
Unit Specification

iUHB356 – Cut ladies hair using a variety of techniques

Unit reference number: L/651/0687

Level: 2

Guided Learning Hours (GLH): 111

Overview

The aim of this unit is to develop learners' knowledge, understanding and skills to create a variety of basic looks using club cutting, freehand, texturising and scissor over comb techniques.

Learners are required to use these techniques to produce uniform layers, short and long graduations and one length cuts.

Learners will need to maintain health, safety and hygiene salon procedures throughout the unit. Additionally, learners must maintain their personal appearance and demonstrate effective communication and consultation skills.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, learners will:

LO1 Be able to cut hair using basic techniques

LO2 Know how health and safety policies and procedures affect cutting services

LO3 Understand the factors that influence cutting services

LO4 Understand the tools, equipment, products and techniques used for cutting services

Unit content

LO1 Be able to cut hair using basic techniques

Prepare for cutting services

Taught content

- Preparation of learners should include:
 - Clean and hygienic appearance
 - Good communication and listening skills
 - Correct posture
- Preparation of the working area to include:
 - Chair and work area to be clean before the client arrives
 - Chair is positioned correctly
 - Adequate work area to allow safe use of haircutting equipment
 - Products on display to be clean of dust and hair
 - Tools and equipment to be clean and sterilised
 - Electrical equipment to be visually checked before use
 - All tools and equipment to be positioned for ease of use
- Preparation of the client to include:
 - Clean protective garments for the client
 - Cutting collar/cape
 - Visual check of client's hair and scalp for signs of contra-indication, infections or infestations

Apply safe and hygienic methods of working throughout services

Taught content

- Ensuring that visual checks of the hair and scalp during consultation for anything that will influence or limit the service
- Removing hair cuttings from the client's skin promptly to prevent discomfort or irritation to the client
- Clearing away/sweeping the hair from working area to prevent accidents by slipping on the hair
- Disposing of hair cuttings hygienically and appropriately
- Ensuring all tools are handled and stored safely

Consult with clients to confirm the desired look

Taught content

- Consulting and confirming with the client before cutting hair commences to agree the chosen style/amount of hair to be cut
- Explaining each stage of the haircut to the client
- Confirm the length and shape of the haircut to meet the client's requirements
- Adapt the haircut where appropriate
- Modify the haircut where appropriate for example, to take into account a specific hair growth pattern

Select suitable products, tools and equipment

Taught content

- Products
 - Water spray, keeps hair damp during the haircut
 - Detangling solution, used to help detangle and prevent knotting during the haircut
- Tools
 - Scissors, used to remove length and bulk from the hair. Creates blunt, textured and/or tapered ends to the hair
 - Razors, used to remove bulk and length from the hair, creates textured and tapered effects throughout the hair length and ends
 - Combs, small tooth comb used to control the hair when cutting. Wider tooth comb used to detangle hair and pin tail combs may be used to aid sectioning the hair
 - Sectioning clips/clamps, used to keep accurate cutting lines by keeping uncut hair out of the way
- Equipment
 - Mirror, used to show the client the sides and back of the haircut or to confirm required length to be cut
 - Cutting collar/cape, used to protect the neck area from hair cuttings
 - Neck brush, used to remove unwanted hair cuttings from around the client
 - Hand held hairdryer, used to dry, style or remove excess moisture from the hair after hair cutting

Carry out cutting services

Taught content

- Compare hair preparation methods suitable to achieve the desired style i.e. cutting hair wet or dry or both
- Cutting hair wet:
 - Hair wet with water spray – quicker for the client but hair may not be clean, may not be evenly wet
 - Pre-shampooed and conditioned hair – clean hair to cut, hair fully returns to its alpha-keratin state
 - Advantages of cutting hair wet – supports cleaner section making, hair easier to control, greater accuracy for precision cutting, able to see hair in natural state (curls, waves), guidelines more visible
 - Disadvantages of cutting hair wet – hair growth patterns less obvious, takes longer to complete the appointment from start to finish
- Cutting hair dry:
 - Hair shampooed, conditioned and dried/straightened
 - Good for texturising and removing bulk from the hair especially curly or coarse hair types or where hair has been shampooed and styled straight
 - Quick, easy fringe cutting hair service for the client between full haircut appointment
 - Advantages of cutting hair dry – quick, easier to see natural hair movement and fall, accurately assess actual hair length
 - Disadvantages of cutting hair dry – hair may not be clean, less accurate sections, less control, more static, harder to comb
- Choose the most appropriate methods of cutting hair depending upon the hair type, classification and characteristics as identified during consultation

- To include cutting methods and techniques
- Club cutting
 - Creates a blunt end to hair, used for precision cutting, retains hair bulk and weight, used for both curly and straight hair types
- Freehand
 - Cutting hair with no tension without holding the hair with the hand, fingers or tools
- Scissor over comb
 - Hair supported by comb when cut with scissors. Produces a soft-layered effect. Often used for very short styles cut into nape/sides, shortens to less than finger depth, cut to head shape/size or when blending layers
- Cutting styles
 - Uniform layer – hair is held at 90°. No weight line. Hair cut to any length long, medium short, above or below the shoulders
 - Long graduation – hair held at a range of angles over 90°, depending on the degree of graduation required. Short internal layers and longer external layers
 - Short graduation – hair held at 45° angles. Long internal layers, shorter external layers
 - One length – hair held at 0° angle. Above the shoulders, below the shoulders
- Haircut is adapted by:
 - Working with natural fall of hair
 - Accommodating hair growth patterns
 - Undertaking remedial action to resolve emerging issues during the haircut

Provide clients with advice and recommendations on the service(s) provided

Taught content

- Products to use, for example, use of styling products or styling finishing sprays
- Home care maintenance, for example the routine could include a light spray water to freshen the style or using a specific brush to style the hair
- Discuss client's needs, requirements and lifestyle to provide further advice and guidance on use of home care products for example, a client with busy outdoor lifestyle may require advice and guidance on protecting the hair from extremes in temperatures
- Discuss client's needs and requirements for future services, for example the need to grow a certain part of the hair for developing a new style, or a colour or lightening service to enhance the new haircut
- Discuss limitations, for example a specific growth pattern for example, cowlick fringe – may inhibit a chosen haircut, or may require the client to dry the hair in a specific way to achieve results
- Suggested interval between cuts, the client should be aware of the recommended time to return for maintenance of the style
- Other offers or promotions for example salon loyalty cards

LO2 Know how health and safety policies and procedures affect cutting services

The responsibilities for health and safety in own role

Taught content

- Relevant legislation for consultation, client care, confidentiality and consumer/retail, for the country the qualification is taken, which includes: General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), consumer rights, health and safety, equality. Health and safety regulations for the country where the qualification is taken, examples within the United Kingdom would include:
 - The Health and Safety at Work Act
 - The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations
 - Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations
 - Electricity at Work Regulations
 - Reporting Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)
 - The Consumer Protection Act
 - The Trade Descriptions Act
 - Salon insurance requirements, employers liability, public liability, professional indemnity
- Responsibilities for health and safety to include:
 - The reasons why all staff working in the salon have a responsibility for the health and safety of themselves and others
 - The salon safety regulations to ensure their actions do not put others at risk, which includes all staff, clients and visitors
- Additional factors will include:
 - The reasons why it is important to accurately describe the features and benefits of products and services
 - The reasons and importance for gaining client consent
 - The maintenance of the salon environment including:
 - The comfort of the salon
 - Cleanliness of the salon to prevent cross infections via direct or indirect contact
 - Provisions and use of workplace equipment – using only products, tools and equipment trained to use
 - Reasons for personal protective equipment (PPE) for example, using garments/gown for clients when cutting hair
 - Making visual checks on all electrical equipment and reporting faults/isolating power for example, hand held hairdryer used to remove excess moisture or style the finished cut
 - Ensuring manufacturers' instructions are always followed when using products and equipment that are used associated to the cutting service
 - Responsibilities of reporting certain work-related incidents or accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to a senior staff member
 - Ensuring the public are protected from the manufacture of supplied unsafe goods or misleading price indications
 - Prevent a false trade description to any goods that are supplied or offered to supply any goods to which a false trade description has been applied, or false statement about the provision of any service
 - Ensure that all personal client data records remain safe and confidential
 - Update client records following services
 - Disposing of waste and hair cuttings hygienically and appropriately

The potential hazards and possible risks that may occur in the workplace and affect services

Taught content

- Hazards – anything that has the potential to cause harm, for example, unprotected scissors, or blades left open when not cutting
- Risks – a chance, high or low, that harm caused by the hazard may occur, for example, potential to cut clients or own skin
- Working safely throughout the cutting service, an example may include ensuring there is adequate room around the client and no obstructions
- Ensuring use and maintenance of any equipment is monitored for example, conduct visual checks i.e. ensuring any obstructions are removed before cutting and that the seat is at correct height
- Ensuring the client is comfortable and free from harm throughout the service for example, removing jewellery that may restrict movement whilst cutting
- Disposing of waste appropriately to minimise risk of cross-infection and ensure there is no unnecessary risk to the environment, for example, hair cuttings removed from the floor immediately after the cutting service
- Correct handling and storage of all products, tools and equipment as applicable to the country the qualification is being taken in
- The course of action to be taken when accidentally cutting own or client's skin:
 - Cut own skin – stop immediately, clean wound, apply pressure to stop bleeding and apply a plaster
 - Cut client's skin – stop immediately, provide sterile cloth to client to hold against the cut skin, provide plaster for client to apply. Stylist to wash hands to remove blood from own skin, stylist to wear gloves if applying plaster to client cut
- The importance of ensuring a thorough visual check of the hair and scalp is performed prior to the service to prevent cross infection for example, ensuring the scalp is not tender when combing hair for sectioning prior to cutting
- Risk of electric shock when using electrical equipment to enhance the service to include potential hazards of trailing wires
- Fire – the salon's policy in the outcome of a fire and where the assembly point is
- The need to ensure personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements are followed

The safe and hygienic working methods and practices that must be followed throughout the services

Taught content

- The use of clean towels and gowns for all clients
- The use of clean and sterile tools and equipment for all clients
- The safe work practices and use of tools and equipment to include:
 - Prevention of cross-infection for example, covering any open cuts
 - The need to be organised and ready to undertake a cutting service
 - The maintenance of tools and equipment
 - Avoidance of trailing wires
 - Avoidance from water sprays and cuttings on the floor
 - The need to store sharp objects safely for example, return scissors to closed case after use
- Protecting the client's scalp when using electrical equipment
- Apply heat protectors (where required) to the hair when using electrical equipment
- Organisation of working area

Contact dermatitis and how it can be prevented

Taught content

- Recognising contact dermatitis symptoms
- Contact dermatitis – is a rash caused by the skin reacting to a substance it has come into contact with for example, chemicals. Symptoms can be varied and include:
 - Skin redness
 - Extreme itching
 - Oozing or blisters, may make skin swell
 - Skin that appears darkened or hard/leathery to touch that may become dry or flaky
 - Sensitive to products and sunlight
- How to avoid contracting and preventing measures which may include:
 - Wearing gloves (recommended) when shampooing hair prior to cutting service
 - Rinsing and drying hands thoroughly
 - Use of moisturisers or barrier creams
- Correct handling and storage of all products, tools and equipment
- Following and adhering to manufacturers' instructions when using products to enhance a haircut style

The importance of questioning clients prior to and during services

Taught content

- Understanding what the client wants and their expectations of the chosen cut and finished style
- To ensure the amount of hair to be cut is agreed
- To ensure the client understands the process
- To provide the opportunity for the client to ask questions
- To check that the client is comfortable
- To gain information on how clients maintain their hair, lifestyle and commitment to the style
- To ensure the client's expectations are met
- The legal significance of client questioning and the recording of client's responses to questioning

The importance of preventing cross-infection and cross-infestation

Taught content

- Avoidance of cross-contamination for example, using unclean tools from one client could contaminate the next client's hair or scalp
- Ensure the professional salon image is maintained
- The contra-indications to cutting to include:
 - Adverse skin conditions
 - Bacterial, viral or fungal infections
 - Bacterial infection examples include:
 - Impetigo – begins as blisters that itch, then fill with a yellowish-brown fluid, that once rupture becomes a flat crust
 - Folliculitis – infection of the hair follicle, causes bumps with pus. May be painful, itchy, sore or swollen
 - Viral infection examples include:
 - Herpes simplex, a raised red blister full of fluid. It will usually be painful and tender to the touch
 - Warts, small, fleshy, grainy bumps usually flesh-coloured, white, pink or tan. Rough to the touch and can be sprinkled with black pinpoints, which are small, clotted blood vessels
 - Fungal infection examples include:
 - Ringworm – depends where it appears but may be red, itchy, scaly, or raised patches that develop blisters or begin to ooze. Patches that may be redder on the outside edges creating a 'ring' effect
 - Infestation/parasites include:
 - Head lice – are tiny grey/brown insects. Head lice cling to hairs but stay close to the scalp which they feed off. Head lice lay eggs which hatch after 7 to 10 days. It takes about 7 to 10 days for a newly hatched louse to grow into an adult and start to lay eggs known as nits. Nits are the empty yellow-white eggshells which are left when the lice hatch. Nits look like dandruff but stick strongly to hair
 - Scabies – itchy skin condition causing a rash which may cause tiny blisters or sores where mites have burrowed into the skin
 - Hair defects, including:
 - Trichorrhesis nodosa – hair which breaks easily. Symptoms can include patches of hair loss or extremely short hair that appears not to grow. The hair shaft has thickened or thinned areas or has excessively split ends with discolouration
 - Monilethrix – is a condition that affects hair growth. The common characteristic is that individual strands of hair have a beaded appearance that results in short, fragile and broken hair
- The course of action to be taken if contra-indications are suspected to include:
 - The limits and boundaries of duties
 - Not to offer diagnosis
 - Which conditions need reporting and when
 - Whom to report to and where to record the findings
 - Referral for medical attention or advice

LO3 Understand the factors that influence cutting services

The factors that influence cutting services

Taught content

- Hair classification

Hair classifications table			
Type 1: Straight hair	1A - Fine/thin	1B - Medium	1C - Coarse
	Straight	Straight with volume	Straight difficult hair
Type 2: Wavy hair	2A - Fine/thin	2B - Medium	2C - Coarse
	'S' pattern	Frizzy 'S' pattern	Very frizzy 'S' pattern
Type 3: Curly hair	3A - Fine/thin	3B - Medium	3C - Coarse
	Soft curl	Loose curl	Tight curl
Type 4: Very curly hair	4A - Fine/thin	4B - Medium	4C - Coarse
	Tight coiled curl pattern	'Z' pattern and spring curl	Tight 'Z' pattern

- Hair characteristics and clients features to include:
 - Density – this is defined as the number of hairs on the scalp and will affect the choice of tools and products used and the time of the service
 - Texture – the circumference of an individual strand of hair. Hair can be fine, medium or coarse. Coarse hair has the largest circumference, and fine hair the smallest. Texture may affect the porosity of the hair
 - Porosity – this relates to the condition of the cuticle. Porosity levels are caused by both chemical and physical damage. Cuticles which are raised and feel rough, and may tangle when haircutting, are known as porous and will absorb water and products more easily and unevenly when applying finishing products after cutting the hair
 - Elasticity – this relates to the condition of the cortex layer of the hair. Elasticity levels are affected by how the hair is treated and its general condition. Hair should stretch and return to its normal size, this indicates the hair is in good condition and no damage to the cortex. If hair stretches and snaps or does not return to its original length this indicates internal damage to the cortex
 - Growth patterns – this relates to the direction the hair grows from the scalp and may influence the desired finish. Selection of appropriate cutting techniques may help overcome a difficult growth pattern
 - Head and face shape and size – this relates to the overall shape and size of the client's head and includes any specific features. When haircutting, it is important to ensure that the client has a style they can manage and which suits their overall appearance
 - Lifestyle – this is about the client's everyday activities and working patterns for example, it is important the client can manage the chosen haircut
 - Hair length – this will affect the general condition of the hair for example, cutting the hair may improve the overall hair condition

Dealing with any influencing factors

Taught content

- How hair classifications and characteristics may influence the cutting methods and techniques employed
- Club cutting
 - Creates a blunt end to hair, used for precision cutting, retains hair bulk and weight, used for both curly and straight hair types
- Freehand
 - Cutting hair with no tension without holding the hair with the hand, fingers or tools – suitable for most hair types. Removes length
- Scissor over comb
 - Hair supported by comb when cut with scissors. Produces a layered effect. Often used for very short styles cut into nape/sides. This method shortens the hair to less than finger depth, and is usually cut to head shape/size. Also used for blending layers
- Growth patterns
 - Ensuring the hair growth pattern has been accounted for prior to cutting, for example, the hair may need extra length to weigh it down, or, cut shorter to remedy the issue
 - Ensuring the natural fall of the hair is accounted for prior to and during the cutting service
- Density – the amount of hair on the scalp will influence the cutting method used, for example, hair that is fine in appearance may require club cutting to help give an overall thicker appearance
- Texture – as an example, coarse straight hair may require different cutting techniques for example, texturising around the hairline for a softer finish
- Porosity – this will influence the overall expected haircut finish. When the hair is porous a cut will help improve the overall appearance and improve the hair's ability to accept other services
- Elasticity – cutting may help to improve the overall condition of the hair if there is signs of damage
- Head and face shape and size – as an example, a client with a long face may not require height on the crown or a client with a high forehead may be best suited to a longer fringe effect haircut
- Lifestyle – will influence the longevity or suitability of a finished style for example, a client who is a mother to small children and needs to do the school run may require a low maintenance, manageable style
- Hair length – the expectations of the client about either the amount of hair to be removed or the expected new style can be influenced by the hair length in order to achieve a realistic outcome

LO4 Understand the tools, equipment, products and techniques used for cutting services

The importance of preparing the hair prior to cutting

Taught content

- The importance of preparing hair prior to cutting to include:
 - Removing tangles/knots
 - Checking hair growth patterns/natural fall of the hair
 - Checking hair and scalp prior to shampooing, if cutting hair wet to remove dirt/debris, product build-up
 - Checking hair and scalp if cutting hair dry
 - Checking for influencing factors
 - Checking for contra-indications/signs of infections or infestations
 - Checking for piercings that may inhibit the service
- The importance of checking hair when wet/shampooed for:
 - Natural movement
 - Partings
 - Elasticity
- The importance of checking hair when dry for:
 - Hair growth pattern/movement
 - Natural fall of the hair

The tools, equipment and products available and the effects they achieve

Taught content

- Scissors
 - Used to remove length and bulk, creates blunt, textured and/or tapered end to the hair
 - Maintain by removing loose hair, wipe clean, sterilise, stored in appropriate pouch, and sharpened if required, only use for cutting hair
- Razors
 - Used to remove bulk from coarse or thick hair or to add texture or taper the ends of the hair
 - Maintain by disposing of blade in sharps bin/appropriate dispenser. Avoid touching the blade
- Thinning scissors
 - Thinning scissors can help to blend haircuts or reduce bulk from thicker coarse hair. The scissors possess a number of teeth that allow them to cut some but not all strands of hair and the effect is to thin out the hair
 - Maintain by removing loose hair, wipe clean, sterilise and store in appropriate pouch
- Cutting comb(s)
 - Used to detangle hair, support hair when cutting, create sections, control hair when cutting
 - Maintain by cleaning comb of hair clippings, wash and dry, place in sterilising solution, store on clean receptacle/area
- Sectioning clips
 - Used to keep hair out of the way when sectioning hair for accurate and precise cutting lines

- Maintain by cleaning sectioning clips of hair clippings, wash and dry, place in sterilising solution, store on clean receptacle/area
- Cutting collar/cape
 - Used to protect neck area from hair clippings
 - Maintain by wiping clean, store at work station or clean trolley
- Back mirror
 - Used to show client the sides and back of the haircut
 - Maintain by cleaning for smear free reflection, store at workstation
- Neck brush
 - Soft brush that removes excess hair from client's neck and shoulders
 - Maintain by washing in warm soapy water, rinse and dry thoroughly
- Water spray
 - Use to keep hair damp during the haircut
 - Maintain by refreshing water
- Detangling solution
 - Used to prevent knotting during the haircut
 - Maintain by ensuring product bottle is clean after use, replaced in storage
- Handheld dryer
 - Used to dry or remove excess moisture after cutting
 - Maintain as per manufacturers' instructions, ensure air filter is cleaned regularly

The importance of applying correct techniques during services

Taught content

- Working with the natural fall/movement of the hair, including hair partings
- Weight distribution of the hair to ensure the expected shape can be achieved
- Adapting cutting methods where needed to take into account any specific hair growth patterns for example, cowlick, nape whorl
- Using the correct cutting method(s) for hair type and classification
- Using the correct cutting method(s) to achieve the desired style
- Using correct sectioning
- Holding the hair at the correct tension
- Using correct angles when cutting

The importance of providing clients with advice and recommendations on the service(s) provided and products available

Taught content

- To help clients achieve the required result at home
- Guidance on when to return for a maintenance cut
- The reasons for using specific products at home
- Reputation and walking advertisement for the salon
- Suggesting other services to enhance the style

Unit requirements

Learners must complete all assessment requirements related to this unit:

1. Service portfolio
2. Synoptic practical examination

1. Service portfolio

Learners must produce a service portfolio which is required to be completed under the supervision of a lecturer who must monitor the quality of the services performed throughout the learners' training.

The performance of learning outcome 1 must be demonstrated as part of all technical observations and will be recorded on **at least six observations**. This must be conducted on a range of new and existing clients and include the following cutting styles: one uniform layer, one length, short graduation and long graduation.

A style collection of before and after photographs of each observation must be produced to be sampled by the external examiner.

The service portfolio must be completed and marked prior to the learner completing the synoptic practical examination.

2. Synoptic practical examination

Learners must complete a synoptic practical examination for this unit which will be externally set by the awarding organisation and examined and marked by an external examiner. The synoptic practical examination will take place at the end of the period of learning.

Document History

Version	Issue Date	Changes	Role
v1.0	20/03/2024	First published	Qualification Administrator
v2.0	24/06/2026	Rebranding	Development Administrator