

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Industrial Investigation

Unit code: DV79 35

Unit purpose: This Unit is about developing and applying the skills required to carry out and complete a systematic investigation into a defined area of an organisation's business activity. This is a Unit aimed at the candidate who wishes to carry out an empirical study in order to examine how business practise compares with concepts and theory.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- 1 Produce a proposal for an investigation which matches a given brief.
- 2 Conduct a systematic investigation which researches the areas specified in the proposal.
- 3 Produce a report on an industrial investigation.
- 4 Orally present the findings of an industrial investigation.

Credit points and level: 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.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, but it would be beneficial if the candidate had possession of HN Unit Marketing Research Theory (DG6M34) or similar qualifications or experience.

Core Skills: There may be opportunities to gather evidence towards Core Skills of Communication of SCQF level 6 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

Assessment: All assessments, apart from Outcome 4, will be open-book and undertaken in the candidates own time. Outcome 1 will require the submission of a detailed proposal of the investigation. Outcomes 2 and 3 will be integrated and will require the completion of a formal report based on the detailed plan of the investigation. Outcome 4 will require candidates to produce short summary materials and to make an oral presentation of the findings of the formal report.

An exemplar pack and marking guidelines have been produced to indicate the national standard of achievement required at SCQF level 8.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and evidence requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Produce a proposal for an investigation which matches a given brief

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Elements of the planning process
- ◆ General and specific aims of the investigation
- ◆ Research methodology
- ◆ Resource requirements and availability
- ◆ Constraints
- ◆ Scheduling activities

Evidence Requirements

The candidate will need evidence to demonstrate his/her knowledge and /or skills by showing that he/she can:

- ◆ identify a clear rationale for the investigation
- ◆ produce a clear set of aims for the proposed investigation
- ◆ outline a clear research methodology
- ◆ identify suitable resources
- ◆ identify constraints on the investigation
- ◆ produce a schedule of planned activities

Evidence will take the form of an outline plan of a minimum of 600 words. The evidence should be presented in correct report format using appropriate headings and subheadings.

Assessment guidelines

The assessment for this Outcome could be integrated with Outcomes 2, 3 and 4. The candidate, having produced a suitable proposal for an industrial investigation, is expected to follow it when researching the business organisation and the agreed areas of activity (Outcome 2). The materials gathered will form the basis of the written report (Outcome 3) and the oral presentation (Outcome 4).

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Industrial Investigation

Outcome 2

Conduct a systematic investigation which researches the areas specified in the proposal

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Secondary research tools
- ◆ Primary research tools
- ◆ Scheduling of activities

Evidence Requirements

The candidate will need evidence to demonstrate his/her knowledge and/or skills by showing that he/she can:

- ◆ Access a range of secondary sources, for a minimum of three items from the following list:
 - staff handbook
 - company literature
 - company magazine
 - company newspaper
 - trade articles
 - internet
- ◆ Select and justify the use of a minimum of three Primary research methods, from the following list:
 - observation
 - personal interviews
 - postal questionnaires
 - telephone interviews
 - focus groups
- ◆ Design suitable research instruments for each of the three research methods selected.
- ◆ Assemble evidence and material in a systematic way and to an agreed timetable.

Assessment will be open-book and undertaken in the candidate's own time.

Assessment guidelines

This Outcome could be assessed in conjunction with Outcome 3. The assessment is the first part of a written c. 3,000 word formal report.

Outcome 3

Produce a report on an industrial investigation

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Industrial Investigation

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Report writing formats
- ◆ Collation of materials
- ◆ Research findings
- ◆ Non-subjective writing

Evidence Requirements

The candidate will need evidence to demonstrate his/her knowledge and/or skills by showing that he/she can:

- ◆ select an appropriate writing format
- ◆ prepare a suitable introduction for the report
- ◆ communicate in writing the methodology and findings of the research
- ◆ present appropriate conclusions and recommendations
- ◆ include relevant materials or evidence in the form of appendices and bibliography

Assessment guidelines

Assessment could be open-book.

As previously stated, Outcome 3 may be assessed jointly with Outcome 2 and the evidence will be the second part of a written c. 3,000 word formal report.

Outcome 4

Orally present the findings of an industrial investigation

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Appropriate structures for a presentation
- ◆ Techniques for oral presentation
- ◆ Non-verbal communications
- ◆ Audio/visual aids

Evidence Requirements

The candidate will need evidence to demonstrate his/her knowledge and/or skills by showing that he/she can:

- ◆ Based on the formal report in Outcome 3, prepare suitably structured material for presentation to a specified audience. This structured material, of between 350–500 words, forms the basis of the required formal presentation.
- ◆ Demonstrate oral presentation skills appropriate for the situation.
- ◆ Perform an oral presentation of between 5-10 minutes which presents information accurately and avoids the use of inappropriate non-verbal communication.
- ◆ Employ suitable audio/visual aids.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Industrial Investigation

Assessment guidelines

Details of assessment are covered within Evidence Requirements section.

Administrative Information

Unit code:	DV79 35
Unit title:	Industrial Investigation
Superclass category:	AG
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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Industrial Investigation

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 80 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit is a mandatory Unit of the Group Award in HNC/D Advertising Public Relations and it may also form part of other Higher National programmes.

This unit is intended to enable candidates to carry out a systematic piece of research based on an empirical study which will allow them to examine and evaluate first hand marketing communication operations in a business context. Examples include the use of marketing communications by an organisation, such as the activities of Advertising, Sales Promotion, Public Relations, Direct Marketing and Creative Technology.

It is more appropriate if candidates base their investigation on an organisation with which they are familiar. It may be their place of employment, either part time or fulltime. Alternatively, it may be an organisation where they have a contact. It is important that candidates have access to staff and personnel so that they can undertake a proper investigation with interviews etc. The result should be more than a simple descriptive narrative.

The following notes give additional information on each Outcome:

Outcome 1

This is fully covered in the evidence requirements.

Outcome 2

Candidates should be encouraged to use a range of sources to build up evidence. It may be the case that the size and type of organisation being examined will dictate the type of sources that will be available. The following list is not prescriptive but is merely a suggestion of what might be available:

- ◆ secondary sources: staff handbook, company literature, magazines, newspapers, textbooks, journals, internet web pages
- ◆ primary research tools: observation, personal interviews, telephone interviews, postal questionnaires, surveys

Outcome 3

This is fully covered in the Evidence Requirements.

Outcome 4

This is fully covered in the Evidence Requirements.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Industrial Investigation

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

Outcome 1 requires the candidates to develop a proposal working to the guidelines laid down in the brief provided by the lecturer. It requires candidates to use an appropriate report format to produce a rationale with clear objectives which will give a focus to the investigation. It is expected that candidates will examine specific aspects of marketing and/or promotional activity as part of their research. Candidates are expected to outline their proposed research methodology, identifying resource implications and constraints. The proposal should be linked to a time schedule prepared by candidates which outlines when they expect particular activities to be completed.

For Outcome 2 candidates are expected to use a range of techniques covering both secondary and primary research to gather relevant material on the organisation's operations, consistent with the objectives stated in the proposal. A variety of secondary sources should be referred to. It is also expected that candidates will use a number of different approaches to gather original material, such as an observation exercise, personal interviews, and customer surveys. It is important that candidates are supported during this period and the lecturer should fulfil a mentoring role giving guidance and acting as a sounding board for candidates.

In Outcome 3 candidates will produce a report based on the materials gathered as part of the investigation.

In Outcome 4 candidates are required to produce a short written summary and to give a short oral presentation which outline the process they undertook as part of the investigation and the key points that they uncovered.

Completion of this Unit will give candidates a clear and practical understanding of the process involved in the completion of an investigation and the skills required to communicate the results both written and orally.

During the period of the Unit candidates will be expected to maintain a weekly logbook to record their activities for the week. This should allow candidates to monitor their progress against their original planned schedule.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

Although skills in Communication are not formally certificated, candidates will be expected to source, produce and present written materials to the professional level of the industry.

Skills in accessing, analysing and evaluating a range of sources which provide current and complex information on professional theories, issues and ideas will be developed, in order that candidates are able to read in depth and in detail current reference materials from a range of paper based and electronic sites. Analytical evaluation of information accessed would include a check on the currency, authority, accuracy, and balance of all information to be used.

The need to develop efficient systems of recording, coding and storing outline information for ease of reference, such as log books, diaries, and folders will be emphasised.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Industrial Investigation

Candidates will be supported and encouraged to express essential ideas, information accurately and coherently, to use a formal structure and recognised format, and to check language, spelling, punctuation and syntax for accuracy. Presentation of the report will be to a standard acceptable in industry.

Open learning

This Unit could be delivered by distance learning. However it would require planning by the centre to ensure that the candidate received adequate support and that arrangements were made to ensure frequent contact between the candidate and the centre with regard to Outcome 2 and 3. It would require planning by the centre to ensure that Outcome 4 could be completed in conditions suitable to assess the candidate.

For further information and advice, please see *Assessment and Quality Assurance for Open and Distance Learning* (SQA, February 2001 — publication code A1030).

Candidates with additional support needs

This 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 alternative Outcomes for Units. 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**.

General information for candidates

Unit title: Industrial Investigation

This Unit lets you plan, organise and carry out a study into a particular aspect of an organisation's activity. It allows you use a range of research techniques whilst carrying out the investigation, including desk research, observation, and personal interviews.

Your industrial investigation takes the form of a project which will be the basis for the assessment. You are expected to select an organisation and a suitable topic to examine. With the agreement of the lecturer, you will decide the purpose and objectives for your investigation. You will then gather relevant evidence and material which can be critically analysed and evaluated. You would be expected to identify various aspects of activity and compare it to current theory and practice.

Outcome 1 requires you to prepare an outline proposal for your investigation. In Outcome 2, you will carry out a systematic investigation and research the areas specified in the proposal and produce material for the first part of a formal written report. Outcome 3 requires you to produce the second part of the formal report in which you outline how you carried out your investigation, an analysis of the evidence you have gathered and relevant conclusions and recommendations.

In Outcome 4, you are required to produce a short summary of the report and to give a short oral presentation which outlines to the audience how you carried out your investigation and the key points and evidence you uncovered.