



## Higher National Unit Specification

### General information for centres

**Unit title:** Consumer Behaviour: Research and Applications

**Unit code:** DV77 35

**Unit purpose:** On completion of this Unit, the candidate should be able to understand the importance of consumer behaviour in the marketing process by considering the range of investigative methods available and how they are then used to analyse behaviour. It is intended for candidates who already have an appreciation of the relevant psychological and sociological theory and will allow them to use appropriate methods when considering these theories in practice.

On completion of the unit, the candidate should be able to:

- 1 Describe the steps in the consumer research process.
- 2 Analyse consumer behaviour.

**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 this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, but it would be beneficial if the candidate had possession of HN Unit Consumer Behaviour and the Marketing process (DG6L 34).

**Core Skills:** There are opportunities to gather evidence towards Core Skills of Problem Solving 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:** In order to achieve this Unit, candidates must provide sufficient evidence that they have satisfied the minimum evidence requirements for each Outcome:

The assessment for this Unit should take a holistic approach with both Outcomes being assessed together. On completion, the candidate will have produced a piece of research on a selected area of consumer behaviour and will use the knowledge and skills obtained in Outcome 1 to undertake an investigation and analyse the results as required by Outcome 2.

The holistic approach will require candidates to produce a formal response (where in written format, suggested length of 1,500-2,000 words) that will allow the candidate to demonstrate that they have followed the stages in the research process as outlined in Outcome 1 and have applied this process to a suitable research topic in Outcome 2.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards**

**Unit title:** Consumer Behaviour: Research and Applications

**Unit code:** DV77 35

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 steps in the consumer research process

#### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- ◆ Definition of objectives of consumer research
- ◆ Collection and evaluation of secondary data
- ◆ Designing a primary research study
- ◆ Collecting primary data
- ◆ Analysis of data
- ◆ Preparation of report on findings

#### **Evidence Requirements**

See Evidence Requirements at Outcome 2.

#### **Assessment guidelines**

See Outcome 2.

### **Outcome 2**

Analyse consumer behaviour

#### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- ◆ Psychographic profiling
- ◆ Motivational techniques
- ◆ Perceptual dynamics

## Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

**Unit title:** Consumer Behaviour: Research and Applications

### Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can produce a report on consumer behaviour that covers:

- ◆ Identification of appropriate objectives, which are specific, measurable, agreed realistic, time and cost framed (SMART)
- ◆ Identification of **one** appropriate source of secondary data from the following:
  - internal sources
  - Government publications
  - periodicals and books
  - commercial data
- ◆ Design of a primary research study using **one** of the following methods:
  - qualitative
  - quantitative
- ◆ Collection of Primary Data using a minimum of **one** of the following methods:
  - depth interviews
  - focus groups
  - projective techniques
  - observational research methods
  - experimentation
  - surveys
- ◆ Compilation of a psychographic profile or lifestyle analysis, using **one** of the following approaches:
  - profile using the trait approach
  - lifestyle analysis using Activities, Interests and Opinions (A, I, O)
- ◆ A minimum of **one** of the following motivational techniques appropriate to the situation:
  - psychodrawing
  - role playing
  - magazine cutting
  - apperception tests

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

### **Unit title:** Consumer Behaviour: Research and Applications

The assessment for this Unit takes the form of a response (where in written format, of 1,500-2,000 words) on an investigation into consumer behaviour. This response should be structured to show that the candidate has followed the research process and methodology of Outcome 1, and applies these tools to a topic in Outcome 2. The response should therefore adhere to the following format:

- summary
- introduction
- research methodology
- conclusions
- recommendations
- appendices detailing information gathered

### **Assessment guidelines**

The holistic approach allows the candidate to demonstrate an understanding of the key areas of consumer behaviour (lifestyle, motivation, perception) by using the research process of Outcome 1 to analyse a chosen piece of consumer behaviour in Outcome 2. This ensures the candidate understands both the process and its relevance to current consumer behaviour.

## Administrative Information

**Unit code:** DV77 35

**Unit title:** Consumer Behaviour: Research and Applications

**Superclass category:** BA

**Date of publication:** August 2005

**Version:** 03 (November 2014)

### History of changes:

Version	Description of change	Date
03	Insertion of short guidance in Support Notes (in Guidance on the content and context) of this Unit re inclusion of the impact and application of digital media on consumer behaviour and marketing communications.	03/11/14
02	Removal of final bullet of Outcome 2 (page 4) regarding perceptual tests.	26/07/12

**Source:** SQA

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2005, 2012, 2014

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged.

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges have made to the development of Higher National qualifications.

Additional copies of this Unit specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. Please contact the Customer Contact Centre for further details, telephone 0845 279 1000.

## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes**

### **Unit title: Consumer Behaviour: Research and Applications**

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 an optional Unit within the Group Award in HNC/D Advertising and PR and it may also form part of other Higher National programmes. It is intended for candidates who wish to pursue a career in advertising, PR and the media and specifically for those candidates considering a career where an understanding of the behaviour of the consumer is crucial to a successful marketing communications campaign. Current practice in many major industries and their advertising/PR agencies is to place primary focus on the motivation of the consumer that will drive their communication campaign to meet its objectives. This Unit addresses this focus and allows candidates to appreciate the importance of understanding consumer behaviour, together with the process that allows this understanding to be expressed in ways that will allow effective marketing communications decisions to be made.

It will allow candidates to develop skills in researching and producing information that could be used as the starting point for an advertising or PR campaign.

It would be helpful, where appropriate, to ensure that candidates are made aware of the rapid growth and application of digital media and the impact that this has on effective marketing communications.

### **Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit**

The assessment for this Unit should take a holistic approach so that on completion, the candidate will have produced a piece of research on a selected area of consumer behaviour and will use the process demonstrated in Outcome 1 to allow them to carry out their investigation within the parameters of the topics which are the focus of Outcome 2. This assessment will take the form of a response (where in written format, of 1,500-2,000 words) and will be presented in a manner that will demonstrate that the candidate has followed the stages in the research process as outlined in Outcome 1 and has applied this process to a topic in Outcome 2 which will provide sufficient evidence to meet the knowledge/skills requirements of this Unit.

The format for the response should be strictly adhered to since this is industry practice and is outlined in Evidence Requirements.

Since this is a holistic assessment, candidates will first be shown examples of research in consumer behaviour. Many published examples exist and text books on consumer behaviour cover research, which highlights marketing opportunities as a result of investigations into consumer behaviour. Should the candidate be interested in cross cultural comparisons, then research from other countries could also be used as a learning tool.

Candidates should be introduced to the research process initially and guided through the individual stages by the tutor; this will allow them to understand the sequence of stages and how they can investigate consumer behaviour. At this point, candidates should be reminded that they will eventually be applying this sequence to a piece of chosen research from a topic in Outcome 2.

## Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

### Unit title: Consumer Behaviour: Research and Applications

Once candidates have been introduced to the topics in Outcome 2, they should be encouraged to consider the selection of a piece of consumer behaviour they could investigate. This can be instigated by looking at advertising material in the public domain, especially of a topical nature that may interest candidates, and they should consider a subject(s) for research among their peers, family or possibly from specific target markets should they choose to follow this path. The topics in Outcome 2 should be explored by the tutor with candidates in a way that will highlight the link between the topics and marketing communications material, such as advertising or direct mail or sales promotion (including digital marketing). For example, candidates could be encouraged to consider a current advertising campaign and establish the psychographic profile of the targeted consumers. Candidates may consider areas of perceptual dynamics as detailed in the Outcome that may be relevant to current advertising campaigns and products with which candidates are familiar. For example, a new product launch where candidates could be encouraged to consider the advertising campaign that has tied in with the launch and how consumer perception has been taken into consideration by the advertiser. The essence of this is that the knowledge and/or skills in Outcome 2 should be introduced to the candidate in a way that is relevant to the marketing communications material they see around them in their consumer environment.

To assess these knowledge and/or skills, candidates should, in agreement with the tutor, select a piece of consumer behaviour that they find interesting and then pursue an investigation of this behaviour using the research process as a framework and the topics in Outcome 2 as parameters for the area of investigation. For example, candidates could be encouraged to consider the product crossover phenomenon where brands such as Kit Kat move markets from biscuit to confectionery because of consumer perception. The candidate would then use the research process in Outcome 1 to plan their investigation and select the most appropriate method. They could, for example, run a focus group with selected members to test a proposal that changing the shape of the product re-positions the product in a different market due to consumer perception. Kit Kat have done this successfully by reducing them to miniature sizes, in effect moving the Kit Kat in to the mainstream confectionery market and thereby maintaining their superiority as the UK's number 1 biscuit/confectionery brand. Candidates will then produce a response on this which follows the conventional research process ie

- ◆ summary of results
- ◆ introduction
- ◆ research methodology
- ◆ analysis of findings
- ◆ conclusions
- ◆ recommendations
- ◆ appendices detailing information gathered

The candidate should be encouraged to think laterally.

## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)**

**Unit title:** Consumer Behaviour: Research and Applications

It is envisaged that the unit could be broken down as follows:

Outcome 1 — 30%

Outcome 2— 40%

Assessment — 30%

### ***Opportunities for developing Core Skills***

All elements of the Core Skill of Problem Solving, Planning and Organising, Critical Thinking and Reviewing and Evaluating, will be fully developed and enhanced in the Unit. Candidates undertake complex practical research using recognised techniques to analyse a selected aspect of consumer behaviour and to establish clear research objectives. Identifying and assessing the relevance of all factors impacting on consumer behaviour will involve a high level of critical thinking. Justifying and adopting effective research strategies which allow on-going opportunities for review and potential adjustment will assure the relevance of information collated. The formal and detailed report produced will include conclusions and recommendations resulting from the research process. Candidates may benefit from personal interviews with the tutor to reinforce analytical evaluative approaches to work.

### **Open learning**

If this Unit is delivered by open or flexible learning, additional resources and materials will be required for candidate support, assessment and quality assurance. For further information and advice please refer to the SQA document *Assessment and Quality assurance for Open and Distance Learning* (SQA, February 2001-publication code A1030)

### **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](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements)

## **General information for candidates**

### **Unit title: Consumer Behaviour: Research and Applications**

This Unit will build on your knowledge of psychological and sociological theory as applied to the marketing communications process, resulting in material which targets consumers through the media using conventional advertising and PR methods.

Advertising and PR is undertaken for a reason and establishing this reason lies at the very beginning of the marketing process. The study of consumer behaviour is crucial in underpinning an effective marketing communications campaign. The results of consumer behaviour studies are an important component of the whole marketing process as competition becomes even more intense.

Outcome 1 of this Unit introduces you to the standard research process used to collect information on consumer behaviour. You will be taken through this process, and given examples of methods that have been used to establish patterns of consumer behaviour that have been utilised as the basis for advertising campaigns.

In Outcome 2 you will be introduced to a series of topics that reflect the main areas of current investigation into consumer behaviour. For example, no advertising agency would pitch to a client without describing the psychographic profile of the consumer — this allows the client and agency to bring to life the intended target and to make use of it in the advertising campaign. You will be shown, among other topics, how to compile one of these profiles and be encouraged to relate it to current advertising campaigns.

Once you have considered these topics, you will then be asked to use the standard research process from Outcome 1 to carry out an investigation into a piece of consumer behaviour of your choice. This could be undertaken with other candidates, your family or your social circle and will allow you to apply what you have learned to a real situation.

Once you have carried out your investigation you will be asked to produce a response, following the conventional layout for this kind of research. This will be the only assessment for the Unit since what you have learned in both Outcomes will be assessed together in this response.