



Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Specification

General Information

This Graded Unit has been validated as part of the HNC in Fitness, Health and Exercise. Centres are required to develop a project-based assessment in accordance with this validated specification.

Graded Unit title: Fitness, Health and Exercise: Graded Unit 1

Graded Unit code: H4VL 34

Type of Project: Investigation

Publication date: August 2013

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 01

Graded Unit purpose

This Graded Unit is designed to provide evidence that the learner has achieved the following principal aims of the HNC in Fitness, Health and Exercise:

- ◆ To gain knowledge and skills of investigation, planning and problem solving.
- ◆ Identify key issues facing those working in the Fitness industry.
- ◆ Investigate factors which influence customer retention.
- ◆ To develop an awareness of different exercise regimes
- ◆ Learning good practice from Fitness professionals at work.
- ◆ To assist learner in making informed choices regarding career options.

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7)

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Recommended entry to the Graded Unit

It is recommended that the learner should have completed or be in the process of completing the following Units relating to the above principal aims prior to undertaking this Graded Unit:

Exercise Physiology and Anatomy
Exercise Principles and Programming
Nutrition for Fitness, Health and Exercise
Health Screening
First Aid for Sport and Fitness
Exercise and Fitness: Health and Safety Management
Working safely and effectively with customers

At least one of the following:

Plan, Teach and Evaluate a Group Exercise to Music Session
Plan, Teach and Evaluate a Group Gym based Session
Plan, Teach and Evaluate a Group Exercise Session

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Graded Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Graded Unit.

Assessment Support Pack

The Assessment Support Pack for this Unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable instrument of assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the Assessment Support Pack to ensure a comparable standard. Assessment Support Packs are available on SQA's secure website.

Equality and inclusion

This Graded Unit has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on SQA's website:
www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

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Assessment

This Graded Unit will be assessed by the use of a project-based investigation developed by centres. The project should provide the learner with the opportunity to produce evidence that demonstrates she/he has met the aims of this Graded Unit.

The project undertaken by the learner must be a complex task which involves:

- ◆ variables which are complex or unfamiliar
- ◆ relationships which need to be clarified
- ◆ a context which may be unfamiliar to the learner

The project must require the learner to:

- ◆ analyse the task and decide on a course of action for undertaking the project
- ◆ plan and organise work and carry it through to completion
- ◆ reflect on what has been done and draw conclusions for the future
- ◆ produce evidence of meeting the aims which this Graded Unit has been designed to cover.

It is intended that the project will draw together knowledge and skills from all of the topic areas covered within the HNC award in Fitness, Health and Exercise. Whilst it is unlikely that evidence from all aspects will be directly referenced, centres should ensure that topics chosen by learners broadly reflect the issues encountered by instructors and personal trainers working in a commercial exercise environment.

Suggested brief

The learner is required to plan, develop and evaluate a work based investigation and analyse key operational issues that currently or may in the future, impact on the selected facility/organisation/client group/personal trainer.

The following list gives examples of the types of issues that may be considered:

- ◆ influence of local and national government policies on the types of activity provided
- ◆ influence of increasing competition on levels of service provision
- ◆ older adults to achievement of recommended activity levels
- ◆ the debate over appropriate Certification for Exercise Professionals
- ◆ Motivation and reasons for exercise
- ◆ Training opportunities and provision for special populations
- ◆ the effect of personal programming on customer retention
- ◆ Supplements, performance and recovery in the gym
- ◆ day to day operational issues
- ◆ the impact of pricing and product range on customer satisfaction and retention

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The above list is not exhaustive and students may select a topic appropriate to the needs/wants of internal/external customers.

Planning Stage

Learners must produce a project outline (a minimum of 1,000 words) which will include:

A general statement of the overall aims of the investigation, together with a brief overview of the selected facility/organisation, its key features and issues, and its relevance to the investigation

Identification of *a maximum of two aims and a minimum of three objectives*. A research approach should be chosen which is relevant and appropriate, and allows effective achievement of the project aims. There are a variety of research methods that learners may choose, falling into two main categories:

- (a) Qualitative Research
- (b) Quantitative Research

Information gathered for the project will also come from primary sources such as questionnaires and/or interviews, and also from secondary sources such as organisation reports, government papers, National Occupational Standards, etc. Learners should provide *a minimum of four key sources of reference material* (for example company reports, research documents, government papers, physical activity guidelines, etc) that will provide direction and underpin the themes of the investigation.

An overview of the methodology and action plan should be presented which makes clear how the aims and objectives of the investigation will be achieved. The plan should indicate a clear focus on the task of collecting specific information on the selected issue, evidence of negotiated access to an appropriate facility/organisation/client group/personal trainer, justification of the research approach (with appropriate timescales), and identification of viable contingency planning

The work produced should always be the learner's own. However, tutors are expected to provide learners with advice, guidance and constructive criticism as necessary when they are devising their plans. In the event that the assessor forms the view that the work finally submitted by the learner for the planning stage is so weak as to prevent progression to the next stage, the learner may receive additional assistance (over and above the norm). In this event, the assessor will record this fact and the learner may receive no more than half of the available marks for this stage.

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Developing Stage

It is anticipated that this stage will be a minimum of 1,500 words. Learners must provide clear evidence of undertaking the investigation, and of implementing the action plan which may include all or some of the following:

- ◆ Clear evidence of research, which should be clearly referenced
- ◆ Information sources (primary and secondary)

- ◆ Primary information sources may include:
 - Questionnaires
 - Recordings or transcripts of interviews (including interview questions)
 - Observation records and/or experiments
 - Work diary
 - Progress reviews

- ◆ Secondary Information sources may include:
 - Libraries
 - Sportscotland
 - Physical Activity Taskforce
 - NHS/Health Scotland
 - Marketing plans
 - Operational procedures
 - Health and safety reports
 - Minutes of meetings
 - Company reports
 - Government reports and guidelines
 - National Occupational Standards
 - Research information collected online
 - Other relevant reference material
 - Copies of correspondence associated with the project.

Once all the evidence is gathered and collated it must be prepared for presentation using appropriate language, format and structure. The final submitted work for this stage should present sound conclusions consistent with the data collected. Appendices should be used and referenced as appropriate.

The learner should have regular meetings with the project supervisor/assessor who will provide advice and reasonable assistance where appropriate.

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Evaluation and Oral Presentation

Learners must produce a report (a minimum of 500 words) that contains:

- ◆ A clear statement of objective criteria on which to base the evaluation
- ◆ Evaluation of the relevance of the (developing stage) evidence to the original aims and objectives of the project
- ◆ Evidence indicating whether the original aims and objectives have been met
- ◆ Reference to any modifications to the approach during the course of the project or to alternative approaches considered
- ◆ Draw conclusions as to how the process of carrying out the project (planning, implementation, and reporting) could be improved
- ◆ Provide justified recommendations for personal development which are relevant to the project
- ◆ Uses appropriate language, format and structure

The learner will summarise the project and subsequent evaluation process in a 10-minute oral presentation. The presentation may make use of electronic media and software packages.

It is recommended that learners are not given specific feedback on the developing stage prior to writing their evaluation.

Conditions of assessment

The learner should be given a date for completion of the project. However, the instructions for the project should be distributed to allow the learner sufficient time to assimilate the details and carry out the project. During the time between the distribution of the project instructions and the completion date, assessors may answer questions, provide clarification, guidance and *reasonable* assistance. The project should be marked as soon as possible after the completion date. The final grading given should reflect the quality of the learner's evidence at the time of the completion date.

At this level, learners should work independently. It is the responsibility of centres to take reasonable steps to ensure that the project is the work of the learner. For example, centres may wish to informally question learners at various stages on their knowledge and understanding of the project on which they have embarked. Centres should ensure that where research, etc is carried out in other establishments or under the supervision of others that the learner does not receive undue assistance. The evidence for the project is generated over time and involves three distinct stages, where each stage has to be achieved before the next is undertaken. Thus any re-assessment of stages must be undertaken before proceeding to the next stage.

If a learner fails the project overall, then this must be done using a substantially different project, ie all stages are undertaken using a new project. In this case, a learner's grade will be based on the achievement in the re-assessment.

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Evidence Requirements for this Graded Unit

The project undertaken by learners will consist of three stages: planning; developing; and evaluating. The following table specifies the minimum evidence required to pass each stage.

All stages should use language, format, and structure appropriate to SCQF level 7.

[Learners should use a wide range of routine skills and some advanced skills associated with the subject/discipline, eg:

- ◆ ***convey complex ideas in well-structured and coherent form***
- ◆ ***use a range of forms of communication effectively in both familiar and new contexts***
- ◆ ***use standard applications to process and obtain a variety of information and data]***

The mark allocation for Stage 1 (planning) reflects the importance of planning when developing a piece of research.

Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements	% Mark Allocation
Stage 1 — Planning	<p>Evidence that the learner has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ analysed and interpreted the requirements of the project brief, key factors influencing the project, and their inter-relationships ◆ established and stated aims and objectives (minimum of three objectives and a maximum of two aims) for the project ◆ developed an action plan to carry out the project, allowing a realistic timescale for the stages involved and identifying viable contingency plans ◆ developed and justified a research approach that is appropriate to the subject matter (eg desk, qualitative/quantitative, primary/secondary) ◆ identified resources/materials/information required to carry out the project (minimum of four) ◆ identified where the materials/resources/information required to complete the project can be sourced/accessed ◆ negotiated access to an appropriate facility/organisation/team/other ◆ identified any ethical issues involved in undertaking the project ◆ identified criteria on which to evaluate the research process (the developing stage) <p><i>The learner must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Planning stage.</i></p>	24

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Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements	% Mark Allocation
Stage 2 — Developing	<p>Evidence that the learner has carried out the project, meeting the requirements of the plan, and managing the project which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ develops a coherent line of thought ◆ retains task focus based on identified objectives ◆ contains accurate details of the Investigation ◆ accesses an appropriate range of resources as per the plan ◆ applies effective research techniques ◆ demonstrates effective selection and analysis of information ◆ applies problem solving techniques and identifies issues where this has been required ◆ presents objective, reliable results ◆ presents sound conclusions consistent with data and acknowledges sources <p><i>The learner must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Developing stage.</i></p>	64
Stage 3 — Evaluating	<p>Evidence that the learner has evaluated the effectiveness of the approach taken which includes all stages of the activity. The evaluation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ use of identified criteria on which to base the evaluation ◆ evaluation of the relevance of the evidence to the original aims and objectives of the project ◆ identifies and utilises appropriate evidence to decide whether the aims and objectives have been met ◆ reference to any modifications to the approach during the course of the project or to alternative approaches considered ◆ provide justified recommendations for the future which are relevant to the project ◆ summary of project and subsequent evaluation process in a 10-minute oral presentation <p><i>The learner must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Evaluating stage.</i></p>	12

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Assessing and grading learners

The overall project will be marked out of **100**. Only whole marks should be used.

The percentage of marks allocated to each stage of the project is outlined in the **Evidence Requirements**.

It is a requirement that learners must meet the minimum *Evidence Requirements* for the *Planning* stage before progressing to the *Developing* stage, and subsequently to the *Evaluating* stage. Learners may produce evidence over and above that specified in the minimum *Evidence Requirements* and may as a result be awarded additional marks for that stage. Assessors should use the Grade Related Criteria outlined below to judge learner performance.

Learners are required to work independently to meet the *Evidence Requirements* of the Graded Unit. At the same time, learners need appropriate support. SQA uses the term reasonable assistance to describe the balance between supporting learners in their project and not providing too much assistance.

At the end of *each* stage there should be opportunities for remediation and re-assessment of learners for that particular stage. This includes the final *Evaluation* stage. Any re-assessment should be carried out in line with the centre's own assessment policy.

Assessors are reminded that achievement of the minimum evidence criteria will mean that the learner should be awarded a pass graded at C. Where the learner has submitted work which contains more than the minimum evidence, then additional marks may be awarded to enable the learner to be awarded either a grade B or an A.

It is recommended that half marks are awarded for achievement of the minimum Evidence Requirements (either a learner has achieved them or not). Given the assessment and grading allowed in the Evidence Requirement statement, this would allow a maximum of 12 additional marks to be awarded for the planning stage, 32 additional marks for the developing stage, and 6 additional marks for the evaluation stage. Assessors should develop a clear marking guideline which makes clear where additional marks may be awarded.

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Grade Related Criteria	
Grade A	Grade C
<p>Is a seamless, coherent piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ has sufficient evidence for the three essential phases of the project, is produced to a high standard, and is quite clearly inter-related ◆ demonstrates an accurate and insightful interpretation of the project brief ◆ is highly focused and relevant to the tasks associated with the project brief ◆ is clear and well-structured throughout and language used is of a high standard in terms of level, accuracy and technical content ◆ effectively consolidates and integrates required knowledge and skills ◆ demonstrates the learner's ability to work autonomously 	<p>Is a co-ordinated piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ has sufficient evidence of the three essential phases of the project, is produced to an adequate standard ◆ demonstrates an acceptable interpretation of the project brief ◆ is focused and relevant to the tasks associated with the project brief ◆ is satisfactorily structured and language used is adequate in terms of level, accuracy and technical content ◆ consolidates and integrates knowledge and skills but this may lack some continuity and consistency ◆ demonstrates independent learning with minimum support and revision during project

The marks allocated to each stage will then be aggregated to arrive at an overall mark for the project. Assessors will then assign an overall grade to the learner for this Graded Unit based on the following grade boundaries.

- A = 70%–100%
- B = 60%–69%
- C = 50%–59%

These grade boundaries are fixed and should **not** be amended.

If a learner does not achieve a pass or wishes to upgrade, then this must be done using a substantially different project, ie all stages are undertaken using a new project (case study, investigation or practical assignment). In these circumstances, the highest grade achieved should be awarded.

More information on reasonable assistance, remediation and re-assessment may be found in the SQA publication *Guidance for the Implementation of Graded Units in Higher National Certificates and Diplomas* (SQA, 2008, Publication code: CA4405).



Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Support Notes

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Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment of this Graded Unit

This Unit is designed to assess the learner's ability to integrate, practically and academically, the knowledge and understanding gained during the HNC Fitness, Health and Exercise and apply it in a practical context with a client. Learners will be required to apply the Core Skills of communication; problem solving and working with others throughout.

The assessments should be completed holistically as a practical project in the context of selecting, screening, programming and delivering exercise and dietary advice to a client. It is strongly recommended that this Unit is not cross assessed with the associated Units mentioned above and that it is completed holistically for a new client not associated with the assessments in these Units.

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components as part of this Graded Unit. However, there may be opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Problem Solving*, *Working with Others* and *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*.

History of changes to Graded Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for learners

Graded Unit title: Fitness, Health and Exercise: Graded Unit 1

This section will help you decide whether this is the Unit for you by explaining what the Unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the Unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

This Unit has been designed as a Graded Unit Practical Case Study for the HNC Fitness, Health and Exercise and as such should not be used as a stand-alone Unit. Please see 'Recommended entry to the Unit' above.

You will be required to plan, develop and evaluate a practical case study which will analyse key fitness and health based issues that currently, or may in the future, impact on a selected client.

In undertaking this project, you will be required to negotiate access to a client and secure informed consent to carry out the investigation. There are significant issues of confidentiality involved in the completion of the task, and the skills you need will be drawn from the whole range studied in the HNC or first year of HND in Fitness, Health and Exercise.