Care Skillsbase: Skills Check 20

Using Numbers in Office Work

Interviewer's pack
Contents

- Skills Check guidance, answers and activity
- Feedback form
- Personal development form

Summary	
Suitable for	Administrator/office worker
Skill checked	Number skills
Covers	Office work problems involving numbers and calculation
Learning for interviewer	Can the member of staff apply number skills to solve typical problems in office work?
Learning for member of staff	How number skills are used in office work
Approx time needed	Total: 30 minutes (15 minutes for Skills Check and 15 minutes for feedback)
How it works	Asks the person to use number skills to solve seven short problems typical of office work in a care organisation. Discuss the person's answers to check understanding.
Notes	Answers are included with the guidance overleaf.
Before you start	Read the **general guidance** in the **Skills Check** area of the Care Skillsbase website.

We welcome suggestions to improve this Skills Check. Please use the contact form on our website at www.scie.org.uk/careskillsbase

Using Numbers in Office Work

Guidance

Use this Skills Check to find out if the person has the **number skills and knowledge** required for their job.

These problems offer the person an opportunity to use knowledge and skills relating to:

- four rules of arithmetic (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division)
- time (calculations involving hours and minutes; 24-hour clock, calendar)
- money (calculations involving pounds and pence)
- simple fractions
- useful symbols and language (e.g. £ and %, 'item', 'every three weeks', 'do not count').

Check that the person understands that each problem offers three options:

- try to solve the problem by making calculations and arriving at an answer
- tick a box to show that they do not know how to solve the problem
- tick a box to show that they do not understand the question.

Say that at work it is not always possible to use a calculator and because of that you want them to try to solve the problems without one.

Tell the person that no overall score is awarded. The point of the Skills Check is to see how they get on with the different problems.

Point out the instruction to note their workings. This will help you understand their answers afterwards.

Tell the inductee to spend about ten minutes on the Skills Check and not to worry if they can't do one or more of the problems. They should just move on to the next.

Tell them to let you know when they have done all they can. If they have not finished after ten minutes, stop them anyway and ask them to show you how they got on.

Before you go through their answers (correct answers follow), ask the person what they thought of the Skills Check and if it seemed relevant to their work.

Answers

Note: The workings-out shown here are just one of the possible ways to arrive at a correct solution. There are other ways to arrive at the right answer.

1. Agency staff hours

Addition, fractions, time: 14 + 23 + 33 + 9 ½ = 79½

Answer: 79.5 hours (79 ½ hours)

2. Petty cash tin

Decimal subtraction (money): £15 minus £4.03; minus 65p; minus £1.79; minus £2.57 = £5.96; **or** decimal addition and subtraction (money): £4.03 + 65p + £1.79 + £2.57 = £9.04; £15.00 minus £9.04 = £5.96

Answer: £5.96 left in tin

3. Ordering supplies

Multiplication, division:

Paper: 4 x 5 = 20

Staples: 5 x 2 = 10

Post-it pads: 4 x 6 = 24, 4 x 7 = 28

HP cartridges: 3 x 2 = 6, 4 x 2 = 8

Answer: Paper: 4 boxes; Staples: 2 packs; Post-it pads: 7 packs; HP cartridges: 4 packs

4. Pay rise

Percentages, division: 3% = 3 in every 100; 3% of £100 = £3; £50 is half of £100; half of £3 = £1.50; 3% of £50 = £1.50

Answer: Sam = £103; Bernie = £51.50

5. Book-keeping hours

Fractions, addition: ½ of 30 hours = 15 hours; 1/3 of 30 hours =10 hours; 15 hours + 10 hours = 25 hours; 30 hours minus 25 hours = 5 hours

Answer: 5 hours

6. Care managers' meeting schedule

Calendar, multiplication, addition:

3 weeks = 3 x 7 days = 21 days;

4th June + 21 days = 25th June;

25th June + 21 days = 16th July (June has 30 days; 25th June + 7 days = 2nd July; 2nd July + 14 days = 16th July)

 Answer: Meeting 1: 25th June; Meeting 2: 16th July

7. Time sheet

24-hour clock, time addition, subtraction: Monday 21:45 to 05:30 = 9.45 pm to 5.30 am = 7 hours 45 mins; breaks = 45 mins + 15 minus = 1 hour; 7 hours 45 mins minus 1 hour = 6 hours 45 mins

Tuesday 22:30 to 06:45 = 10.30 pm to 6.45 am = 8 hours 15 mins; breaks = 45 mins; 8 hours 15 mins minus 45 mins = 7 hours 30 mins

Answer: Mon = 6 hours 45 mins (or 6¾ hours); Tues = 7 hours 30 mins (or 7½ hours)

Understand the Job: Using Numbers in Office Work

Problem-solving is a vital part of health and social care work. Use this activity to learn more about typical problems and the **number skills** that help solve them.

First, write your name and today's date on the line below.

| (First name) | (Last name) | (Date: Day-Month-Year) |

....

Please show your workings! Even if you can do the problem in your head, please note the calculations you made to help the interviewer understand how you solved the problem.

Example problem showing how to note your calculations
You work five days a week. You drive five miles to work and five miles back home each day. How many miles do you drive to and from work each week?

For your workings	**Answer:** *50 miles*
5 + 5 = 10 miles *10 x 5 days = 50 miles*	

| *or*   I don't know how to work this out ☐ | *or*   I don't understand the question ☐ |

Problems

1. Agency staff hours
Here are last week's hours for agency staff: Jane: 14 hrs, Neil 23 hrs, Betty 33 hrs and Mary 9½ hrs. What is the total number of agency hours for the week?

For your workings	**Answer:**

| *or*   I don't know how to work this out ☐ | *or*   I don't understand the question ☐ |

Understand the Job: Using Numbers in Office Work (continued)

2. Petty cash tin
The petty cash tin had £15 in it on Monday. £4.03, 65p, £1.79 and £2.57 have been taken out. How much money is left in the tin?

For your workings	Answer:

or I don't know how to work this out ☐	*or* I don't understand the question ☐

3. Ordering supplies
Your organisation needs 20 reams of paper, 10 boxes of staples, 25 Post-it pads, 7 HP cartridges No 56. There is an order form below. It shows how items are supplied. Complete the order form to make sure your organisation has what it needs.

For your workings

or I don't know how to work this out ☐	*or* I don't understand the question ☐

Order form		
Item	**How supplied**	**Quantity ordered**
Paper	Box of 5 reams	box(es)
Staples	Pack of 5 boxes	pack(s)
Post Its	Pack of 4 pads	pack(s)
HP cartridge No 56	Pack of 2	box(es)

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4. Pay rise

Sam and Bernie work in your organisation. Sam earns £100 a week. Bernie earns £50 per week. Next month, both will get a 3% pay rise. What will each earn per week after the pay rise?

For your workings	**Answer:** **Sam will earn**
	Bernie will earn

or   I don't know how to work this out ☐   *or*   I don't understand the question ☐

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5. Book-keeping hours

Your book-keeper works 30 hours a week. Half her time goes on credit control and a third on sales and purchase ledger work. How many hours are left for VAT preparation?

For your workings	**Answer:**

or   I don't know how to work this out ☐   *or*   I don't understand the question ☐

6. Care managers' meeting schedule

The care managers meet every three weeks. You have to do the diary entries. Imagine today is 4th June and there has just been a meeting. On what dates will the next two meetings be?

For your workings	**Answer:** **Meeting 1.**
	Meeting 2.

or I don't know how to work this out ☐	*or* I don't understand the question ☐

7. Time sheet

Complete the time sheet below.

For your workings

or I don't know how to work this out ☐	*or* I don't understand the question ☐

Time sheet				
Day	**In**	**Out**	**Breaks**	**Hours worked (do not count breaks)**
Mon	21:45	05:30	45 mins 15 mins	
Tues	22:30	06:45	45 mins	

Feedback form	Date:
Staff member's name	
Staff member's job title	
Interviewer's name	
Interviewer's job title	

1. Interviewer's view The member of staff ...	**No**	**Partly**	**Yes**
a. Can solve typical care problems effectively.			
b. Can communicate effectively about typical care problems.			

2. Interviewer's reasons The member of staff ...	**No**	**Partly**	**Yes**
a. Understood the questions (knowledge of key words, symbols and concepts).			
b. Used number skills and knowledge to solve the problems; did not guess the answers (knowledge of how to solve problems).			
c. Gave the correct answer (ability to make accurate calculations).			
d. Wrote calculations and answers clearly (legibility).			
e. Completed the activity within the allocated time (ability to problem-solve quickly).			
f. Explained their answers clearly and coherently afterwards.			

3. Next steps to help develop skills and knowledge for the job	**Yes**	**No**
a. Interviewer will arrange monitoring, feedback and support from a supervisor.		
b. Interviewer and member of staff will plan personal development to improve member of staff's understanding of key social care words and ideas.		
c. Interviewer and member of staff will plan personal development to improve member of staff's number skills and knowledge.		

4. Interviewer's signature	**Staff member's signature**

Use the other side of this sheet for notes.

Personal development form	Date:
Staff member's name	
Staff member's job title	
Interviewer's name	
Interviewer's job title	

1. Learning aim: to work safely and meet quality standards, the member of staff should develop the following number skills and knowledge	Tick (✓) if 'yes'
a. Knowledge of key words, symbols and concepts (to understand problems).	
b. Maths methods (to solve problems).	
c. Ability to make accurate calculations (to solve problems correctly).	
d. Ability to write numbers that are easily readable (to pass on information).	
e. Ability to solve problems quickly (to cope with work situations).	
f. Ability to explain problems and solutions (to support team work and help service users).	

2. How will the learning happen?

3. What support and resources will be needed to make the learning successful?

4. When will the learning happen?

5. How will we know the learning has been successful?

6. Progress review date:

7. Interviewer's signature	Staff member's signature