Higher National Unit specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Web Development: Website Optimisation

Unit code: F6C5 35

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to enable candidates to gain the knowledge and skills required to implement best practice search engine optimisation, web copywriting and information architecture techniques during website design. The candidate will evaluate existing websites and apply the knowledge gained when redesigning sites using information architecture principles, search engine optimisation (SEO) techniques and effective web copy to achieve a website that is search engine friendly, engages with the audience and satisifies accessibility.

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

1   Evaluate existing websites in relation to search engine optimisation (SEO), information architecture and web copywriting quality.
2   Apply search engine optimisation (SEO) techniques to a website.
3   Implement information architecture strategies in a website.
4   Apply recognised web copywriting techniques to a website.

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 will be at the discretion of the centre and the following recommendations are for guidance only. Candidates should have a knowledge of web development and an understanding of usability and interface design principles. This may be achieved by completeing the HN Units F1YY 34 *Web Development: Essential Content*, F1VV 34 *User Interface Design* and F6BV 35 *Human Computer Interface*.

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

General information for centres (cont)

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: Candidates are encouraged to use the Internet in any research. However, the evidence produced must be the candidate's own words. Assessors should assure themselves of the authenticity of candidate's evidence.

Written and/or oral recorded, performance and product evidence is required which demonstrates that the candidate has achieved the requirements of all of the Outcomes and that the candidate has appropriate knowledge and skills of the content of this Unit.

This Unit should be assessed by three separate assessment tasks detailed as follows:

♦ Outcome 1 is open book and should take the form of a case study where the candidate evaluates two different websites and reports on the use of search engine optimisation, information architecture and web copywriting techniques.

♦ Outcome 2 is an open-book assessment and should take the form of a practical assessment carried out under supervised conditions and is designed to demonstrate the candidate's knowledge and/or skills in applying search engine optimisation techniques to a website

♦ Outcome 3 is an open-book assessment and should take the form of a practical assessment carried out under supervised conditions and is designed to demonstrate the candidate's knowledge and/or skills in implementing information architecture strategies in a website.

♦ Outcome 4 is an open-book assessment and should take the form of a practical assessment carried out under supervised conditions and is designed to demonstrate the candidate's knowledge and/or skills in applying effective web copywriting to a website.

There is an opportunity to take a more holistic approach to assessment by integrating Outcomes 2, 3 and 4. Assessors should ensure themselves of the authenticity of the candidate's evidence.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Web Development: Website Optimisation

Unit code: F6C5 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

Evaluate existing websites in relation to search engine optimisation (SEO), information architecture and web copywriting quality

Knowledge and/or Skills

♦   Search Engines
♦   Off Page SEO techniques
♦   On Page SEO techniques
♦   Site Architecture
♦   Site Hierarchy
♦   Internal Navigation
♦   Web copywriting

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can understand how search engines work, recognise and explain SEO techniques, recognise and explain the use of information architecture strategies and recognise and report on web copywriting quality.

A candidate's response can be judged to be satisfactory where the evidence provided shows the candidate is able to:

♦   explain how search engines work
♦   explain off-page SEO techniques
♦   explain site architecture
♦   identify and evaluate On page SEO techniques used on existing websites
♦   identify and evaluate Information Architecture strategies used on existing websites
♦   identify and evaluate the effectiveness of web copywriting used on existing websites

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Web Development: Website Optimisation

Assessment Guidelines

The candidate should be supplied with a minimum of two existing websites for evaluation purposes. The websites should be considerably different in terms of the evaluation criteria. The candidate should be able to recognise a minimum of:

♦ four search engine optimisation (SEO) techniques
♦ four information architecture techniques
♦ two web copywriting techniques

The evidence could take the form of a Log or Blog.

Outcome 2

Apply search engine optimisation (SEO) techniques to a website

Knowledge and/or Skills

♦ Sitemap
♦ Keywords in URLs
♦ Relevant Title Tags
♦ Relevant Header Tags
♦ Descriptive Metadata
♦ Relevant Keywords

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can apply current SEO techniques to a website.

A candidates' response can be judged to be satisfactory where the evidence provided shows the candidate is able to successfully:

♦ apply a minimum of five On-page SEO techniques to a website
♦ log/blog the SEO techniques applied

Assessment Guidelines

See Outcome 4.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Web Development: Website Optimisation

Outcome 3

Implement information architecture strategies in a website

Knowledge and/or Skills

♦ Site Hierarchy
♦ Categories and Sections
♦ Pages
♦ Internal linking
♦ Basic linking, deep linking, anchor text
♦ Grouped site information

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can apply current information architecture strategies to a website.

A candidates' response can be judged to be satisfactory where the evidence provided shows the candidate is able to successfully:

♦ implement a minimum of four information architecture strategies to a website
♦ log/blog the strategies implemented

Assessment Guidelines

See Outcome 4.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Web Development: Website Optimisation

Outcome 4

Apply recognised web copywriting techniques to a website

Knowledge and/or skills

♦ User consideration
♦ Home page
♦ Page copy
♦ Deep content
♦ Keywords
♦ Metadata
♦ Accessibility
♦ Active Voice
♦ Inverted Pyramid
♦ Content order
♦ Clear headlines and headings

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can apply effective web copywriting techniques to a website.

A candidates' response can be judged to be satisfactory where the evidence provided shows the candidate is able to successfully:

♦ apply a minimum of six web copywriting techniques to a website
♦ log/blog the techniques used

The holistic assessment that integrates assessments for Outcomes 2, 3, and 4 could take the form of a web redesign case study. The assessment should be carried out over an extended period.

The candidate should be provided with a website which is sufficient enough to allow the candidate to apply SEO techniques, information architecture strategies and web copywriting techniques and covers all Evidence Requirements for Outcomes 2, 3 and 4.

The website should be a minimum of five pages in size and include text and images.

Assessment Guidelines

Further information can be found in the support notes.

Administrative Information

Unit code: F6C5 35

Unit title: Web Development: Website Optimisation

Superclass category: CB

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Version	Description of change	Date

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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Web Development: Website Optimisation

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 has been written in order to allow candidates to develop knowledge, understanding and skills designing websites that are search engine friendly, engage with the audience and satisfy accessibility.

The Unit is at SCQF level 8 and the Unit has been developed as part of HND Interactive Media award. However this does not preclude the use of this Unit in other awards where it is appropriate.

Outcome 1 is designed to give the candidates knowledge and skills of search engine optimisation (SEO), information architecture and web copywriting quality techniques by evaluating existing websites.

The following information is current at the time of writing. The list is not definitive. The list that is deemed important material to cover in this Outcome is:

(a) Search Engines — spidering/crawling, indexing, search engine software, query software, bots, algorithms, page rank, redirects, search engine marketing, paid-search (PPC).
(b) Off-page SEO techniques or Off-site techniques — keyword research, links from high quality publisher sites, one-way inbound links, relevant keywords near inbound links, common off-page SEO mistakes and spamming tactics.
(c) On-page SEO techniques keyword selection, title tags, meta tags, ALT tags, H1 tags, url structure, internal linking, content, keyword density, sitemaps, usability, common on-page SEO mistakes and spamming tactics.
(d) Site architecture and site hierarchy– domains, sections, categories, pages and media, the framework of the site and how it fits together, navigation, top level, second level, deep levels. Pages — standards compliant, accessibility, clean code, metadata, external code files, Strong Internal linking/navigation, site information grouped.
(e) Internal Navigation — basic linking, deep linking, anchor text.
(f) Web copywriting — user consideration, home page, page copy, deep content, keywords, metadata, accessibility, active voice, inverted pyramid, content order, clear headlines and headings.

Outcomes 2, 3 and 4 are designed so that the candidate can recommend and implement techniques and strategies for search engine optimisation, information architecture and web copywriting to existing websites.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Web Development: Website Optimisation

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

The purpose of this Unit is to develop the candidates' knowledge and skills so that they can implement optimisation techniques to a website and produce a website that is search engine friendly, engages with the audience and satisfies accessibility within the 40 hours of the Unit.

In the delivery, candidates should have access to the internet and web development software.

During the holistic project that covers the assessment for Outcomes 2, 3, and 4 the candidate must implement and log or blog the techniques and strategies they have applied to a website.

A suggested delivery sequence to this Unit would be the following:

♦   Outcome 1 should be taught and assessed first so the candidate has the underpinning knowledge required for the remainder of the Unit. The candidate has been asked to evaluate websites for on-page SEO techniques, information architecture and web copywriting quality. However they must also be able to explain how a search engine works, and how to implement off-page or off-site SEO techniques and what site architecture is.

♦   Outcomes 2, 3 and 4 is putting into practice the knowledge and skills gained in Outcome 1 and these Outcomes can be delivered in any sequence.

Outcome 1 assessment may be issued early on in the delivery of the Unit. The assessment should be conducted under open-book conditions.

Outcomes 2, 3, and 4 may be assessed using a holistic assessment in the form of a case study that integrates each of these Outcomes. This assessment requires that the candidate be given a website. This website should be sufficient enough to allow the candidate to apply SEO techniques, information architecture strategies and web copywriting techniques and covers all Evidence Requirements for Outcomes 2, 3 and 4.

The website should be a minimum of five pages in size and include text and images.

The website could be one that the candidate has produced whilst studying another Unit within the HND Interactive Media framework as long as it satisfies the requirements stated.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

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

Open learning

This Unit could be delivered by distance learning that may incorporate some degree of on-line support.

However it would require planning by the centre to ensure the sufficiency and authenticity of candidate's evidence. Arrangements would have to be made to ensure the assessment for Outcome one is delivered in a supervised environment under controlled conditions.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Web Development: Website Optimisation

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

Unit title: Web Development: Website Optimisation

This Unit is designed to teach you how to implement best practice search engine optimisation, web copywriting and information architecture techniques during website design which in turn will enable you to design a website that is search engine friendly, engages with the audience and satisfies accessibility and usability.

You will learn how to recognise Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) techniques, information architecture strategies and good web copywriting techniques by studying existing websites.

You will then learn how to:

♦   apply search engine optimisation techniques to a website
♦   implement information architecture strategies in a website
♦   write effectively for the web

There will be two assessments in this Unit.

Outcome 1 assessment will take the form of a case study where you will be required to evaluate existing websites and report on the use of search engine optimisation, information architecture and web copywriting techniques used within each site.

The other assessment will be a practical exercise in which you are required to apply the techniques you have learned to an existing website.

On completion of the Unit you should be able to:

1   Evaluate existing websites in relation to search engine optimisation (SEO), information architecture and web copywriting quality.
2   Apply search engine optimisation techniques to a website.
3   Implement information architecture strategies in a website.
4   Apply recognised web copywriting techniques to a website.