specific terms the knowledge and skills that learners will have achieved on successful completion of the module.
Portfolio of Assessment	Provides details on how the learning outcomes are to be assessed.
Grading	Provides details of the grading system used.
Individual Candidate Marking Sheets	List the assessment criteria for each assessment technique and the marking system.
Module Results Summary Sheet	Records the marks for each candidate in each assessment technique and in total. It is an important record for centres of their candidate's achievements.
Appendices	Can include approval forms for national governing bodies.
Glossary of Assessment Techniques	Explains the types of assessment techniques used to assess standards.
Assessment Principles	Describes the assessment principles that underpin FETAC approach to assessment.

Introduction

A module is a statement of the standards to be achieved to gain an FETAC award. Candidates are assessed to establish whether they have achieved the required standards. Credit is awarded for each module successfully completed.

The standards in a module are expressed principally in terms of specific learning outcomes, i.e. what the learner will be able to do on successful completion of the module. The other elements of the module - the purpose, general aims, assessment details and assessment criteria - combine with the learning outcomes to state the standards in a holistic way.

While FETAC is responsible for setting the standards for certification in partnership with course providers and industry, it is the course providers who are responsible for the design of the learning programmes. The duration, content and delivery of learning programmes should be appropriate to the learners' needs and interests, and should enable the learners to reach the standard as described in the modules. Modules may be delivered alone or integrated with other modules.

The development of learners' **core skills** is a key objective of vocational education and training. The opportunity to develop these skills may arise through a single module or a range of modules. The core skills include:

- taking initiative
- taking responsibility for one's own learning and progress
- problem solving
- applying theoretical knowledge in practical contexts
- being numerate and literate
- having information and communication technology skills
- sourcing and organising information effectively
- listening effectively
- communicating orally and in writing
- working effectively in group situations
- understanding health and safety issues
- reflecting on and evaluating quality of own learning and achievement.

Course providers are encouraged to design programmes which enable learners to develop core skills.

1	**Module Title**	**Communications**
2	**Module Code**	**G20001**
3	**Level**	**5**
4	**Credit Value**	**1 credit**
5	**Purpose**	This module descriptor is a statement of the standards to be achieved to gain a credit in Communications at Level 5. Communication skills are highly valued in the workplace but this module extends beyond exclusively vocational needs, recognising that the acquisition of these skills is a life-long process, and central to personal, social and professional development and fulfilment. Course providers are responsible for the design of programmes that are consistent with the learning outcomes and relevant to learners' needs and interests. Level 5 Communications is ideally integrated with other Level 5 modules but may be offered as a stand-alone module. Evidence of achievement may be presented in either Irish or English.
6	**Preferred Entry Level**	Level 4 Certificate, Leaving Certificate or equivalent qualifications and/or relevant life and work experiences.
7	**Special Requirements**	None.

8 General Aims

Learners who successfully complete this module will:

8.1 develop an awareness of the essential role played by communication in human interaction

8.2 acquire communication skills relevant to vocational and personal development

8.3 understand the communicative principles and practices involved in gathering and relaying information

8.4 acquire the skills and confidence to convey and interpret meaning, in writing, orally and visually

8.5 develop a critical awareness of communications messages and media

8.6 explore the use of modern communication and information technology, and its application in personal and vocational life.

9 Units

The specific learning outcomes are grouped into 4 units.

Unit 1 **Listening and Speaking**
Unit 2 **Reading and Writing**
Unit 3 **Non-Verbal and Visual Communication**
Unit 4 **Communications Technology**

10 Specific Learning Outcomes

Unit 1 **Listening and Speaking**

Learners should be able to:

10.1.1 understand key terms used in communications theory such as sender, receiver, message, code, channel, communicate, noise, feedback, context, with particular reference to working life

10.1.2 recognise the kinds of listening required in different contexts e.g. understanding, interpreting, receiving information

10.1.3 demonstrate a range of listening behaviours appropriate to the context such as eye contact, facial expression, encouragement, control of own responses

10.1.4	practise communications techniques relevant to different situations in work and leisure, such as conversations, interviews, formal presentations, message taking/giving and telephone dialogues
10.1.5	participate effectively in group discussion and negotiated decision making
10.1.6	co-operate and contribute effectively in formal meetings
10.1.7	prepare and deliver an oral presentation and answer questions.
Unit 2	**Reading and Writing**
	Learners should be able to:
10.2.1	gather information from a range of written material including technical/vocational, personal, literary, business and media communication
10.2.2	read critically, with objectivity and discrimination, a range of media texts including written, visual and broadcast texts
10.2.3	apply a reading approach appropriate to purpose and the nature of the text e.g. skimming, obtaining an overview, identifying key points, extracting information, critical evaluation, in-depth analysis
10.2.4	recognise some key issues currently facing media consumers such as freedom of information, tabloidisation, censorship, state regulation, ownership and control etc.
10.2.5	write clearly, confidently and expressively in a variety of forms relating to personal, creative, vocational and social needs
10.2.6	use with confidence the vocabulary and language conventions relevant to a specific area of work
10.2.7	follow the conventions of writing for a specific purpose including reports, memoranda, minutes, applications, letters, faxes etc.
10.2.8	observe the current conventions of written English usage (spelling, punctuation, syntax etc.) in accordance with purpose
10.2.9	draft, edit and proof-read written documents
10.2.10	plan and undertake research into a topic related to a vocational specialism, using a variety of sources, both primary (e.g. interviews and observations) and secondary (e.g. internet, media, libraries).

Unit 3	**Non-Verbal and Visual Communication**
	Learners should be able to:
10.3.1	demonstrate an understanding of various non-verbal and visual codes such as signs, symbols, still and moving images, cartoons, body signals, music, numbers, dance, colour
10.3.2	demonstrate an awareness of ways in which the body communicates non-verbally through gesture, posture, appearance, eye and physical contact, facial expression, proximity and orientation etc.
10.3.3	demonstrate appropriate non-verbal communication in a range of settings including one-to-one, group, formal and informal
10.3.4	recognise the role of perception in the communication process and factors that affect it such as sensory variation, stereotyping, prejudice
10.3.5	recognise the ways physical environment communicates e.g. structure, shape, colour, texture, smell, sound
10.3.6	construct and interpret visual aids and/or images.

Unit 4	**Communications Technology**
	Learners should be able to:
10.4.1	explain the impact of communication and information technology on personal, social and vocational life
10.4.2	describe the various uses of technology to assist communication e.g. computers, telephones, facsimile, video recorders, the Internet, electronic fund transfer, data communications systems
10.4.3	use a range of communications technologies to exchange information with another user e.g. e-mail, fax, mobile telephone
10.4.4	evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of the use of technology in communications
10.4.5	outline current relevant legislation (e.g. the Data Protection Act, the Freedom of Information Act) in terms of rights, responsibilities, grievances and penalties.

11 Portfolio of Assessment

Please refer to the glossary of assessment techniques and the note on assessment principles at the end of this module descriptor.
All assessment is carried out in accordance with FETAC regulations.
Assessment is devised by the internal assessor, with external moderation by FETAC.

Summary	**Collection of Work**	**50%**
	Skills Demonstration	**50%**

11.1 Collection of Work

The internal assessor will devise guidelines for candidates on gathering a collection of work that demonstrates evidence of the following communication skills:

- writing skills. Evidence should include a range of relevant documents, including a short structured report and a minimum of 3 other pieces.
  - a short structured report. It may be based on any topic, using information gathered from a variety of sources. It could be based on the candidate's vocational area, or research done for another module (e.g. Work Experience Vocational Area Profile). The report may be handwritten or word processed, approximately 500 words.
  - a piece of personal writing e.g. short story/poem, letter of complaint/thanks/condolence/congratulations, etc.
  - business documents such as letter, memorandum, notice of meeting, agenda, minutes (narrative/action) or other relevant workplace documents.

  The documents may be handwritten or word processed. Evidence of drafting, re-drafting and editing should be attached to at least one of the finished pieces. At least one item should be handwritten, where possible.

- communications technology skills. Evidence of using communications technology (CT), for example:
  - sending and receiving both **one-way** (eg fax, answering machine, downloading information from the Internet) and **two-way** (eg email, mobile phone).
  - displaying awareness of current and relevant issues, such as discussion of the uses, advantages/disadvantages and impact of CT. This may be a short written/oral piece, and could be a topic for the report, oral presentation or discussion.

11.2 Skills Demonstration

In one or more skills demonstrations, candidates will be assessed in the following skill areas:

- listening and speaking skills
- visual communication skills.

The internal assessor will devise suitable tasks which may be carried out in the vocational area, or during work experience. The skills may be assessed over a period of time, and may be integrated into a single task. For example, candidates may demonstrate their dialogue skills in conjunction with their oral presentation skills.

Listening and Speaking Skills

- Oral presentation skills. Candidates should make a presentation of approximately 5 - 10 minutes duration. The presentation should be recorded, on audio or video tape. The presentation may be on any topic of interest to the candidate. Ideally it should be on a vocational topic but may draw on other aspects of this module.
- Dialogue skills – the ability to communicate one to one in a formal setting e.g. on the telephone, in an interview, a meeting or question and answer session at the end of the oral presentation. The dialogue should be recorded on audio/ video tape.
- Discussion skills, including non-verbal communication, listening and speaking skills. Candidates should participate in a formal group setting, such as a discussion or meeting. Evidence of the group interaction may be verified by the internal assessor.
- Message taking and giving skills, displaying knowledge of communications process, also information extracting, summarisation skills, and message composing. Evidence should include:
  - original information in writing or on audio or video tape
  - message recorded on audio or video tape.

Visual Communication Skills

Candidates should communicate without words, either by:

- designing/producing (an) image(s) with or without text such as: notice/poster/web page/brochure/flyer/greeting card/ book cover/storyboard/video/flags/map/diagram/photograph/ painting/sculpture/textile/sign

  or
- communicating non-verbally and visually eg making a non-verbal presentation such as mime or dance, done singly or in groups.

Evidence of development of ideas, with initial sketches, support studies, planning, etc. should be included. Evidence of visual communication may be incorporated into other skill demonstrations as visual aids, or presented separately.

12 Grading

Pass	50 - 64%
Merit	65 - 79%
Distinction	80 - 100%

Individual Candidate Marking Sheet 1		Communications G20001 Collection of Work 50%

Candidate Name: _____ **PPSN.:** _____

Centre: _____ **Centre No.:** _____

Assessment Criteria	Maximum Mark	Candidate Mark
Writing Skills **Structured Report** • report well structured, detailed, balanced, uses impersonal language, good interpretation of terms of reference, submitted on time • research is comprehensive, relevant, variety of sources acknowledged through references and bibliography • key issues discussed and explained with clarity, objectivity, evidence of original thinking • findings presented clearly and in own words, recommendations/ conclusions show evidence of critical thinking and analysis • fluent writing, well expressed, extensive vocabulary, freedom from minor errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation	**25**	
Other Documents • correct layout used, accurate, succinct, well expressed and presented, with legible handwriting • demanding situations requiring awareness of suitable tone dealt with effectively • action/follow up requested if appropriate • excellent spelling, punctuation and paragraphing • evidence of careful drafting and re-drafting	**15**	
Communication Technology Skills • wide range of technology used successfully and with confidence • extensive summary of aspects of communications technology, with clear understanding of impact on both private and public life	**10**	
TOTAL MARKS *This mark should be transferred to the Module Results Summary Sheet*	**50**	

Internal Assessor's Signature: _____ ***Date:*** _____

External Authenticator's Signature: _____ ***Date:*** _____

Individual Candidate Marking Sheet 2		Communications G20001 Skills Demonstration 50%

Candidate Name: _____ **PPSN.:** _____

Centre: _____ **Centre No.:** _____

Assessment Criteria	Maximum Mark	Candidate Mark
Listening and Speaking Skills: Oral Presentation • evidence of thorough preparation and rehearsal • clear structure with beginning, middle, end, signposting and linking • interest sustained, very good rapport with the audience, presentation tailored to occasion and environment • good breathing and voice control, with variety of tone, clarity of diction • body language, gesture, stance all excellent	**10**	
Listening and Speaking Skills: Dialogue • effective communication, excellently prepared • good image projected, appropriate eye contact maintained, positive body language • careful listening skills evident, clarification sought if needed, questions responded to confidently and to the point, answers elaborated and expanded on • relevant questions asked • clear and effective speech evident	**10**	
Listening and Speaking Skills: Discussion and Negotiation • active and effective participation and communication • group moved to a decision/conclusion • the aim/goal/task kept in view • excellent group skills – listening, turn taking, including others • body language used and interpreted well	**10**	
Listening and Speaking Skills: Message Taking/Giving • difference between important and non-essential information extracted • message includes essential information with details, personal identification, date, time, contact no. • voice is audible • diction is clear, well measured pace • technology/telephone used confidently and expertly	**10**	
Visual Communication Skills • support studies demonstrate development of ideas • materials/techniques selected complement the design and message • visual communication is clear, consistent and supports the message • product engages the audience and sustains interest • presentation enhances the final quality of the product	**10**	
TOTAL MARKS *This mark should be transferred to the Module Results Summary Sheet*	**50**	

Internal Assessor's Signature: _____ ***Date:*** _____

External Authenticator's Signature: _____ ***Date:*** _____

FETAC Module Results Summary Sheet

Module Title: **Communications**
Module Code: **G20001**

		Assessment Marking Sheets	Mark Sheet 1	Mark Sheet 2	Total 100%	Grade*
		Maximum Marks per Marking Sheet	50	50		
Candidate Surname	*Candidate Forename*					

Signed:

Internal Assessor: _____ **Date:** _____

This sheet is for internal assessors to record the overall marks of individual candidates. It should be retained in the centre. The marks awarded should be transferred to the official FETAC Module Results Sheet issued to centres before the visit of the external Authenticator.

Grade*
D: 80 - 100%
M: 65 - 79%
P: 50 - 64%
U: 0 - 49%
W: candidates entered who did not present for assessment

Glossary of Assessment Techniques

Assignment

An exercise carried out in response to a brief with specific guidelines and usually of short duration.

Each assignment is based on a brief provided by the internal assessor. The brief includes specific guidelines for candidates. The assignment is carried out over a period of time specified by the internal assessor.

Assignments may be specified as an oral presentation, case study, observations, or have a detailed title such as audition piece, health fitness plan or vocational area profile.

Collection of Work

A collection and/or selection of pieces of work produced by candidates over a period of time that demonstrates the mastery of skills.

Using guidelines provided by the internal assessor, candidates compile a collection of their own work. The collection of work demonstrates evidence of a range of specific learning outcomes or skills. The evidence may be produced in a range of conditions, such as in the learning environment, in a role play exercise, or in real-life/work situations.

This body of work may be self-generated rather than carried out in response to a specific assignment eg art work, engineering work etc.

Examination

A means of assessing a candidate's ability to recall and apply skills, knowledge and understanding within a set period of time (time constrained) and under clearly specified conditions.

Examinations may be:

- practical, assessing the mastery of specified practical skills demonstrated in a set period of time under restricted conditions
- oral, testing ability to speak effectively in the vernacular or other languages
- interview-style, assessing learning through verbal questioning, on one-to-one/group basis
- aural, testing listening and interpretation skills
- theory-based, assessing the candidate's ability to recall and apply theory, requiring responses to a range of question types, such as objective, short answer, structured, essay. These questions may be answered in different media such as in writing, orally etc.

Learner Record

A self-reported record by an individual, in which he/she describes specific learning experiences, activities, responses, skills acquired.

Candidates compile a personal logbook/journal/diary/daily diary/ record/laboratory notebook/sketch book.
The logbook/journal/diary/daily diary/record/laboratory notebook/sketch book should cover specified aspects of the learner's experience.

Project

A substantial individual or group response to a brief with guidelines, usually carried out over a period of time.

Projects may involve:

research – requiring individual/group investigation of a topic
process – eg design, performance, production of an artefact/event

Projects will be based on a brief provided by the internal assessor or negotiated by the candidate with the internal assessor. The brief will include broad guidelines for the candidate. The work will be carried out over a specified period of time.

Projects may be undertaken as a group or collaborative project, however the individual contribution of each candidate must be clearly identified.

The project will enable the candidate to demonstrate: (*some of these – about 2-4*)

- understanding and application of concepts in (specify area)
- use/selection of relevant research/survey techniques, sources of information, referencing, bibliography
- ability to analyse, evaluate, draw conclusions, make recommendations
- understanding of process/planning implementation and review skills/ planning and time management skills
- ability to implement/produce/make/construct/perform
- mastery of tools and techniques
- design/creativity/problem-solving/evaluation skills
- presentation/display skills
- team working/co-operation/participation skills.

Skills Demonstration

Assessment of mastery of specified practical, organisational and/or interpersonal skills.

These skills are assessed at any time throughout the learning process by the internal assessor/another qualified person in the centre for whom the candidate undertakes relevant tasks.

The skills may be demonstrated in a range of conditions, such as in the learning environment, in a role-play exercise, or in a real-life/work situations.

The candidate may submit a written report/supporting documentation as part of the assessment.

Examples of skills: laboratory skills, computer skills, coaching skills, interpersonal skills.

FETAC Assessment Principles

1 Assessment is regarded as an integral part of the learning process.

2 All FETAC assessment is criterion referenced. Each assessment technique has **assessment criteria** which detail the range of marks to be awarded for specific standards of knowledge, skills and competence demonstrated by candidates.

3 The mode of assessment is generally local i.e. the assessment techniques are devised and implemented by internal assessors in centres.

4 Assessment techniques in FETAC modules are valid in that they test a range of appropriate learning outcomes.

5 The reliability of assessment techniques is facilitated by providing support for assessors.

6 Arising from an extensive consultation process, each FETAC module describes what is considered to be an optimum approach to assessment. When the necessary procedures are in place, it will be possible for assessors to use other forms of assessment, provided they are demonstrated to be valid and reliable.

7 To enable all learners to demonstrate that they have reached the required standard, candidate evidence may be submitted in written, oral, visual, multimedia or other format as appropriate to the learning outcomes.

8 Assessment of a number of modules may be integrated, provided the separate criteria for each module are met.

9 Group or team work may form part of the assessment of a module, provided each candidate's achievement is separately assessed.

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