

Higher National Graded Unit Specification

General Information for Centres

This Graded Unit has been validated as part of the HNC in Learning and Development. Centres are required to develop the assessment instrument in accordance with this validated specification. Centres wishing to use another type of Graded Unit or assessment instrument are required to submit proposals detailing the justification for change for validation.

Graded Unit Title: HNC Learning and Development: Graded Unit 1

Graded Unit Code: DN7M 34

Type of Graded Unit: Project

Assessment Instrument: Project

Credit points and level: 1 HN Credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**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 Graded Unit is designed to provide evidence that the candidate has achieved the following principal aims of the HNC in Learning and Development:

- ◆ To prepare candidates for employment in at an appropriate level within the learning and development field by developing their skills
- ◆ To develop knowledge and understanding of the roles, responsibilities and processes involved in training and developing the human resource
- ◆ To develop a range of core and transferable skills essential within learning and development
- ◆ To enhance the personal effectiveness of candidates

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 Graded Unit:

- ◆ Learning and Development: Identifying Learning Needs
- ◆ Learning and Development: Planning, Design and Delivery of Learning
- ◆ Learning and Development: Supporting Learner Development
- ◆ Learning and Development: Evaluating Learning
- ◆ Evaluating Own Practice and Planning for Self Development

General Information for Centres (cont)

Core Skills: There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or a Core Skill component as part of this Graded Unit. However, there may be opportunities to develop the Core Skills of Problem Solving, Communication and Information Technology.

Assessment: This 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 Graded Unit that it covers.

Evidence should be generated and presented in Portfolio format to include-

- ◆ A rationale and plan of action with aims and objectives.
- ◆ An investigation report with conclusions, recommendations and appendices.
- ◆ Evidence showing a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the recommendations made.

The completed project report, covering the three areas detailed above, should be in the region of 3000-3500 words.

This graded unit should be undertaken on an individual basis and involves candidates undertaking the role of Consultant to an organisation and responding accordingly. Candidates will be encouraged to investigate the Learning and Development activities in an organisation they are familiar with and make recommendations for changes. It is expected that the investigation will concentrate on the organisation’s processes for identifying, meeting and evaluating learners’ needs. Candidates’ recommendations should be of benefit to the investigated organisation as well as providing an opportunity to reflect critically on their own practice. The recommendations should include a clear action plan and timescale for implementation. This assessment is not only concerned with applied practice but should provide the candidates with opportunities to demonstrate interpersonal and management skills and creative solutions to problems.

The organisation investigated should be a real organisation which the candidate is familiar with, ideally their employer. In exceptional circumstances a case study can be used but this is not recommended as a normal course of action.

An exemplar instrument of assessment for the group award Graded Unit has been produced to indicate the national standard of achievement required at SCQF level 7.

Administrative Information

Graded Unit Code: DN7M 34

Graded Unit Title: HNC Learning and Development: Graded Unit 1

Date of publication: August 2004

Source: SQA

Special Needs: This Graded Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special 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 Special Assessment Arrangements* (December 2001, AA0645/3).

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

Graded Unit Title: HNC Learning and Development: Graded Unit 1

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 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.

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

The assessment task must require the candidate to:

- ◆ identify a suitable situation where the learning and development provision can be analysed
- ◆ analyse the task and decide on a course of action for undertaking the project
- ◆ prepare for and conduct an investigation into the learning provision of the organisation
- ◆ consider and evaluate all possible factors e.g. budgetary, structural, cultural and any information that may impact upon recommendations
- ◆ present arguments and justify proposals for action
- ◆ reflect on what has been done, critically evaluate the approach taken to the project and draw conclusions for the future
- ◆ produce evidence to meet the requirements of this Graded Unit
- ◆ plan and organise work and carry it through to completion

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

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.

Grade A (70% - 100%)	Grade B (60% – 69%)	Grade C (50% - 59%)
<p>Is a seamless, coherent piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ has sufficient evidence for all three essential phases of the project ◆ demonstrates an insightful interpretation of the project brief ◆ is highly focused on the key learning and development tasks associated with the investigation ◆ effectively consolidates and integrates knowledge and skills from across the HNC ◆ is clear and well structured and the language used is accurate and technically correct ◆ is produced to a high standard 	<p>Is a well co-ordinated piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ has sufficient evidence for the three essential phases of the project, is produced to a good standard and is inter-related ◆ demonstrates an accurate interpretation of the project brief ◆ is well focused and relevant to the tasks associated with the project brief ◆ is clear and well structured throughout and language used is of a good standard in terms of level, accuracy and technical content ◆ satisfactorily consolidates and integrates knowledge and skills 	<p>Is a co-ordinated piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ has sufficient evidence for all three essential phases of the project ◆ demonstrates an acceptable interpretation of the project brief ◆ is focused and relevant to the tasks associated with the investigation ◆ consolidates and integrates knowledge and skills from across the HNC, but this may lack some continuity and consistency ◆ is satisfactorily structured and the language used is adequate ◆ is produced to an adequate standard

The project will be marked out of 200. Assessors will mark each stage of the project, taking into account the criteria outlined. 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.

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

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 Graded Unit.

Project Stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
Stage 1 — Planning 25%	An Action Plan which includes- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ a rationale and aims and objectives for the project ◆ analysis of project, identifying the factors influencing the project and how these inter-relate ◆ project plan with mile-stones showing consideration of resources and time available ◆ considerations of contingency plans ◆ proposed investigation methods ◆ rationale for choice of organisation ◆ expected outcomes from the project <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Planning stage.</i></p>
Stage 2 — Developing 50%	An investigation report including evidence of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ collection and collation of data ◆ interpretation and analysis of data ◆ summary of the findings and recommendations made The report should show: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A knowledge of the training cycle and its key stages ◆ The key activities undertaken by trainers ◆ An awareness of resource constraints affecting the organisation ◆ An awareness of current legislation which may impact on recommendations ◆ The updating of the action plan as required ◆ A discussion of the need for contingency action ◆ Clear recommendations for the changes to be adopted ◆ A rationale for the recommendations

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

<p>Stage 2 — Developing (cont)</p>	<p>The report should also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ a contents page ◆ a list of acknowledgements of sources and references ◆ appendices <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Developing stage</i></p>
<p>Stage 3 — Evaluating</p>	<p>An evaluation plan which should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ briefly outline how the investigation will be carried out ◆ identify the criteria on which the evaluation will be based <p>A self- evaluation report which should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ assess the candidate’s effectiveness in planning, research and working to time and resource constraints ◆ refer to any modifications to the approach during the course of the activity ◆ reflect upon knowledge and/or skills developed ◆ evaluate the effectiveness of the recommendations made <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Evaluating stage.</i></p>

Candidates with Additional Support Needs

This Graded Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. 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 Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs*, which is available on the SQA website www.sqa.org.uk.