



Higher National Unit specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Information Technology: Legislation and Codes of Practice

Unit code: DX43 35

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to provide candidates with knowledge and understanding of the legislation and codes of practice operating within the Information Technology industry.

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

- 1 Describe the legislation that applies to the Information Technology profession.
- 2 Describe the main codes of practice that apply within the Information Technology industry.

Credit points and level: 1 HN Credit at SCQF level 8: (8 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 the Unit will be at the discretion of the centre, however, it is recommended that candidates should have previous experience of studying computing at Higher National level. Although differing programmes of study will be sufficient to prepare candidates for this Unit it is recommended that they may have completed the HN Units DH37 34 *Information Technology: Information Systems and Services*, DF6F 34 *e-commerce: Introduction*, DV6H 34 *e-marketing* and DV6J 34 *Functional Areas of Business*. Candidates should have an understanding of the application of information technology in organisations gained either through previous study or through work experience.

Core Skills: There are no opportunities to develop Core Skills in this Unit.

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: Based on a specific business scenario, Outcome 1 will be assessed by a series of extended response questions to be completed within the specified time with the assessment will be conducted under open-book conditions. The evidence of this Outcome will be collected in the response to a representative set of five extended response questions each approximately completed in 150 words. Centres can cover five individual legislation items using single questions per item or may elect to cover five legislation items using two questions. This assessment instrument must change and sample different legislation on **each** assessment occasion.

General information for centres (cont)

Outcome 2 will be assessed by a written report testing all of the Knowledge and Skills carried out in open-book conditions. Assessors must assure themselves of the authenticity of each candidate's submission. A candidate is encouraged to use the Internet in any research etc. However, the evidence produced **must** be the candidate's own written words.

Some of the assessment may be produced using e-assessment. This may take the form of e-testing (for knowledge and understanding and/or e-portfolios (for practical abilities)). There is no requirement to seek prior approval if you wish to use e-assessment for either of these purposes so long as the normal standards for validity and reliability are observed. Please see the following SQA publications for further information on e-assessment:

- ◆ *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education* (March 2003)
- ◆ *Assessment & Quality Assurance in Open & Distance Learning* (February 2001)

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

Describe the legislation that applies to the Information Technology profession

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Computer Misuse Act 1990
- ◆ Consumer Protection Act 1987
- ◆ Data Protection Act 1998
- ◆ Disability Discrimination 1995
- ◆ EC Directives on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)
- ◆ Freedom of Information Act 2002
- ◆ Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- ◆ Copyright, Designs and Patent Act 1988
- ◆ Protection of the Environment (Environmental Information Regulations 2005)
- ◆ Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
- ◆ The Telecommunications Regulations 2000 (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications)

Evidence Requirements

To achieve the Evidence Requirements for this Outcome the candidate is required to submit evidence to show that he/she can, with reference to a specific business scenario, provide an accurate and clear explanation of at least five pieces of legislation from the above list. Evidence of this Outcome will be collected in the response to a representative set of five extended response questions each approximately completed in 150 words. Centres can cover five individual legislation items using single questions per item or may elect to cover five legislation items using two questions.

The questions **must** be sampled from the bullet points and changed on **each** assessment occasion from the knowledge and/or skill bullet points listed above.

The assessment is open-book and must be conducted under supervised conditions and completed within two hours. Assessors must assure themselves of the authenticity of each candidate's submission. A candidate is encouraged to use the Internet in any research, etc, however, the evidence produced **must** be the candidate's own written words.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Information Technology: Legislation and Codes of Practice

Outcome 2

Describe the main codes of practice that apply within the Information Technology industry

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Main professional institutions within the Information Technology industry
- ◆ Roles of professional institutions within Information Technology
- ◆ Areas of influence of professional institutions within the Information Technology industry
- ◆ Structure of the Information Technology profession

Evidence Requirements

Evidence for the knowledge and/or skills in this Outcome will cover all of the Knowledge and Skills bullet points. The evidence presented for this assessment will be in the form of a report of approximately 1,000 words which **may** be based on a project, case study or scenario.

The candidate's evidence can be judged to be satisfactory where the evidence provided has covered **all** of the Knowledge and/or Skills requirements and included information linked to **at least four** Professional Institutions.

Assessors must assure themselves of the authenticity of each candidate's submission. A candidate is encouraged to use the Internet in any research, etc, however, the evidence produced **must** be the candidate's own written words.

Assessment guidelines

Examples of institutions are:

- ◆ Association of Computer Professionals
- ◆ British Computer Society
- ◆ Institute for Management of Information Systems
- ◆ Institute of Electrical Engineers
- ◆ Institute of IT Training
- ◆ Institution of Analysts and Programmers

Administrative Information

Unit code:	DX43 35
Unit title:	Information Technology: Legislation and Codes of Practice
Superclass category:	CY
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History of Changes:

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Outcome 1 assessment changed to five extended response questions of 150 words over a two hour period.	24/04/09
03	Error on Page 1 amended. Closed-book changed to open-book to match info. under Outcome 1.	06/10/10

Source: SQA

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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Information Technology: Legislation and Codes of Practice

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 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit is intended to provide candidates with the knowledge they will require in order to function professionally in the Information Technology environment. In the current work place, it is necessary that the Information Technology professional can understand the business world in which they operate. Therefore, this Unit concentrates on:

- ◆ Legislation affecting organisations which use Information Technology and employs Information Technology specialists
- ◆ Professional Codes of Conduct, their ethics and limitations

Although the Unit is expressed in generic terms, whenever possible, it should be related to organisations, institutions, companies and situations that are familiar to candidates.

There are two main areas of study:

1 Legislation

- ◆ Computer Misuse Act 1990
(http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1990/Ukpga_19900018_en_1.htm)
- ◆ Consumer Protection Act 1987
(http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si1987/Uksi_19871680_en_1.htm)
- ◆ Data Protection Act 1998
(<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts1998/19980029.htm>)
- ◆ Disability Discrimination 1995
(<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1995/1995050.htm>)
- ◆ EC Directives on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)
(<http://www.dti.gov.uk/sustainability/weee/>)
- ◆ Freedom of Information Act 2002
(<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2002/20020013.htm>)
- ◆ Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
(<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2001/20012127.htm>)
- ◆ Copyright, Designs and Patent Act 1988
(http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1988/Ukpga_19880048_en_1.htm)
- ◆ Protection of the Environment (Environmental Information Regulations 2005)
(<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2004/20043391.htm>)
- ◆ Regulation of Investigatory Powers 2000
(<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2000/20000023.htm>)
- ◆ The Telecommunications Regulations 2000 (Lawful Business practice, Interception of Communications)
(<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2000/20002699.htm>)

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Information Technology: Legislation and Codes of Practice

The effects of specific legislation on organisations, employees and individuals and the implications of non-compliance. Some pieces of legislation will impact more on certain job functions than upon others.

2 Professional Institutions

- ◆ British Computer Society
(<http://www.bcs.org/>)
- ◆ Institute for Management of Information Systems
(<http://www.imis.org.uk/>)
- ◆ Institute of Electrical Engineers
(<http://www.theiet.org/>)
- ◆ Institute of IT Training
(<http://www.iitt.org.uk/>)
- ◆ Institution of Analysts and Programmers
(<http://www.iap.org.uk/>)

The professional codes applicable to the Information Technology profession including the strengths and weaknesses of these codes.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This Unit can be delivered using examples of organisations familiar to candidates. Wherever possible, use should be made of the candidates' own experiences of organisations, including school and college, and those which they come into contact with as customers. They can also research organisations using the internet and other sources such as business and trade magazines. In this way, the Unit can be made practical. Candidates can be made aware that they themselves are members of, or potential members of, organisations. In this way they can become aware that they are, or will be, part of the situations which they are studying.

Candidates should be introduced to the legislation and codes of practice that apply to the Information Technology profession and industry. At this level, candidates should have studied the legislation and the codes of practice in which to base their explanations. They should also recognise that there are often several alternative ways to interpret the implication of any legislation.

Assessment, based on a scenario (or a series of smaller case studies) of a hypothetical or an actual organisation gives considerable benefits. A candidate who has access to a suitable organisation, perhaps as a current or former employee, could base her/his work on that organisation. In principle, it would be possible for candidates to research a suitable organisation of their choice. Another option is to build links with an appropriate organisation or organisations, something which several Colleges have successfully achieved. These connections often involve one or more visits to the organisation where the candidates participate in activities and exercises which enable them to gather information required for a report. Where links are well-established, members of the organisation can be briefed beforehand on the issues about which candidates are seeking information. For this Unit, it may be possible for example to hear presentations on each of our functional areas which could be accompanied by a question and answer session.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There are no Core Skills embedded in this Unit. However, it does offer opportunities for candidates to gather evidence which could help them demonstrate achievement for the following Core Skills. The following table gives further information on the Core Skills to which the Unit may contribute and on the opportunities which the Unit provides for Core Skills development.

Core Skill	SCQF Level	Opportunities for development
Communication	Level 6	Both Outcomes, and the Evidence Requirements associated with them, can contribute to aspects of this Core Skill. The Core Skill could be developed without formal certification.
Written Communication (Reading)	Level 6	Candidates taking this Unit are expected to read and understand complex written information — the general skill of this component. They should identify and summarise significant legislation. This information is conventionally available in textbook and similar sources which involve complex written information. Candidates are also expected to evaluate the effectiveness of this information in terms of how well it meets the purpose for which they require it. Consequently, candidates could demonstrate, through formative and summative assessment, that they have achieved this Core Skill component. They may be required during their study for the Unit to prepare notes from the internet for example. The final summative report may include sections based on summaries of material obtained from reading complex written information.
Written Communication (Writing)	Level 6	Candidates can meet the Evidence Requirements for both Outcomes by producing a report. By doing this, they could provide evidence for the general skill of this component which is ‘Produce well-structured written communication on complex topics’. The report could allow candidates to demonstrate that they can meet all the specific skills associated with this general skill. For example, a good report would present how codes of practice affect the information technology areas of business in a logical and effective order as well as providing suitable supporting detail. It would also have a structure which took account of the purpose of the report and the audience and linked major and minor points in ways which assisted the clarity of the report and the impact of the writing. The report would use a suitable structure, format and layout which employs effective conventions to achieve its purpose. Spelling and punctuation would be accurate.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Problem Solving	Level 6	Both Outcomes, and the Evidence Requirements associated with them, can contribute to the critical thinking component of this Core Skill as explained below.
Critical Thinking	Level 6	The general skill for this component is ‘Analyse a complex situation or issue’. The summative assessment requires that candidates apply relevant concepts and approaches to explain what is taking place in a particular organisation. Candidates may also undertake formative assessment to help them prepare for the final assessment. Applying the legislation effectively to a given scenario, or a series of smaller case studies, gives candidates the opportunity to demonstrate this Core Skill component. For example, this can involve the identification of the factors involved in the organisational situation and an assessment of their relevance to particular legislation. It can also include a justification of why the concept or approach is a relevant way to explain the particular situation faced by the organisation. Candidates could be encouraged to adopt this approach to their assessment to aid the development of this Core Skill. It is possible also that this could yield evidence which candidates could use to demonstrate their achievement of this Core Skill component.

Open learning

If this Unit is delivered by open or distance learning methods, additional planning and resources may be required for candidate support, assessment and quality assurance.

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website

www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

General information for candidates

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This Unit is designed to help you to recognise the main legislative issues affecting the Information Technology professional. As well as being in possession of the technical knowledge to perform the tasks detailed in a particular work environment, an Information Technology professional should understand how the law impacts on that environment. This Unit will give you an appreciation of a number of areas that organisations and the Information Technology professional should take cognisance of in the workplace.

In Outcome 1 you will be introduced to a number of current pieces of legislation appropriate to the Information Technology profession covering:

- ◆ Computer Misuse Act 1990
- ◆ Consumer Protection Act 1987
- ◆ Data Protection Act 1998
- ◆ Disability Discrimination 1995
- ◆ EC Directives on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)
- ◆ Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- ◆ Copyright, Designs and Patent Act 1988
- ◆ Protection of the Environment (Environmental Information Regulations 2005)
- ◆ Freedom of Information Act 2002
- ◆ Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
- ◆ The Telecommunications Regulations 2000 (Lawful Business Practice), (Interception of Communications)

You will be expected to undertake a series of extended response questions covering a number of the legislations identified in the above list.

In Outcome 2 you will produce evidence in the form of a report describing the main codes of practice that apply within the Information Technology industry from different institutions. Example of institutions would be:

- ◆ Association of Computer Professionals
- ◆ British Computer Society
- ◆ Institute for Management of Information Systems
- ◆ Institute of Electrical Engineers
- ◆ Institute of IT Training
- ◆ Institute of Analysts and Programmers