

Assessor Guide

NCFE CACHE Level 1 Award in Awareness of
Substance Misuse

QRN: 603/1924/0

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Section 1: General introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to Assessors and Internal Quality Assurers of the NCFE CACHE Level 1 Award in Awareness of Substance Misuse (603/1924/0). This document should be used alongside the most recent version of the qualification specification.

The sample answers given in this guide are an indication of the quality and depth of response that learners are required to produce. Learners are not expected to produce answers that are correct 'word for word'. There will often be more than one acceptable answer to any question posed. Alternative answers are acceptable, providing that they are coherent and relevant to the subject area and question asked.

Assessors are expected to use their own experience and expertise to make reasonable judgements as to what is sufficient and/or acceptable.

Learner answers are not awarded specific marks. Assessors are expected to decide whether the answer is sufficient. Where an answer is insufficient or incorrect, constructive feedback must be provided to enable the learner to amend their response.

Spelling and grammar are not included in the assessment criteria of this qualification; however learners' answers must be legible and comprehensible. It is good practice to make learners aware of repeated spelling errors.

For further information on the responsibilities of Assessors, Internal and External Quality Assurers, please refer to the Delivering our qualifications – assessment and internal quality assurance guidance, available from the website, www.cache.org.uk, or from the Centre Support team.

Section 2: Marking Guidance

Sample Answer	Notes
<p>1) Identify 3 substances which are often misused. (1.1)</p> <p>Learners could identify any type of substance affecting the mind, body or perceptions, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• alcohol• over-the-counter products/medicines• naturally occurring - such as magic mushrooms• new or novel psychoactive substances (use and supply of which was recently covered by the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016)• tobacco products• prescribed medication• volatile substances (glues, gases, aerosols)• cigarettes and nicotine.	<p>Tutors/Assessors should ensure the widest possible range of substances is discussed, from more common to less common substances. It is important to fill in any gaps in the list so that the fullest range is identified.</p> <p>Alcohol is one of the most widely used and commonly misused substances and a set of interesting and useful statistics can be found at: www.alcoholconcern.org.uk/alcohol-statistics</p> <p>New or novel psychoactive substances have become the cause of much concern in recent years and legislation was passed in 2016 relating to these products. Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 - Legislation.gov.uk</p> <p>For more information on new psychoactive substances and the associated legislation please see the Psychoactive Substances (NPS) resource pack</p> <p>For a range of substances learners could look at Talk to Frank: www.talktofrank.com</p>

Sample Answer	Notes
<p>2) State 3 possible reasons why people might misuse substances. (1.2)</p> <p>There are many reasons that may contribute towards an individual's motivation to experiment with, and continue to use, substances. The list below indicates a range of reasons but is not exhaustive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• for fun/excitement• risk-taking• boredom• curiosity• peer pressure• need or desire to conform• confidence boosting• prevailing youth culture• escapism• aid relaxation.	<p>It is important that Tutor/Assessors include the positive reasons for use, as opposed to simply stressing the negatives.</p> <p>Although many people experiment with various substances at different times in their lives, not all will come to lasting harm. For example, some people will find the experience unpleasant or feel that the risks outweigh the benefits. A change in circle of friends can also mean that the motivation to try substances disappears. In the past many people hoped that drug education would prevent young people from ever using drugs. This has proved to be an unrealistic aim and education alone is unlikely to prevent young people from ever experimenting with substances.</p>

Sample Answer	Notes
<p>3) Identify 3 factors that might influence an individual's attitude towards the use of substances (1.3)</p> <p>There is a wide range of potential influences on our attitude towards the use of substances and each individual will be influenced by one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal attitude to risk-taking • upbringing, parenting or family influences • socio-economic background • social deprivation/social exclusion • behavioural issues • culture • religion • local community • friends and peer groups • income • type of job. 	<p>Assessors may also wish to draw the attention of learners to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and their potential to impact on health in relation to substance use and misuse in adult life.</p> <p>A useful and interesting animation developed by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, Public Health and Public Health Wales, explains the implications and potential impact of ACE simply. The animation is suitable for learner use. player.vimeo.com/video/189604325</p> <p><u>NB: Please note Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council should be clearly acknowledged when using this animation.</u></p> <p>The documents referenced below are also a good source of introductory information on ACE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.academic.oup.com/jpubhealth/article/36/1/81/1571104/Adverse-childhood-experiences-retrospective-study • www.cph.org.uk/case-study/adverse-childhood-experiences-aces/ • Welsh report – http://www.cph.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ACE-Report-FINAL-E.pdf

Sample Answer	Notes
<p>4) Outline 2 risks involved with the misuse of substances (1.4)</p> <p>The risks involved fall into 4 main categories and learners should be able to give examples from each:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical health risks such as weight loss, poorer hair and skin condition, becoming more reliant on substances, and being subject to violence associated with drug dealing • psychological health risks such as anxiety, depression, inability to concentrate, unable to enjoy life without substances • risks associated with a person's social life such as friendships might be lost or change; family breakdown; getting a criminal record • impact on an individual's financial circumstances such as loss of a job; spending too much on obtaining the substances, getting into debt to pay for drugs. 	<p>Within this answer there is some overlap with 2.1, therefore there is an opportunity for holistic assessment of the 2 assessment criteria.</p> <p>When identifying the risks involved with the misuse of substances, learners may well identify the impact at the same time. For example, a practical risk is that someone misusing substances may be continually late for work and perform badly, perhaps ultimately getting fired. An impact of substance misuse may also be the loss of income due to loss of a job.</p>

Sample Answer	Notes
<p>5) Outline how the following factors can influence the effects of substances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • age • gender • a person’s mindset at the time of use • the setting in which a substance is taken. <p>(1.5)</p> <p>Learners should be able to provide a simple example for each factor citing the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • age – all substances can be more harmful for young people because their bodies and brains are still developing • gender – generally speaking, the same amount of any substance will have a greater effect on a woman than on a man • mindset – a person’s mood, health, circumstances and surroundings all contribute to the effect of the substance • setting – some places where substances may be used are inherently more dangerous, such as lonely out-of-the-way places where help may not be easy to access should something go wrong. 	<p>Different drugs, because of their chemical structures, can affect the body and mind in different ways. The effects of drugs vary from substance to substance and it is not possible to say exactly how a particular drug will affect someone.</p> <p>The effects of drugs can vary due to different body chemistry and hormones. For example, women’s bodies deal with (metabolise) alcohol differently from men, and because women have a larger storage of fat than men, any medication that is “fat soluble” (dissolves in fat before going to the brain) will be distributed differently in a woman.</p> <p>The effects of any substance can also differ depending on the context in which it is used. Alcohol for example can have a very different effect on someone who is sad and depressed to someone heading out to a party or an exciting event.</p> <p>The place where substances are used can influence the potential effects. For example, accidents are more likely in out-of-the-way places or derelict buildings. Using or taking substances into school may lead to being expelled with lasting effects on future education and career prospects. Driving a car, riding a bicycle or operating machinery whilst intoxicated greatly increases the risks of accidents.</p>

Sample Answer	Notes
<p>6) Identify signs and symptoms that may indicate the use of substances and how these could potentially be misleading. (1.6)</p> <p>Signs or symptoms could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical • behavioural • emotional • social signs • drug related debris (paraphernalia). <p>Signs could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unkempt appearance • excessive tiredness • mood swings • sudden change of social circle • spending less time on activities that used to be important • drop in attendance and/or performance at work or school • unexplained injuries or accidents. <p>Symptoms could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poor appetite • weight loss • loss of concentration • excessive sleeping. <p>These signs and symptoms can be misleading/misinterpreted. Many signs and symptoms can be attributed to factors other than substance misuse. For example, underlying medical conditions, normal adolescent behaviours, stress, bullying at school.</p>	<p>Tutor/Assessors should be aware that lists of signs and symptoms have their limitations, this is addressed in the second part of the question identifying misleading signs and symptoms.</p> <p>Jumping to conclusions is often the least useful response, especially for parents/guardians.</p> <p>It's important to keep channels of communication open, at the same time explaining that some substances are illegal and can affect physical and mental health amongst other things.</p> <p>The young person should be reassured that they can always talk about any worries they may have.</p> <p>Help and advice is available to parents and carers from websites such as Adfam, Community for Recovery and Family Lives.</p>

Sample Answer	Notes
<p>7) Identify the impact of substance misuse on individuals, families and communities and society (2.1)</p> <p>The impact of substance misuse on individuals varies hugely depending on a number of factors, some of which were addressed at 1.4.</p> <p>Learners may mention a wide range of points and examples are provided below, which are not exhaustive. There is no one simple answer and the impact depends on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the amount taken and how often the substance is used• what the substance is mixed with – many illegally sold substances have other things mixed in with them that can increase the risk of harm• mixing substances (poly drug/substance use) which has become more common in recent years• the method used to take a substance – for example, sniffing volatile substances (solvents) can cause instant death the first time of use and currently 50 people each year die from this type of substance misuse• substance misuse can lower inhibitions, increasing the likelihood of unprotected sexual encounters. <p>Someone's misuse and dependency affects everybody around them, including their families, friends, communities and society. The impact of substance misuse on communities and society can include how:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• people can get involved with crime to pay for the substances• families can be disrupted or split up• drug dealing and drug use happening on a regular basis in a community can be threatening so that people do not feel safe• discarded needles and syringes in public places could cause harm to people.	<p>There is an opportunity for holistic assessment between this question and 1.4 as there is likely to be some overlap in the learner answers.</p>

Sample Answer	Notes
<p>8) Describe some of the well-being issues and health problems associated with substance misuse (2.2)</p> <p>Involvement with substance misuse frequently limits a person's social life and interests. Becoming increasingly dependent on the substance(s) may result in social isolation and/or mixing only with people who have similar issues and lifestyles.</p> <p>Mental health and well-being are affected in many ways including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • binge drinking causes acute harms, such as injuries from accidents and assaults • anti-social behaviour impacts on the well-being of wider communities and places an unnecessary burden on the NHS and the police • substance misuse impacts on families and workplace productivity, affecting the well-being of everyone • school and workplace attendances are adversely affected with consequent loss of self-esteem and independence. 	<p>The New Economics Foundation's Five Ways to Wellbeing project may be used as the basis for a discussion at this point, exploring the reduced likelihood of engagement with the five ways when a person is heavily involved with substance use.</p> <p>The five ways are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connect eg, build social relationships, spend time with friends and family • be active eg, engage in regular physical activity • take notice eg, be mentally "present", focus on awareness and appreciation • keep learning eg, maintain curiosity about the world, try new things • give eg, make a positive contribution to the lives of others. <p>(see also 4.2 – Question 14)</p> <p>Five ways to well-being - New Economics Foundation</p>

Sample Answer	Notes
<p>9) Give examples of local and national services and organisations that offer intervention, information, advice and guidance for substance misuse (2.3)</p> <p>Local and national examples should be given with a brief outline of the service offered.</p> <p>Learners should provide more specific information than vague and general responses such as 'GPs' or 'hospitals'.</p>	<p>It is important for Tutors/Assessors to enable raising awareness of local as well as national service provisions, and to encourage learners to explore the range and purpose of provision in their area.</p> <p>There is an opportunity here to engage with local providers and often they will be willing to provide a short input to taught courses.</p> <p>Useful websites that provide access to a range of resources and information include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talk to Frank www.talktofrank.com• DrugWise www.drugwise.org.uk• National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse www.nta.nhs.uk.

Sample Answers	Notes
<p>10) Identify 3 stereotypes associated with substance misuse. (3.1)</p> <p>Learners may identify the most common stereotypes such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • heroin addict or junkie/'smackhead' • someone who steals, lives on the streets or in squats, has no job, or engages in prostitution to fund the addiction • all alcoholics are 'down and outs'. <p>Explain how these stereotypes can be misleading or discriminatory (3.2)</p> <p>Stereotypes can also be misleading because, for example, some legitimate health conditions can cause people to exhibit behaviours that are similar to someone who is under the influence of drugs.</p> <p>Others may use a substance for medical purposes, eg medical marijuana, within the confines of their home, and have families, jobs, relationships and be significant members of society.</p>	<p>Assessors are advised first to clarify the meaning of stereotyping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • labelling people in a judgemental way • generalising about people without taking into account their circumstances and needs • making assumptions about people without taking into account that everyone has their own needs. <p>Everyday colloquial terms are also acceptable to describe stereotyping, such as pigeonholing people into groups; painting everyone with the same brush etc.</p> <p>Assessors should ensure that learners identify a range of stereotypes including typical and atypical examples.</p> <p>Stereotypes often arise from the most visible substance misusers who live their life on the streets and are involved in anti-social behaviours</p> <p><i>"If people with drug problems are seen as 'junkie scum' and 'once a junkie always a junkie', people will be reluctant to acknowledge their problems and seek treatment, employers will not want to give them jobs, landlords will be reluctant to give them tenancies and communities will resist the establishment of treatment centres. As a result, drug problems will remain entrenched rather than overcome".</i> Getting Serious about Stigma: the problem with stigmatising drug users. An Overview UK Drug Policy Commission (UKDPC), December 2010. ISBN 978-1-906246-26-6</p>

Sample Answers	Notes
<p>11) Give examples of how the media portrays substance misuse (3.3)</p> <p>Learners could give examples from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• newspaper or magazine articles• news stories from television or radio• scenarios seen in TV programmes (eg soaps) or films• lyrics from songs. <p>The learner should give a simple outline of the type of people involved, the situation and how the substance use was portrayed eg good, bad, fun, criminal, harmful etc.</p>	<p>Tutors/Assessors should ensure that both negative and positive examples are identified and discussed.</p> <p>The way the press and other media report on substance use and misuse helps to shape attitudes and can cause unnecessary worry and alarm for parents.</p> <p>Certain groups of people in society are perhaps more likely to be negatively labelled for their substance use, for example, as addicts or junkies. Use amongst celebrities and professionals may on the other hand be glamorised.</p>

Sample Answers	Notes
<p>12) Identify information about the extent and types of substance use and misuse in the UK using reputable/reliable sources (3.4)</p> <p>There are many potential sources of information on the extent of substance use and misuse. Some of these are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • government departments' websites • drug education in schools • websites for a range of organisations and charities • newspapers • surveys • opinion polls • local young people's agencies/drug projects • local and national agencies. 	<p>Assessors are encouraged to emphasise to learners that some information, depending on the source, might not be accurate or correct. This may be due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collection method used • personal prejudice • unrecorded use (of drugs) • illegal use • who funded/organised the research • who was asked to take part/target • answers not clearly recorded • types of questions asked • inaccurate reporting • sensationalising the issue • glamorising the issue. <p>Reliable and useful sources of information about the extent of substance use and misuse in the UK can be found at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse - Official statistics • Drug misuse statistics - GOV.UK • How many people use drugs? – DrugWise • Alcohol Concern Statistics • New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) resource pack <p>NB some of these are quite weighty documents and not suitable for Level 1 learners, but are for Assessor information.</p>

Sample Answers	Notes
<p>13) Define 'resilience'. (4.1)</p> <p>Dictionary definitions are acceptable here.</p>	<p>Assessors should introduce the definition of resilience with simple examples of how this translates into practical actions in terms of prevention, enabling learners to explore and identify protective factors that enhance well-being and reduce the risks involved with substance misuse.</p> <p>Resilience is the capacity of an individual to 'bounce back' from adverse experiences, and to manage positive resources and skills, such as 'character' and 'grit', that can allow minimising negative outcomes of adverse circumstances.</p> <p>Public Health England: Building children and young people's resilience in schools</p>

Sample Answers	Notes
<p>14) Some individuals are more likely to misuse substances than others. Choose 3 factors from the list below and explain how they can increase the likelihood of someone misusing substances. (4.2)</p> <p>All of the factors stated below may be offered as examples by learners and all are exacerbated by deprivation in one form or another. Deprivation can involve many things such as poverty, inadequate housing, poor education and lack of job or social opportunities. The list below is not exhaustive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • younger people may be more easily influenced by peers and older friends • young people may lack the experience to make safer choices • older people may be lonely and isolated using alcohol as a comfort • substance misuse may be normal behavior amongst someone's friendship group • parents may be substance users • parents may not provide any guidance or proper care • someone with no money, job and/or prospects may find the use of different substances provides relief from stress and worry • a person may have a high-pressure, high-earning job and be surrounded by people who use stimulants regularly • there may be drug dealing in the local area • drug dealing may be an easy way of earning money. 	<p>As already noted at 1.3, the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in relation to substance use and misuse is significant and can be reinforced here.</p> <p>It's also important to recognise that use of some substances, particularly alcohol, is often excessive in a wide range of social groups and there are different problems in these groups, eg wealthy and middle classes, socially isolated older people.</p> <p>There is often a mistaken view that those who use substances, especially if this is in a dependent manner, lack moral principles or willpower and that they could stop this use simply by choosing to do so. In reality the picture is often more complex, and becoming free of substance use usually involves rather more than good intentions or a strong will, although these are the key elements.</p>

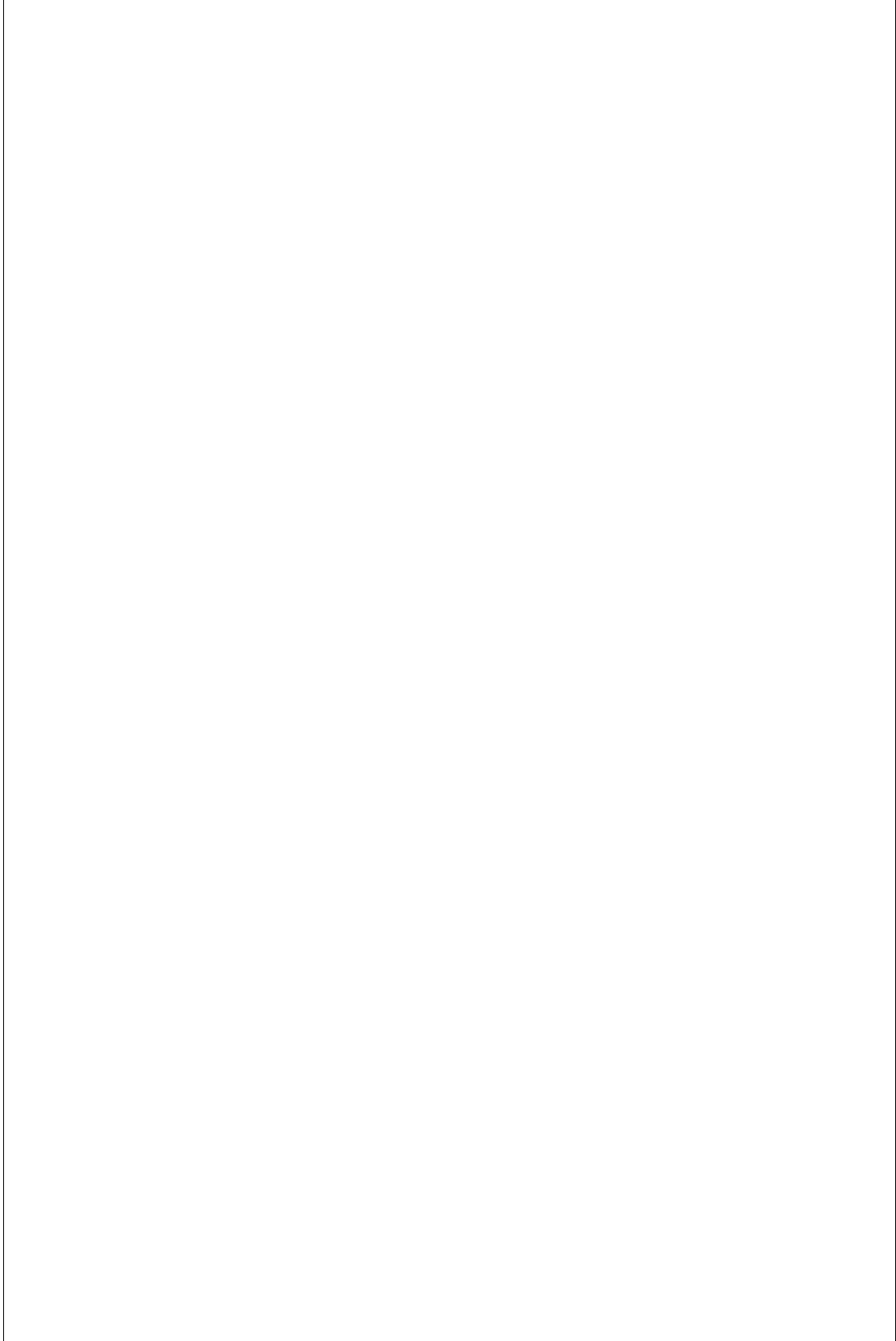
Sample Answers	Notes
<p>15) State 3 factors which may help to prevent individuals from misusing a substance (4.3)</p> <p>There are many potentially preventative factors that have been identified in 3 domains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individual – for example: academic achievement/ intellectual development; high self-esteem, emotional self-regulation; good coping skills and problem-solving skills; involvement in leisure activities • family – for example: family that provides structure, limits, rules, monitoring, and predictability; supportive relationships; clear expectations for behaviour and values • community – for example: opportunities for engagement within school and community; physical and psychological safety. <p>Learners should provide an example from each domain.</p>	<p>In general, early intervention and prevention programmes provide the opportunity for children and young people to develop essential social and emotional skills to help them face future challenges and experiences, and to prevent the escalation of problems that may lead to risk taking behaviours including substance misuse.</p> <p>Research has shown that experiences in the early years of children’s lives can have a major impact on health and the well-being outcomes of later life. This is known as Adverse Childhood Experiences. (ACE) as mentioned at 1.3.</p> <p>Protective factors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presence of mentors and support for development of skills and interests • opportunities for engagement within school and community • positive norms • clear expectations for behaviour • physical and psychological safety • family provides structure, limits, rules, monitoring, and predictability • supportive relationships with family members • clear expectations for behaviour and values • positive physical development • emotional self-regulation • high self-esteem • good coping skills and problem-solving skills • engagement and connections in 2 or more of the following contexts: at school, with peers, in athletics, employment, religion, culture • opportunities for exploration in work and school • connectedness to adults outside of family.

Sample Answers	Notes
<p>16) Give 3 examples of ways to build resilience and help protect individuals from the risks of substance misuse (4.4)</p> <p>Learners may choose from a range of examples including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ensuring people know where to go for help and support• implementing the five ways to well-being• taking up an interest or hobby• becoming involve with a sport or physical activity• having someone to talk to• learning how to manage problems• supportive relationship with responsible adult (young people).	<p>Tutors/Assessors should use simple case studies and examples to illustrate how resilience can be enabled. A useful resources could include:</p> <p>Public Health England: Building children and young people's resilience in schools</p>

Sample Answers	Notes
<p>17) Identify 3 possible barriers to making healthy choices. (4.5)</p> <p>Barriers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • economic restrictions to the cost of leisure or educational activities • low achievement at school and lack of interest and engagement - this is usually the product of one or more of the other factors listed here • lack of interest in any activities, sports, hobbies or pastimes • poor and ineffective parenting • parental substance misuse/ domestic violence • lack of support and encouragement from any responsible and significant adult • lack of positive role models • isolation and loneliness • lack of information about services and sources of help • fear of engaging with new people and activities • fear of losing certain friendship groups or partners. 	<p>It is important to note the emphasis of this unit is the barriers to healthy choices, not the healthy choices themselves.</p> <p>Learners may include a range of potential barriers, often expressed in colloquial terms, but essentially incorporating the list provided.</p> <p>Personal experiences may be revealed when answering this question and Assessors need to be alert to the possibility that signposting to support may be welcomed.</p> <p>Young people living in circumstances where there are no clear expectations for behaviour, no-one to provide structure, limits, rules, or monitoring, and where physical and psychological safety may be lacking are more vulnerable to risky behaviours in general.</p>

Section 3: Notes and Additional Information

Notes

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Equal Opportunities

NCFE CACHE fully supports the principle of equal opportunities and opposes all unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of ability, age, colour, culture, disability, domestic circumstances, employment status, gender, marital status, nationality, political orientation, racial origin, religious beliefs, sexual orientation and social background.

NCFE aims to ensure that equality of opportunity is promoted and that unlawful or unfair discrimination, whether direct or indirect, is eliminated both in its own employment practices, and in access to its qualifications.

A copy of NCFE CACHE's Equal Opportunities Policy is available on request.

Data Protection

NCFE is registered under the Data Protection Act and committed to maintaining the highest possible standards when handling personal information.

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