

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: European Union: An Introduction

Unit code: F1A2 34

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to introduce the candidate to the central features of the European Union (EU), its origins, principal institutions and their inter-relationship. On completion of the Unit candidates should be able to analyse the impact EU laws have on Member States and citizens.

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

- 1 Explain the origins and subsequent development of the European Union.
- 2 Explain the roles of the principal institutions of the EU.
- 3 Evaluate the impact of European laws on Member States and European citizens.

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.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. However candidates would normally be expected to have Communication Skills at SCQF level 6 or equivalent.

Core Skills: There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of Written Communication and Information Technology at 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.

General information for centres (cont)

Assessment: Outcome 1 may be assessed with Outcome 2 or if the assessor prefers two separate assessments may be used. The assessments could consist of a series of restricted response questions assessed using open-book conditions, under supervised conditions, with sampling of knowledge and skills. A combined assessment event could last approximately 1.5 hours. If two assessments are used each should last approximately 45 minutes.

The assessment Outcome 3 could take the form of a case study followed by a number of questions. This may be completed as a home based assessment where candidates will undertake some research and incorporate the results into their answers. Candidate's final submission could take the form of a report, of approximately 1,200 words.

Centres will have discretion in designing assessments so that they can assess outcomes individually or combine outcomes where they consider it appropriate.

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

Explain the origins and subsequent development of the European Union (EU)

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Factors influencing EU creation
- ◆ Founding treaties
- ◆ Current treaties and developments
- ◆ Enlargement of the EU
- ◆ Political and economic union

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ explain the main factors influencing the creation of the EU
- ◆ explain the principal aims of the founding treaties that created the EU
- ◆ explain the impact of a current treaty on EU members or EU progress towards a new treaty
- ◆ evaluate the progress of the EU towards political and economic union

Assessment guidelines

Outcome 1 may be assessed with Outcome 2. Alternatively, Outcomes 1 may be assessed as a separate assessment event.

The assessment event(s) could consist of a series of restricted response questions assessed in open-book conditions, under supervised conditions, and covering all the areas of knowledge and skills. A combined assessment event could last approximately 1.5 hours. If two assessment events are used each should last approximately 45 minutes.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: European Union: An Introduction

Outcome 2

Explain the roles of the principal institutions of the EU

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Council of Ministers
- ◆ European Parliament
- ◆ European Commission
- ◆ European Court of Justice
- ◆ Court of Auditors
- ◆ Making EU law

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ explain the primary role of two EU institutions

Candidates will explain the role of two EU institutions from the following:

- ◆ Council of Ministers
- ◆ European Parliament
- ◆ European Commission
- ◆ European Court of Justice
- ◆ Court of Auditors
- ◆ explain the relationship between the European Commission, Council of Ministers and European Parliament in the making of laws
- ◆ evaluate the role of the European Court of Justice in the making of laws

The assessment must be conducted under supervised conditions. Where sampling is used a different sample should be used in a reassessment event.

Assessment guidelines

Outcome 1 may be with Outcome 2. Alternatively, Outcomes 2 may be assessed as a separate assessment event.

The assessment event(s) could consist of a series of restricted response questions assessed in open-book conditions, under supervised conditions, and covering all the areas of knowledge and skills. A combined assessment event could last approximately 1.5 hours. If two assessment events are used each should last approximately 45 minutes.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: European Union: An Introduction

Outcome 3

Evaluate the impact of European laws on Member States and European citizens

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Treaty articles
- ◆ Regulations
- ◆ Directives
- ◆ Supremacy of EU law
- ◆ Remedies available to EU citizens

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ explain the distinction between treaty articles, regulations and directives
- ◆ evaluate the impact that treaty articles, regulation and directives and the on the shaping of EU law
- ◆ explain principle of supremacy of European law over domestic law
- ◆ evaluate the remedies available to EU citizens where EU law has been breached

The evidence produced by candidates must use examples/reported cases in the responses given.

Assessment guidelines

It is recommended that the assessment for Outcome 3 could take the form of a case study followed by a number of questions covering all areas of the knowledge and skills. This could be completed as a home based assessment where candidates can undertake some research and incorporate the results into their answers. Candidates should be encouraged to use examples/case law in their responses to the questions set. The final submission could take the form of a report, of approximately 1,200 words, where candidates are asked to explain the law and offer legal advice in relation to how different European laws will affect Member States and individuals.

Administrative Information

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| Unit code: | F1A2 34 |
| Unit title: | European Union: An Introduction |
| Superclass category: | EA |
| Original date of publication: | March 2007 |
| Version: | 02 |

History of Changes:

| Version | Description of change | Date |
|---------|--|----------|
| 02 | Assessment guidelines amended to allow centres greater discretion in designing assessments. Wording revised relating to guidance for candidates with additional support needs. | 20/07/10 |
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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: European Union: An Introduction

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

European Union, its principal institutions and the impact EU laws have on Member States and citizens.

This Unit is intended to be an introduction to the reasons for, the functioning and impact of the European Union on the law and therefore detailed analysis of all Treaties to date is not required. Given the number of Treaties now in force, teaching should focus on an overview of the main issues raised by each Treaty.

The suggested allocation of teaching time when delivering this Unit is as follows:

Outcome 1 — 30%

Outcome 2 — 40%

Outcome 3 — 30%

Outcome 1 should cover the reasons for the European Union and an introduction to the founding Treaties. Subsequent amendments must include the SINGLE EUROPEAN ACT 1986, THE MAASTRICHT TREATY, THE TREATY OF AMSTERDAM, THE TREATY OF NICE and reference must also be made to the DRAFT CONSTITUTIONAL TREATY. Enlargements of the Union must also be mentioned.

Detailed analysis of each is not required but teaching should emphasise the development of the European Union.

Outcome 2 should cover the five principal institutions of the EU. Teaching should examine and analyse the main functions of each of the institutions and their role in the law making process. Reference can be made to the ancillary institutions and their role in the law making process but the emphasis should be on the principal institutions and the important role they play in governing the European Union.

Outcome 3 should cover the principles of direct applicability, direct effect and supremacy. These should be applied to the various legal European laws which can be passed. The distinction between vertical and horizontal direct effect is important and must be mentioned in overview especially when applying to European Directives. Case law should be emphasised in this Outcome.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: European Union: An Introduction

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

Outcomes should be assessed in chronological order so that the candidate understands the reasons behind the Union, how this is governed and the impact this has on the law for Member States and individuals within the Union.

Outcome 1 may be assessed with Outcome 2. Alternatively, Outcomes 1 and 2 may be assessed as separate assessment events. The assessment event(s) could consist of a series of restricted response questions assessed in open-book conditions, under supervised conditions, and covering all the areas of knowledge and skills. A combined assessment event could last approximately 1.5 hours. If two assessment events are used each should last approximately 45 minutes.

Outcome 3 could take the form of a case study followed by a number of questions covering all areas of the knowledge and skills. This could be completed as a home based assessment where candidates can also undertake some research and incorporate the results into their answers. Candidates should be encouraged to use examples/case law in their responses to the questions set.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

Skills in accessing, analysing and evaluating sources which provide current and complex information on professional theories, issues and ideas should be developed, in order that candidates are able to read in depth and in detail current reference materials from a range of specialist paper based and electronic sites. Checklists to support analytical evaluation of information might include criteria to check on the currency, authority, accuracy and balance of all information accessed. The need to develop efficient systems of recording, coding and storing information for ease of reference should be emphasised. Candidates should develop skills in the use of Information Technology as they manage the practical aspects of research and present effective formal written reports to a professional standard.

Written Communication skills are not discretely assessed but candidates should be advised on the need to present analytical written responses which are technically accurate and reach coherent conclusions.

Open learning

Although this Unit could be delivered by distance learning, it would require a considerable degree of planning by the centre to ensure the sufficiency and authenticity of candidate evidence. Arrangements would have to be made to ensure that:

Outcome 2 takes place under supervised conditions.

Appropriate arrangements would need to be made for assessment and quality assurance. For information on this, please refer to the SQA document *Assessment and Quality Assurance of Open and Distance Learning* which is available on the SQA website: www.sqa.org.uk.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: European Union: An Introduction

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 alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (www.sqa.org.uk).

General information for candidates

Unit title: European Union: An Introduction

This Unit is designed to introduce you to the workings of the European Union. There are three Outcomes in this Unit and these will cover:

- ◆ the history and reasons behind the European Union
- ◆ the roles and functions of its primary institutions
- ◆ the impact European laws have on Member States and citizens of the EU

You will need to show that you understand the following:

Outcome 1

- ◆ Reasons for the founding of the European Union
- ◆ Aims of the founding Treaties
- ◆ Main provisions found in subsequent Treaties
- ◆ The enlargement process
- ◆ Movement from Community to Union
- ◆ Recent developments towards a constitution for the EU

Outcome 2

- ◆ Location, function and powers of the Council Ministers
- ◆ Location, function and powers of the European Commission
- ◆ Location, function and powers of the European Parliament
- ◆ Location, function and jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice
- ◆ Location, function and powers of the Court of Auditors
- ◆ The contribution of the main institutions in law making in the EU

Outcome 3

- ◆ Types of EU legislation
- ◆ Direct applicability
- ◆ Direct effect
- ◆ Supremacy of EU law
- ◆ Remedies for breach of EU law

Outcome 1 may be assessed with Outcome 2. However, you may be assessed by two separate assessments. The assessments could consist of a series of restricted response questions assessed in open-book conditions, under supervised conditions, and covering all the areas of knowledge and skills. A combined assessment event could last approximately 1.5 hours. If two assessment events are used each should last approximately 45 minutes.

The assessment Outcome 3 could take the form of a case study followed by a number of questions. This may be completed as a home based assessment where you will undertake some research and incorporate the results into your answers. Your final submission could take the form of a report, of approximately 1,200 words.