



Level 2 Certificate in

MRSA: Understanding and Controlling Acquired Infection

Specification

LSC Learning Aim Code: 00292207

ASCENTIS' MISSION STATEMENT

'Building Partnerships to Advance and Accredite Lifelong Learning for All.'

About Ascentis

Ascentis was originally established in 1975 as OCNW, a co-operative scheme between Universities and Colleges of Further Education. OCNW was the first 'Open College' in the UK and served the needs of its members for over 34 years. Throughout this period, OCNW grew yet maintained its independence in order that it could continue to respond to the requirements of its customers and provide a consistently high standard of service to all centres across the country and in recent years to its increasing cohorts of overseas learners.

In 2009 OCNW became Ascentis - a company limited by guarantee and a registered educational charity.

Ascentis is distinctive and unusual in that it is both:

- a National Awarding Body (NAB) approved by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)

and

- an Access Validating Agency (AVA) for 'Access to HE Programmes' licensed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)

Ascentis is therefore able to offer a comprehensive ladder of opportunities to centres and their students, starting at Entry Level basic skills or vocational programmes and progressing to QAA recognised Access to HE qualifications. The flexible and adult-friendly ethos of Ascentis has resulted in centres throughout the UK choosing to run its qualifications.

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SPECIFICATION SUMMARY

Introduction

The numbers of people acquiring hospital infections are rising year upon year in the United Kingdom. With the media attention focusing on MRSA as the “super bug” and the Government applying targets for the reduction in the number of deaths complicated by infection, NHS Hospital trusts, Primary Care Trusts and nursing and social care organisations are keen to ensure that staff are well-informed and trained to control cross-infection.

The first two units of this qualification help learners gain an understanding of the different agents which can cause infection and how they grow and mutate; how infection is spread and the measures that can be taken to prevent this from taking place. In the third unit MRSA is examined in more depth with learners looking at how it has become a hospital ‘super bug’ resistant to anti-biotics; and their role and obligations under law in reducing its spread.

Its target learners are all staff working in health and social care.

There are several features of this qualification that make it very appropriate for its target learners:

- Allows the learners to develop a good understanding of the general principles of infection control
- A focus on specific issues relating to MRSA
- Unit certification is available for each of the units
- Moderation and certification can be offered throughout the year, allowing maximum flexibility for centres
- Can be delivered within the workplace, as a blended learning programme or a classroom based course
- Evidence can be generated within a wide range of organisational contexts allowing the qualification to meet the specific occupational requirements of the learners

LSC Learning Aim Code

00292207

Specification Overview

Unit Number	Unit Title	Mandatory or Optional Unit	Internal or External Assessment
1	The Agents of Infection	Mandatory	Internal
2	Transmission of Pathogens, Infection Prevention and Control	Mandatory	Internal
3	Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus	Mandatory	Internal

Unit certification is available for any of the units.

ASSESSMENT AND MODERATION ARRANGEMENTS

In order to achieve the full qualification, learners must build up a portfolio of evidence made up of tasks that cover the assessment criteria within the 'What you need to do' section of each unit. Internal Moderation must take place within a centre followed by external moderation from Ascentis. To gain a unit certificate all assessment criteria within the 'What you need to do' section of the unit must be achieved. For the full qualification, learners must satisfy all the criteria for the three units.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Aims

The aims of this qualification are to enable learners:

- 1 To define the terms bacteria and understand the different causes of infection
- 2 To understand how MRSA and other infections are transmitted
- 3 To outline the possible methods of the control and prevention of cross-infection
- 4 To identify specific issues when dealing with MRSA

Target Group

The programme is suitable for all staff working in health and social care whether this is in a residential care organisation or a large NHS trust hospital.

Award of the Qualification

This qualification is offered at Level 2.

To achieve the full award a learner must complete all three mandatory units.

A learner may also achieve unit certification for an individual unit or number of units. Their certificate will give details of the unit/s achieved.

To successfully achieve a unit the learner must present evidence for all the assessment criteria as documented in the 'What you need to do' section of each unit.

Recommended Guided Learning Hours

120 guided learning hours are recommended for the full qualification: 40 guided learning hours for each unit.

Recommended Prior Learning

There are no specific prior learning requirements. However the tutor must be assured that the learner will be able to cope with this level of study.

Opportunities for Progression

The qualification could be used as a progression route to more specialised learning on infection control at Level 3.

Restriction on Learner Entries

There are no restrictions on learner entries.

Centre Approval and Registration

Centres must be approved to run this qualification prior to delivery. Details of the centre approval process are available from the Ascentis office.

All learners must be registered within seven weeks of the course commencing, using the Student Information Record Sheet (SIRS). These forms are available in the Foundation Information File or through contacting the Ascentis office.

Status in Wales and Northern Ireland

This qualification is available in English only.

Learners with Particular Assessment Requirements

Ascentis has procedures in accordance with *The statutory regulation of external qualifications 2004* to ensure this qualification is accessible and does not disadvantage a learner with a particular need. Full details of this procedure are available within the Foundation Information File or through contacting the Ascentis office.

Appeals Procedure

Ascentis has an appeals procedure in accordance with *The statutory regulation of external qualifications 2004*. Full details of this procedure, including how to make an application, are available within the Foundation Information File or through contacting the Ascentis office.

ASSESSMENT AND MODERATION ARRANGEMENTS

Overview

To gain a unit certificate all assessment criteria within the 'What you need to do' section of the unit must be achieved. All three units of the qualification are mandatory and are assessed through a portfolio of evidence. For the full qualification, learners must satisfy all the criteria for the three mandatory units.

Internal Assessment

Assessment is by the building up of a portfolio of evidence made up of tasks that cover the assessment criteria. The portfolios are internally assessed, internally moderated within the centre and then externally moderated by Ascentis.

The portfolios of evidence may include a variety of evidence to demonstrate that the assessment criteria for each unit have been met. Examples of the type of evidence that could be provided are:

- Assessed questions based around the theory learned on the programme and the practices and procedures in their own workplace
- Diary containing personal reflections
- Direct written responses to the assessment criteria
- Worksheets
- Completed observation record forms

If the learner fails to meet the assessment criteria on the first attempt at an activity they may redraft the work following feedback given by the tutor. However tutors must not correct the work of the learner, and all feedback given by the tutor must be included within the learner's evidence.

Learners' portfolio evidence should include a tracking sheet to show where the evidence for each assessment criteria is to be found. Some activities could produce evidence for more than one unit, which is acceptable as long as there is clear reference to this on the tracking sheet. Examples of tracking sheets are found in Appendix 2. For the hand washing exercise in Unit 2 tutors should complete an observation record form, an example form that can be used is found in Appendix 3.

On completion of the learners' evidence, the assessor is required to complete the Summary Record of Achievement for each learner. This form is provided as Appendix 1.

The centre must retain evidence of all assessments for 4 weeks after the date of moderation in case of appeal.

Internal Moderation

Internal moderation is the process of ensuring that everyone who assesses a particular unit in a centre is assessing to the same standards. Internal moderation of this programme will be co-ordinated by a named Co-ordinator at each centre, who will liaise with Ascentis. The Co-ordinator may also act as the Internal Moderator. Internal moderation will be carried out through standardisation activities including the internal moderation of at least 10% of portfolio evidence across all the groups of learners, to include all the assessors and the full range of units. It is the responsibility of Internal Moderators to ensure that assessors' decisions are sampled and monitored to ensure consistency and fairness. Internal Moderators are also responsible for supporting assessors by offering advice and guidance.

The Ascentis Foundation Information File has copies of forms that can be used to record internal moderation activities, although centre-devised forms may also be used.

Ascentis External Moderators will confirm the Internal Moderation activities at their visit. Centres are required to retain all evidence from all learners for external moderation and for a further four weeks afterwards, should any appeals be made.

External Moderation

Accredited centres will normally be visited twice a year for external moderation. The focus of the external moderation visits will include:

- Staff development, including guidance and support for all assessors and internal moderators
- Moderation of a sample of the learners' evidence
- Confirmation of coverage of all the assessment criteria and units needed for unit certification or the full award

Knowledge, Understanding and Skills required of Assessors and Internal Moderators

Tutors of this award should have a knowledge and understanding of the issues that are associated with the control of infection in health care. They should ideally have relevant qualifications and practical experience relating to the course, e.g. a registered nurse.

Internal Moderators need to be competent assessors with knowledge of the requirements of the internal moderation process. Ascentis provides training events for internal moderators and any person new to this role would be advised to go on an Ascentis training event, or a similar event held in their own centre.



Unit Specifications

Unit 1 The Agents of Infection

Introduction

In this unit you will be introduced to the two main micro-organisms; bacteria and viruses, which can cause disease and illness in humans. You will learn about their differences, the conditions they require for growth and some common bacterial and viral illnesses and infection. You will understand how evolution and mutation in bacteria can lead to new strains which may be resistant to antibiotics.

WHAT YOU MUST LEARN

Introduction to Micro-organisms

- Know the common bacterial shapes and arrangements
- Know the anatomy of a single bacterium
- Know the conditions for growth of micro-organisms
- Gain an understanding of viruses – their main features and how they differ from bacteria
- Know how micro-organisms can become established and reproduce

Micro-organisms as Pathogens

- Understand the term pathogen
- Understand the terms evolution and mutation, including how MRSA has evolved.
- Know some common bacterial infections
- Know some common viral infections
- Know that other pathogens e.g. *fungus*, *protozoa* and *prions* can cause illness

Unit 1 The Agents of Infection

What You Need to Do

Introduction to Micro-organisms	
1	Describe the typical structure of bacteria
2	Explain how bacteria and viruses differ from each other
3	Explain the conditions needed for the growth of bacteria and viruses
Micro-organisms as Pathogens	
4	Define the term pathogen
5	Give examples of common bacterial illnesses and infections
6	Give examples of common viral illnesses and infections
7	Give examples of some other type of pathogens and the illnesses which they may cause
8	Explain the meaning of the terms evolution and mutation

Unit 2 Transmission of Pathogens, Infection Prevention and Control

Introduction

In this unit you will look at the transmission of pathogens and portals of entry and exit of pathogens into the body. You will then explore the standard infection control procedures which should be followed to reduce the risk of infection within a health care environment.

WHAT YOU MUST LEARN

Transmission of Pathogens

- Know the different ways that pathogens may be transmitted. This should include vertical and horizontal transmission and direct and indirect contact
- Know the portals of entry and exit of pathogens into the body - inhalation, ingestion, inoculation
- Know that some contagious infections may be transmitted from animals to humans

Infection Prevention and Control

- Know that hand hygiene reduces the spread of disease e.g. *nails to be short, clean and polish free, cuts and abrasions covered with a waterproof dressing, avoid wrist watches and jewellery*
- Know the general hygiene measures which can help to prevent infection e.g. *uniform, hair, general hygiene*
- Know the correct hand washing procedures (the Ayliffe technique) including cleansing materials, guideline requirements, skin care and missed areas
- Understand when hand hygiene should be maintained
- Know how the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) can reduce cross-infection e.g. *appropriate gloves, aprons, face protection*
- Know that health care organisations have procedures for the safe handling and disposal of waste and sharps which should include colour coding of bags used for waste and procedures for the disposal of different types of waste
- Know how the environment needs to be kept clean in order to reduce the risk of cross-infection e.g. *floors, toilets, sinks, surfaces, bedding*
- Understand that certain groups are more at risk of infection e.g. *the elderly*
- Know who your key contact with regard to the control of infection in your organisation
- Know the policy and procedure for infection control in your organisation
- Know the correct procedures to follow in the event of the death of a patient e.g. *mortuary notification*.

Unit 2 Transmission of Pathogens, Infection Prevention and Control

What You Need to Do

Transmission of Pathogens	
1	State the different ways that pathogens may be transmitted
2	State the ways in which pathogens may enter and exit the body
3	Identify some contagious infections that may be transmitted from animals to humans
Infection Prevention and Control	
4	Explain the good hand hygiene procedures to reduce the risk of infection
5	Demonstrate the correct 6-stage hand wash procedure
6	Give examples of when a health care worker should wash their hands effectively
7	State the personal protective equipment needed to reduce the risk of infection and when it should be used
8	Describe the safe handling and disposal of waste procedure operating within a health care organisation
9	Explain how the environment needs to be kept clean to reduce the risk of infection
10	Give examples of groups that are vulnerable to infection
11	State who your key contact is for infection control within your organisation
12	Identify the policies and procedures for infection control in your place of work
13	Explain the correct infection control procedures to follow in the event of the death of a patient

Unit 3 Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus

Introduction

In this unit you will focus on the specific strains of staphylococcus bacteria which are resistant to one or more conventional antibiotics, collectively called MRSA. You will learn why this has become a hospital “super bug” and how it has become resistant to antibiotics. You will build on the work completed in Unit 2 by looking at the additional measures which need to be taken to prevent and control MRSA. You will consider your responsibilities in line with the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) when dealing with cases of MRSA and examine how cases of MRSA are categorised and reported in the UK.

WHAT YOU MUST LEARN

What is MRSA?

- Know that Staphylococcus are a family of common bacteria
- Know that many people carry it in their throats and it can cause a mild infection
- Know that MRSA stands for methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, which includes any strain of staphylococcus bacteria resistant to antibiotics
- Know how MRSA has occurred
- Know where Staphylococcus aureus is likely to become colonised in the body e.g. *anterior nares, skin folds, hairline, perineum*
- Know the difference between colonisation and infection
- Know the conditions when colonisation leads to clinical infection
- Know the signs of infection e.g. *temperature, puss*
- Know why MRSA is a particular problem within health care environments e.g. *care homes, hospitals.*

Prevention and Control of MRSA in Health Care Environments

- Understand that standard infection control procedures should be followed in cases of MRSA
- Know the additional infection control measures which may be used for MRSA e.g. *use of antibiotics, use of isolation unit, screening of other patients and staff, extra cleansing of rooms in addition to normal practice following discharge.*

Safety at Work

- Know the legislation and regulations that are used to ensure employee safety whilst at work and the responsibility of the individual
- Know how infectious disease in the UK is reported and the Department of Health criteria for identifying cases of MRSA.

Unit 3 Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus

What You Need to Do

What is MRSA?	
1	Explain what MRSA is
2	Explain some of the reservoirs used by the MRSA bacteria
3	Describe why MRSA has occurred
4	Explain colonisation and how this may lead to clinical infection of MRSA
5	Explain how to identify the signs of an MRSA infection
6	Explain why MRSA is a particular problem within health care environments
Prevention and Control of MRSA in health care environments	
7	Explain the infection control measures which should be followed in cases of MRSA
Safety at Work	
8	State your responsibilities as an employee when dealing with clients/patients with MRSA
9	State how cases of MRSA are identified and reported to the Department of Health

APPENDIX 1

Summary Record of Achievement

Learner Name _____

	Date completed	Assessor Signature	Internal Moderator Signature (if sampled)
Level 2			
Unit 1			
Unit 2			
Unit 3			

Learner signature _____

Assessor signature _____

APPENDIX 2 Tracking Sheets

Unit 1 – The Agents of Infection

Criteria	Assessment Method	Evidence Details	Portfolio Reference	Completion Date
INTRODUCTION TO MICRO-ORGANISMS 1 Describe the typical structure of bacteria 2 Explain how bacteria and viruses differ from each other 3 Explain the conditions needed for the growth of bacteria and viruses				
MICRO-ORGANISMS AS PATHOGENS 4 Define the term pathogen 5 Give examples of common bacterial illnesses and infections 6 Give examples of common viral illnesses and infections 7 Give examples of some other type of pathogens and the illnesses which they may cause 8 Explain the meaning of the terms evolution and mutation				

The above evidence has been assessed against the standards and has been judged for validity, authenticity, currency, reliability and sufficiency.

Learner Signature _____ Date _____

Assessor Signature _____ Date _____

Internal Moderator (if sampled) _____ Date _____

TRACKING SHEET

Unit 2 – Transmission of Pathogens, Infection Prevention and Control

Criteria	Assessment Method	Evidence Details	Portfolio Reference	Completion Date
<p>TRANSMISSION OF PATHOGENS</p> <p>1 State the different ways that pathogens may be transmitted</p> <p>2 State the ways in which pathogens may enter and exit the body</p> <p>3 Identify some contagious infections that may be transmitted from animals to humans</p>				
<p>INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL</p> <p>4 Explain the good hand hygiene procedures to reduce the risk of infection</p> <p>5 Demonstrate the correct 6-stage hand wash procedure</p> <p>6 Give examples of when a health care worker should wash their hands effectively</p> <p>7 State the personal protective equipment needed to reduce the risk of infection and when it should be used</p> <p>8 Describe the safe handling and disposal of waste procedure operating within a health care organisation</p> <p>9 Explain how the environment needs to be kept clean to reduce the risk of infection</p> <p>10 Give examples of groups that are ore vulnerable to infection</p> <p>11 State who you key contact is for infection control within your organisation</p> <p>12 Identify the policies and procedures for infection control in you place of work</p> <p>13 Explain the correct infection control procedures to follow in the event of the death of a patient</p>				

The above evidence has been assessed against the standards and has been judged for validity, authenticity, currency, reliability and sufficiency.

Learner Signature _____ Date _____

Assessor Signature _____ Date _____

Internal Moderator (if sampled) _____ Date _____

TRACKING SHEET

Unit 3 – Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus

Criteria	Assessment Method	Evidence Details	Portfolio Reference	Completion Date
WHAT IS MRSA? 1 Explain what MRSA is 2 Explain some of the reservoirs used by the MRSA bacteria 3 Describe why MRSA has occurred 4 Explain colonisation and how this may lead to clinical infection of MRSA 5 Explain how to identify the signs of an MRSA infection 6 Explain why MRSA is particular problem within health care environments				
PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF MRSA IN HEALTH CARE ENVIRONMENTS 7 Explain the infection control measures which should be followed in cases of MRSA				
SAFETY AT WORK 8 State your responsibilities as an employee when dealing with clients/patients with MRSA 9 State how cases of MRSA are identified and reported to the				

The above evidence has been assessed against the standards and has been judged for validity, authenticity, currency, reliability and sufficiency.

Learner Signature _____ Date _____

Assessor Signature _____ Date _____

Internal Moderator (if sampled) _____ Date _____

APPENDIX 3 Observation Record

Learner Name _____

Unit _____

Criteria assessed through Observation: (Give number(s) from the 'What you need to do' grid)

What the learner had to do

--

Assessor's comments on learner performance

--

The above evidence has been assessed against the standards and has been judged for validity, authenticity, currency, reliability and sufficiency

Assessor Signature _____ Date _____

Internal Moderator Signature (if sampled) _____ Date _____

APPENDIX 4 Useful websites

The following websites maybe useful for tutors and students of this course:

www.nice.org.uk – The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence

www.nhs.uk/England/AuthoritiesTrusts/Pct/Default - A tool to help find Primary Care Trusts

www.dh.gov.uk – The Department of Health homepage

www.hpa.org.uk – The Health Protection Agency homepage

www.npsa.nhs.uk – The National Patient Safety Agency homepage.