

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Contemporary Marketing Issues

Unit code: DV8G 35

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to provide candidates with the knowledge and understanding of the impact of the changing environment on organisational marketing activities.

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

- 1 Explain contemporary issues affecting the marketing environment.
- 2 Critically evaluate the impact of contemporary issues on the marketing function in organisations.

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 previously completed Principles of Marketing (DV8T 34) and Principles of Promotion (DV8V 34) or equivalent.

Core Skills: There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of Communication and Problem Solving at SCQF level 6 and Information Technology at SCQF level 5 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: In order to pass this Unit, candidates must provide sufficient evidence that they have satisfied the minimum Evidence Requirements for each Outcome. It is recommended that each Outcome for this Unit will be individually assessed.

To reflect the ethos of the Unit, the assessment may be undertaken by separate pieces of written work (reports and/or press articles), together with a presentation on one of these pieces of written work. This is designed to assess candidates' knowledge and ability to apply a range of research skills in contemporary marketing.

General information for centres (cont)

Outcome 1 may be assessed through a report, with supporting evidence based on either a case study or other piece of stimulus material. This allows candidates the opportunity to demonstrate evidence which indicates their understanding of the broad contemporary issues affecting organisations and marketing.

In assessing Outcome 2, candidates may be required to conduct independent research into a sampled contemporary issue. Evidence of their findings may be presented in the style of either short reports or press articles. In addition, it is recommended that candidates undertake a short presentation on one of these pieces of written evidence.

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 contemporary issues affecting the marketing environment

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Ethical issues
- ◆ Societal issues
- ◆ Environmental issues

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ one ethical issue and explain possible marketing implications
- ◆ one societal issue and explain possible marketing implications
- ◆ one environmental issue and explain possible marketing implications

Assessment guidelines

The emphasis is on the candidate's awareness and understanding of current contemporary issues, and the general implications these issues pose for the marketing profession. The assessment can be based on case materials, research or other stimulus material (eg newspaper articles) and can be in the form in a report, with suggested length of 1,500–2,000 words and will be completed under self direction out of the classroom. Candidates should be encouraged to select issues that cover a variety of different types of industry eg manufacturing, services, retailing, B2B, Not for profit, FMCG, etc.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Contemporary Marketing Issues

Outcome 2

Critically evaluate the impact of contemporary issues on the marketing function in organisations

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Impact of ethical issues on marketing activities
- ◆ Impact of societal influences on marketing activities
- ◆ Impact of environmental issues on marketing activities

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can critically evaluate the impact of:

- ◆ a current ethical issue on the marketing activities of an organisation
- ◆ a current societal issue on the marketing activities of an organisation
- ◆ an environmental issue on the marketing activities of an organisation

Assessment guidelines

This Outcome could be assessed by the candidate providing written evidence in the form of either short reports or press articles. In addition, it is recommended that a short presentation should be undertaken by the candidate on one of these pieces of written evidence.

The assessment may be completed under self direction out of the classroom.

Administrative Information

Unit code: DV8G 35

Unit title: Contemporary Marketing Issues

Superclass category: BA

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History of Changes:

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Insertion of short guidance in Support Notes (in Guidance on the content and context) of this Unit re inclusion of the impact of digital media on marketing communications and the need to integrate both digital and traditional marketing communication techniques.	05/11/14

Source: SQA

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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Contemporary Marketing Issues

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 HN Marketing Group Award. It may also form part of other Higher National Programmes and may be offered as an optional Unit for other awards.

It is recommended that, prior to undertaking this Unit, candidates already have an understanding of marketing and promotion. This could be evidenced by possession of the HN Units referred to on Page 1.

This Unit has been designed to introduce candidates to a range of emerging, topical and contentious issues within marketing and enable candidates to reflect on different social, cultural perspectives which underpin current marketing theory. Given the rapid growth of digital media, candidates should be made aware of its significant impact on marketing communications — and that its use is only likely to increase. New forms of digital marketing are emerging all the time so candidates should be made aware of and introduced to the benefits of different form of digital marketing. However, it is important to emphasise that there is a need for digital techniques to be integrated with traditional marketing communication techniques.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

It is envisaged that an integrated approach to teaching the Unit will be adopted whereby the candidates will appreciate the link between Outcome 1 and Outcome 2.

It is recommended that up to 60% of the Unit allocation is spent on Outcome 1 as it provides the knowledge and skills to aid the completion of Outcome 2.

A variety of teaching methods may be used, with the emphasis being on critical evaluation and vigorous discussion and debate. Guest speakers who have expertise and an interest in a particular contemporary issue in marketing would be beneficial.

There are many issues which could be explored, some examples are:-

Ethical Issues: consumer safety, exploitation of consumers and labour (including developing countries), Corporate Social Responsibility, advertising and promotion issues (sales promotion, advertising to children, unethical selling techniques).

Societal Issues: standards of behaviour expected by society (protection of consumer's rights, legal and voluntary regulation) consumer expectations (standard of living, consumer choice, health issues, and product performance, safety, availability), information disclosure, impact of changes in technology and digital communications, globalisation.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Contemporary Marketing Issues

Environmental Issues: protection of the planet's natural resources, recycling, pollution, global warming, animal welfare.

There are many secondary academic and professional references that can enhance this module. The Chartered Institute of Marketing (www.cim.co.uk) provides case studies and discussion topics, and What's new in Marketing (www.wnim.co.uk) are two useful sources.

Other sources include Harvard Business Review, European Journal of Marketing, and Journal of Marketing.

The case materials for Outcome 1 could be based on an actual organisation with which candidates are familiar, and can easily source additional information, eg British Airways, Walkers Crisps etc. where many of the contemporary issues are relevant and obvious.

Outcome 2 will bring together their knowledge from Outcome 1 and will test their skills of critical evaluation. Candidates are required to investigate three contemporary issues, their impact on individual organisations, and evaluate how these organisations have responded in terms of their marketing programmes and activities.

The assessment may take the form of short formal reports or press articles (500–1,000 words each), and it is recommended that candidates also undertake an oral presentation on one of these pieces of work. Thus demonstrating their ability to present and defend arguments in relation to a specific contemporary issue.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of Communication and Problem Solving at SCQF level 6 and Information Technology at SCQF level 5 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Skills in developing an effective search strategy for accessing and evaluating paper based and electronic sources of current complex information on professional considerations, issues and ideas will be developed and enhanced as the Unit is undertaken. Checklists to support analytical evaluation of information accessed could include criteria to ensure 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 should be emphasised. Candidates could be encouraged to develop skills in computerised record keeping and be made aware of the importance of saving materials and performing back ups.

The production of drafts of research reports will ensure assessor involvement at all stages of writing and support the development of skills in the effective evaluation and collating of relevant materials. Although communication skills are not formally assessed candidates will be expected to produce and present written/oral materials to standards acceptable in industry, to express essential ideas, information accurately and coherently, and to use a formal structure suited to purpose and readership. Language, spelling, punctuation and syntax should be accurate: the availability of suitable software packages to support accuracy and professional presentation of written reports could further enhance skills in the use of technology.

Candidates will be required as they undertake the Unit to analyse and seek solutions to a range of theoretical and practical problems and issues. Formative work in which they identify and consider the variables in situations, including all available resources, and analyse the significance of each before identifying and justifying an appropriate strategic approach will provide opportunities to develop problem solving skills to an advanced level. Evaluation which examines all stages of proposed solutions and their potential and actual impact will be on-going.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Contemporary Marketing Issues

Open learning

If this Unit is delivered by open or distance learning methods, additional resources will be required for candidate support, assessment and quality assurance. For further information and advice please refer to the SQA guide: *Assessment and Quality Assurance for Open and Distance Learning* (A1030, February 2001).

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. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Alternative Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs*, which is available on SQA's website: **www.sqa.org.uk**.

General information for candidates

Unit title: Contemporary Marketing Issues

This Unit has been designed to develop your marketing knowledge by analysing the ever changing marketing environment, and will cover a range of emerging topical and contentious issues.

Initially, you will examine contemporary marketing issues that affect organisations and the impact this has for marketing.

In addressing Outcome 1 you will need to consider a wide variety of issues such as societal influences, environmental issues, marketing ethics and the growing power of consumers. The assessment for Outcome 1 is likely to take the form of a written report. Outcome 1 also provides you with the underpinning knowledge needed to complete Outcome 2.

This is an ever changing environment and requires constant reference to organisations in the market place, so in Outcome 2 you will carry out research into a number of different contemporary issues and evaluate how these have influenced the marketing activities of organisations. This may be assessed by written reports or press articles, together with an oral presentation on one of these pieces of written work. This is a challenging assessment that asks you to critically evaluate the impact of specific contemporary issues on organisations.