

Higher National Group Award Graded Unit Specification

General Information for Centres

This group award Graded Unit has been validated as part of the HND Retail Management. Centres are required to develop the assessment instrument in accordance with this validated specification. Centres wishing to use another type of group award Graded Unit or assessment instrument are required to submit proposals detailing the justification for change for validation.

Group Award Graded Unit Title: Retail Management: Group Award Graded Unit 2

Group Award Graded Unit Code: DL39 35

Type of Group Award Graded Unit: Project

Assessment Instrument: Investigation

Credit value: 2 HN Credits at SCQF level 8: (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to doctorates.*

Purpose: This group award Graded Unit is designed to provide evidence that the candidate has achieved the following principal aims of the HND Retail Management:

1. To prepare candidates for entry to the retail industry at junior management level
2. To prepare candidates for articulation to higher education provision in retailing or related areas
3. To provide knowledge and understanding which underpin SVQ Levels 111 and 1V in Retail Operations
4. To build on previously acquired transferable skills
5. To develop a sound understanding of the current and likely future trends in the retail environment, and their impact on the retail industry
6. To develop knowledge, understanding and skills in key management areas of finance, management and marketing
7. To provide candidates with in-depth knowledge and understanding in a range of specialist retail areas

General Information for Centres (cont)

Recommended Prior Knowledge and Skills: It is recommended that the candidate should have completed or be in the process of completing the following Units relating to the above specific aims prior to undertaking this group award Graded Unit:

The mandatory Units which comprise the HNC Retail Management plus the following Units:

- ◆ Comparative Retailing
- ◆ Store Design and Layout
- ◆ Marketing Practice: An Introduction
- ◆ Consumer Behaviour and the Marketing Process
- ◆ Using Financial Accounting Statements
- ◆ Behavioural Skills for Business
- ◆ Corporate/Store Image
- ◆ Principles and Practices of Selling

The above Units are all mandatory for the HND Group Award. Candidates may select a retail based topic for the investigation from those covered in any of the above Units, but must integrate information from a minimum of three Units. Candidates may prefer to choose a combination of mandatory and optional Units upon which to base their investigation. This is also acceptable, provided all the Units are part of the programme of study followed by the candidate for the HND Retail Management group award.

Prior to commencing the investigation, the candidate should discuss his/her choice of topic with the tutor, to ensure that one of suitable substance has been chosen.

This Unit could be undertaken in conjunction with the optional double credit Unit Workplace Experience Unit, allowing the candidate to choose a topic which is relevant to the situation within the workplace, and where some of his/her research may be undertaken. The topic for investigation could also be negotiated with the work place provider, who may have a specific project for investigation. Its suitability for investigation will require to be ratified by the Course Tutor, prior to commencement.

Core Skills: The achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Problem Solving Core Skill components of Critical Thinking and Review and Evaluation at SCQF level 6 (Higher).

Assessment: This group award Graded Unit will be assessed by the use of an investigation. The “fleshed-out” investigation should provide the candidate with the opportunity to produce evidence that demonstrates she/he has met the aims of the group award that this group award Graded Unit covers.

Administrative Information

Graded Unit Code:	DL39 35
Graded Unit Title:	Retail Management: Group Award Graded Unit 2
Original date of publication:	August 2004
Version:	02 (May 2006)

History of Changes:

Version	Description of change	Date
2	Descriptor updated to include Core Skills statement detailing automatic certification of the Problem Solving Core Skills components of Critical Thinking and Review and Evaluation at SCQF level 6 (Higher).	11/05/06

Source: SQA

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Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering special alternative assessment arrangements. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Alternative Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs*, which is available on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk.

Higher National Group Award Graded Unit Specification: Instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates

Group Award Graded Unit Title: Retail Management: Group Award Graded Unit 2

Conditions of Assessment

The candidate should be given a date for completion of the investigation. However, the instructions for the assessment task should be distributed to allow the candidate sufficient time to assimilate the details and carry out the assessment task. During the time between the distribution of the assessment task instructions and the completion date, assessors may answer questions, provide clarification, guidance and reasonable assistance. The assessment task should be marked as soon as possible after the completion date. The final grading given should reflect the quality of the candidate's evidence at the time of the completion date. Reassessment of this group award Graded Unit should be based on a significantly different assessment task.

At this level, candidates should work independently. It is up to Centres to take reasonable steps to ensure that the project is the work of the candidate. For example, Centres may wish to informally question candidates at various stages on their knowledge and understanding of the project on which they have embarked. Centres should ensure that where research etc, is carried out in other establishments or under the supervision of others that the candidate does not receive undue assistance.

It is advisable that candidates should meet regularly with their Class Tutor, to review their work in progress. They should also be encouraged to maintain a log of their activities which should be produced at these meetings, or faxed/e-mailed if the Unit is being undertaken on a distance learning basis. This log should be included in the report appendix. It is recommended that consideration be given to assessing candidates' work at each stage of the investigation – planning, developing, and evaluating – to minimise the requirement for a full resubmission should any stage fail to reach a satisfactory level.

The conditions for all stages of this assessment should be open book.

Instructions for designing the assessment task

The assessment task is a project. The project undertaken by the candidate must be a complex task which involves:

- ◆ variables which are complex or unfamiliar
- ◆ relationships which need to be clarified
- ◆ a context which may be familiar or unfamiliar to the candidate

The assessment task must require the candidate to:

- ◆ analyse the task and decide on a course of action for undertaking the project
- ◆ plan and organise work and carry it through to completion
- ◆ reflect on what has been done and draw conclusions for the future
- ◆ produce evidence of meeting the aims which this group award Graded Unit has been designed to cover

Higher National Group Award Graded Unit Specification: Instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

The project will be based on the investigation of an issue relating to a retail business in either the public, private or voluntary sector, and could be undertaken in conjunction with the Work Place Experience Unit. The issue chosen should involve an investigation which provides a solution to a perceived problem or suggests a new approach in response to the changing needs of the organisation and/or its customers.

It is envisaged that candidates will work on their own. Group work should only be permitted, where there is adequate supervision to ensure that each individual is contributing in equal measure. Groups should not exceed four in number but each participant must submit his/her individual response to each of the three stages of the investigation and assessors must be satisfied that the work has been completed by the individual candidate. Any suspected plagiarism or unfair distribution of tasks should be identified at tutorial meetings.

Guidance on grading candidates

Candidates who meet the minimum evidence requirements will have their achievement graded as C – competent, or A – highly competent or B somewhere between A and C. The grade related criteria to be used to judge candidate performance for this Graded Unit is specified in the following table.

Higher National Group Award Graded Unit specification: Instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Grade A	Grade C
<p>Is a seamless, coherent piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates clear, explicit links between the three stages of the investigation and is produced to a high standard • Is highly focused throughout on the objectives set for the investigation • Carefully selects information from a variety of sources to provide strong and valid reasons to support points made • Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of concepts, theories and issues relating to the retail industry and uses them accurately and relevantly to support points made • Is clear and well structured throughout and language used is of a high standard in terms of level, accuracy and specialist content • Effectively consolidates and, where appropriate, integrates required knowledge and understanding from across Units • Offers conclusions and recommendations which are coherently related to the objectives of the investigation • Includes a careful and considered reflection on the investigation which provides a strong basis for judging its success and making realistic recommendations for the future 	<p>Is a co-ordinated piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contains sufficient evidence to meet the minimum requirements of each of the three stages of the investigation and is produced to an adequate standard • Meets the objectives of the investigation but not in a consistent or fully comprehensive manner • Uses information from a limited range of sources, in a manner which does not always support the rationale • Makes limited reference to concepts, theories or issues relating to the retail industry and may not always use them accurately or relevantly to support points made • Is satisfactorily structured and uses language which is adequate in terms of level, accuracy and specialist content • Consolidates and integrates knowledge and skills, where appropriate, but this may lack some continuity and consistency • Offers conclusions and recommendations, related to the objectives of the investigation, which are limited, weak, or lack coherence • Includes limited reflection on the investigation which fails to provide a comprehensive basis for judging its success or making realistic recommendations for the future

Higher National Group Award Graded Unit specification: Instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

The project will be marked out of 100. Assessors will mark each stage of the project, taking into account of the criteria outlined on page 7. The marks will then be aggregated to arrive at an overall mark for the project. Assessors will then assign an overall grade to the candidate for this graded Unit based on the following grade boundaries.

- ❑ A = 70% - 100%
- ❑ B = 60% – 69%
- ❑ C = 50% - 59%

Note: the candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified below for each stage of the project in order to achieve the graded Unit.

Evidence requirements

The project consists of three stages: planning; developing; and evaluating. The following table specifies the minimum evidence required to pass each stage.

Note: The candidate must achieve **all of the minimum evidence** specified below for each stage of the project in order to pass the group award Graded Unit.

Higher National Group Award Graded Unit specification: Instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Project Stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
Stage 1 — Planning (Brief 15%) (Plan 5%)	<p>An action plan which includes:</p> <p>A brief, outlining the proposed investigation of an issue relating to a retail business in either the public, private or voluntary sector. The issue must be directly related to a topic or topics covered as part of the group award. The brief must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ The title of the investigation report ❑ The objective(s) of the investigation ❑ The rationale for choosing this issue for investigation (if choice has been allowed), with the anticipated benefits which will result for the organisation and/or its customers ❑ Identification of the sources of information which will be used for the investigation with an explanation of why each has been selected ❑ Explanation of how the investigation will be conducted with reasons for the choice of methods adopted ❑ Statement of the criteria which will be used to assess the implications of the issue and the reasons why each has been selected. The criteria chosen and the justification for each criterion should be directly related to a topic or topics covered as part of the group award. <p>A plan, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Timescale for conducting the investigation, including final and interim completion dates ❑ Identification of resources required to carry out investigation <p>Written evidence of both of the above must be submitted by a date specified by the Assessor. It may be supplemented by evidence provided orally by the candidate in a discussion with the assessor. If this is the case, a written or taped record of the points of the discussion should be provided.</p> <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Planning stage.</i></p>

Higher National Group Award Graded Unit specification: Instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Project Stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
Stage 2 — Developing (60%)	<p>An investigation report, which clearly demonstrates a solution to a problem, or suggests a new approach in response to the changing needs of the retail organisation and/or its customers. It should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Contents page <input type="checkbox"/> Description of the retail business upon which the investigation is based <input type="checkbox"/> Detailed explanation of the problem or area where a new approach is required in response to the changing needs of the retail organisation and/or its customers <input type="checkbox"/> The objective(s) to be achieved <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant theory – directly relating to the topic chosen for investigation from the mandatory and/or optional Unit(s) which make up the group award <input type="checkbox"/> Summary of research findings <input type="checkbox"/> Conclusions drawn from the investigation <input type="checkbox"/> Specific recommendations <input type="checkbox"/> A list of acknowledgements of sources and references <input type="checkbox"/> An appendix containing any additional relevant material (eg copy of questionnaire, plannograms, photographs etc.) <p>The report will also include evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Collection and collation of relevant data <input type="checkbox"/> Interpretation/analysis of research data <input type="checkbox"/> Effective use of research material <p>The report should be 2500 – 3500 words and be presented in a format suitable for a business report, which includes an introduction, findings, conclusions and recommendations. It may be supplemented by evidence provided orally by the candidate in a discussion with the assessor. If this is done, a written record of the main points of the discussion should be provided.</p> <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Developing stage</i></p>

Higher National Group Award Graded Unit specification: Instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Project Stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
Stage 3 — Evaluating (20%)	<p>An evaluation relating to the effectiveness of all parts of the investigation. It should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ A brief outline of the investigation ❑ Assessment of the extent to which the original objectives were achieved. This should include details of any modifications made or considered, with sound reasons given for the action taken ❑ In-depth evaluation of the effectiveness of the planning stage, highlighting any problems which arose, how they were dealt with and any modifications made to the original plan ❑ Commentary on the investigation activity and the effectiveness of research methods adopted, highlighting any difficulties experienced in gathering data and how these difficulties were resolved and suggesting any alternative strategies which could have been adopted to achieve the objectives ❑ The strengths and weaknesses of the main body of the report ❑ Description of any new knowledge or skills which have been learned and any areas of personal strength or weakness which have been identified during the investigation ❑ Reflection on the success of the investigation undertaken with recommendations for improvements on future occasions for each of the three stages. These recommendations should be substantiated by credible reasons <p>This evaluation stage could be assessed by either a written report or an oral presentation</p> <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Evaluating stage</i></p>