

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
Advanced Higher

First edition – published March 2006

National Course Specification

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT (ADVANCED HIGHER)

COURSE NUMBER C234 13

COURSE STRUCTURE

The Course has three mandatory Units:

DV4M 13	<i>Managing Organisations: The External Environment (Advanced Higher)</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>
DV4N 13	<i>Managing Organisations: The Internal Environment (Advanced Higher)</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>
DV4P 13	<i>Researching a Business (Advanced Higher)</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>

All Courses include 40 hours over and above the 120 hours for the Units. This may be used for induction, extending the range of learning and teaching approaches, support, consolidation, integration of learning and preparation for Course assessment.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates will normally be expected to have attained one of the following, or equivalent:

- ◆ Higher Business Management or its Units and
- ◆ Standard Grade English at Credit level, or
- ◆ Intermediate 2 English or its Units.

PROGRESSION

The Course or its Units may provide progression to:

- ◆ Higher National programmes
- ◆ Higher education
- ◆ Training or employment

Administrative Information

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National Course Specification: general information (cont)

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

CREDIT VALUE

The Advanced Higher Course in Business Management is allocated 32 SCQF points at SCQF level 7*

**SCQF 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 points at a SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

CORE SKILLS

Achievement of this Course gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skill	None
Core Skills component	Critical Thinking at SCQF Level 6

National Course Specification: course details

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

RATIONALE AND AIMS

Rationale

Business and enterprise are at the heart of national growth and development, and this is reflected in the place that business education assumes at the centre of the curriculum. The provision offers opportunities for candidates to develop the crucial skills and knowledge which allow them to access, understand and contribute to the dynamic and complex business and information environment. Whatever the career pathway or progression route, business education can provide a valuable context which enhances individual effectiveness.

The study of Advanced Higher Business Management provides an opportunity to extend and enhance understanding developed at previous levels of study in this subject area and retains the aim of placing the key elements of management within a study of business as a whole. Candidates are expected to assimilate new content but there is considerable emphasis on using ideas to which candidates have already been exposed, particularly in terms of problem solving and decision making within organisations. Candidates are expected to apply these ideas in an extended context and, in this respect, the Course broadens and deepens the issues raised at Higher level, particularly with respect to international influences and the principles and practice of management. Overall, the Course will enable candidates to apply their knowledge and understanding of business and management to specific aspects of business operations and to recognise, at first hand, the importance of enterprising behaviour in the modern business environment. It will enable them to extend their problem solving skills in a way that will help them to assess their personal effectiveness as potential members of the business community and to develop further their ability to communicate by means of written and spoken language. This should benefit all candidates, whether or not they subsequently follow a career in business. Candidates will benefit from the theoretical underpinning, practical experience and vocational relevance of the study of business management at this level.

The Course includes an investigation of an organisation chosen by the candidate and thus presents an opportunity to apply knowledge and skills gained at Higher level to a real situation. Decision making lies at the heart of business and is essential if organisations are to adapt to a constantly changing environment. However, in today's climate, the need to develop enterprise skills and to foster entrepreneurial behaviour among organisations of all kinds is vital if appropriate decisions are to be made and organisations are to prosper and grow. Self-reliance and self-knowledge are key qualities of those who operate successfully in modern organisations. The Course brings these ideas together and, in doing so, encourages candidates to reflect on the possibilities for self-employment or becoming small business owners.

The Course also builds on the knowledge and understanding developed at earlier levels of the context within which organisations operate and, hence, that within which the investigation will take place. Membership of the European Union has many implications for UK-based organisations. Increasingly, many organisations operate on an international scale and their activities reinforce the impact that international events can have on all organisations in this country. In tandem with this international dimension is the requirement to recognise the underpinning principles which guide managerial decision making, especially in times of rapid change.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

Increasingly, business concepts and techniques are used in the operation of many types of organisation, including those which do not have profit making as their prime objective. The Course recognises this and includes different types of business enterprise, including voluntary organisations, such as charities, and publicly-funded ones, such as local authorities. It also covers the different forms of profit-making bodies from sole traders to large international companies. The Units, therefore, are relevant to all types of organisation. Candidates are encouraged to study the similarities and differences between different types of enterprise.

The terminology of the Course reflects the notion that all organisations require to adopt an enterprising approach. The terms *organisation*, *business organisation*, *business enterprise* and *enterprise* are frequently used to mean the same thing. Although they can have different meanings, throughout this document they are used interchangeably. This helps to emphasise the importance of encouraging enterprising behaviour within all kinds of organisations in all areas of activity.

Overall, therefore, the study of Business Management can provide a valuable experience which can enhance an individual's understanding of a key area in society and provide skills and knowledge which can be used in a wide variety of types of employment. It can promote the development of an enterprise oriented society and encourage candidates to take a positive view of setting up business for themselves.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

AIMS

The aims of the Course are to build on the knowledge and understanding gained in Higher Business Management and are to:

Develop and extend knowledge and understanding of:

- ◆ the importance of business and enterprise in contemporary society
- ◆ the internal environment of organisations

Develop the skills of:

- ◆ critical thinking through the study of management issues in a variety of different situations
- ◆ problem solving and decision making with respect to actual situations faced by businesses
- ◆ acquiring information about a business situation
- ◆ applying business management concepts to the investigation of an actual business situation
- ◆ drawing conclusions from business information and communicating them in a coherent, logical and effective manner

Promote, encourage and extend an understanding and awareness of:

- ◆ the skills which managers require to ensure that organisational objectives are achieved
- ◆ the national and international environment in which organisations operate and the influence that this has on their activities
- ◆ the interdependence of the various activities undertaken by businesses
- ◆ the importance of entrepreneurial behaviour in organisations and its importance in fostering business growth
- ◆ the openings for entrepreneurs and for self-employment and the contribution that this can make to wealth generation in Scotland
- ◆ the importance of personal effectiveness such as time management in business and management

Provide a basis for further study particularly with respect to facilitating the transition to higher education.

Satisfactory completion of the Course will provide candidates with:

- ◆ enhanced knowledge and understanding of Business Management and the key significance of problem solving and decision making to all businesses
- ◆ the ability to apply concepts and ideas from their study to actual business situations and to draw reasoned conclusions from this application
- ◆ a level of understanding which will enable them to progress confidently into more advanced study either in business or management or in courses where business and management are a crucial underpinning aspect
- ◆ the ability to communicate complex ideas in a coherent and logical manner
- ◆ other transferable skills such as the ability to gather and interpret business information

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

The Business Management Course at Advanced Higher is designed to challenge candidates, particularly with respect to building on familiar concepts and relating them to a range of business contexts. It provides progression from Higher Business Management in several ways:

- ◆ the Course Content develops and extends the concepts of Higher
- ◆ the context of the Advanced Higher is more complex and demanding than at Higher, particularly in terms of the application of business management theories and principles to actual business situations
- ◆ the Business Report requires a more sophisticated level of communication skills as candidates must make use of a business report format to present a logical, reasoned analysis of the likely future situation of a particular organisation
- ◆ the Business Report and the Unit, *Researching a Business (Advanced Higher)*, require candidates to develop information gathering skills which are not expected at Higher level
- ◆ the Outcomes and Performance Criteria in the Units at Advanced Higher are more demanding than at Higher, for example with respect to the depth of understanding required and the emphasis on critical thinking and analysis
- ◆ the Course assessment allows a greater degree of integration than that at Higher level

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

COURSE CONTENT

The Course content is organised in three Units — *Managing Organisations: The External Environment (Advanced Higher)*, *Managing Organisations: The Internal Environment (Advanced Higher)*, *Researching a Business (Advanced Higher)*.

All of the Course content will be subject to sampling in the Course assessment.

NB The content of lower levels underpins this award.

Many of the topics in the Course content are ones that could be covered in considerable depth. The requirement at Advanced Higher is that candidates should develop an awareness of what these topics are and how they may be important in the study of business management.

Managing Organisations: The External Environment (Advanced Higher)

Multinational companies	Reasons for growth of multinational companies; methods of growth such as foreign direct investment, buying overseas companies
	A recognition of the issues raised by multinational companies, for example, transfer pricing, exploitation of local resources, foreign control of economy, increasing importance of global operations
	Effects on host country — gains in employment, technology transfer, balance of payments changes from greater exports or increased imports, repatriated profits, ‘screwdriver’ plants, loss of government control
	Effects on home country — balance of payments, loss of control by home government, changing skill mix of employees, effects on overall level of employment
European Union	EU policies, for example, Single European Market (SEM), Social Chapter, European Monetary Union (EMU)
	Candidates should be aware of current developments in EU activities and their likely effect on organisations in the UK
Business issues	Candidates should be aware of current issues affecting business and how these may influence the way in which organisations operate, for example, business ethics, social responsibility, environmental and green issues, globalisation, degree of government involvement in organisations, expansion of organisations, technological changes like e-commerce

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

Managing Organisations: The Internal Environment (Advanced Higher)

Role of management	Planning, organising, controlling, co-ordinating, commanding (Fayol); managerial roles (Mintzberg)
Management thought	Different schools of management thought including classical school, such as Taylor; human relations school, such as Hawthorne studies; systems theory, contingency theory
Motivation to work	Methods to increase motivation to work such as job enrichment, job enlargement, job rotation, empowerment, financial incentives, for example, group bonus schemes
Teams	Role of teams in organisations Characteristics of effective teams, for example, commitment to team goals, size, team roles, such as Belbin; communication between team members, nature and clarity of task, appropriate processes and procedures Stages of group development: forming, storming, norming and performing
Leadership	Awareness of different theories of leadership, for example, trait theory, leadership style, contingency theory Different leadership styles: autocratic, participative Recognition of factors affecting leadership style, for example, task, group size, organisational culture, nature of group members
Personal effectiveness of managers	Principles of time management — assigning priority, grouping similar activities together, clear objectives, time logs, controlling interruptions, saying no. Personal qualities — behaviours associated with enterprise and entrepreneurship, (including self-employment) such as self-confidence and self-reliance, ability to deal with uncertainty, communication skills, administrative and organisational skills, technical skills
Change	
Factors causing change	Analysis of forces driving change and those restraining change (force field analysis)

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

Stages of change	Preparation, unfreezing, changing, refreezing, evaluation
Approaches to managing change	Awareness of a range of approaches to managing change, for example, directive (top-down), piecemeal initiatives; participation; negotiation, for example, productivity improvements; action-centred; use of experts, use of change agents
	Effects of organisational culture on managing change
	Results of change and effects of change on the organisation

Researching a Business (Advanced Higher)

Business details	Internal organisation, for example, structure, organisation chart, nature of jobs; functional activities, such as marketing, financial situation; objectives, for example, profit, survival, growth; strengths and weaknesses (internal), opportunities and threats (external), SWOT analysis
Stakeholders	Examples could include owner(s), shareholders, financial institutions, customers, family members, government, local community, management
Decision making	Structured decision making model: extent to which it is used, alternative ways of making decisions

The following section of the Course content does not form part of the Unit specifications for the Course. It will not be included in any Unit assessment but will be available for Course assessment. Much of it will be assessed through the Business Report but topics from this section may be included in the question paper.

Strategy for future development

Resource requirements	Finance, labour, premises, plant and equipment
Sources of data	Primary, secondary, internal, external

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

Methods of data collection	Desk research, field research, observation, questionnaire, interview
Future levels of activity	Forecasts of future resource requirements based on sales forecasts, use of market research techniques, human resource planning, financial plans based on cash flow forecasts and projected profit and loss statements Proposed strategy relating to marketing — marketing mix, target markets, segmentation; human resources — recruitment and selection, training; finance — sources of finance; operations — process, quality assurance, distribution
Sources of assistance	Local Enterprise Companies (LECs), central and local government schemes, venture capital, advice and support from financial institutions, etc
Implementation of strategy	Implementation plan, including planning techniques such as Gantt chart. Control, for example, budgetary control, milestones, target dates, critical path analysis
Strengths and weaknesses of strategy	These should relate to issues such as coherence of strategy, timescale, validity of forecasts, comprehensiveness of strategy, cost of strategy, suitability of strategy in terms of organisational objectives, acceptance of strategy by stakeholders

ASSESSMENT

To gain the award of the Business Management (Advanced Higher) Course, candidates must pass the Units as well as the Course assessment. The candidate's grade is based on the Course Assessment.

Assessment Objectives

The key objective of assessment is to ensure that candidates have achieved the aims of the Course. In particular, assessment seeks to ensure that candidates have understood and can apply the Course content and that they can communicate their understanding.

Unit assessment aims to enable candidates to complete a range of extended response and analytical questions in familiar situations. There is limited integration confined to the topics covered within the Unit. The Unit, *Researching a Business (Advanced Higher)*, does offer some limited opportunity for integration beyond the confines of an individual Unit.

The Course assessment aims to enable candidates to explain and analyse issues in Business Management in unfamiliar and more complex contexts. This is done through a case study which tests candidates' ability to solve problems and make decisions and by extended response questions. Some questions are integrated and integration is across the whole of the Course content.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

Unit Assessment

The Unit assessment for each of the three Units will be a closed book assessment which should take place at an appropriate time. The maximum time allowed for each assessment is 60 minutes.

Each Unit is assessed against the standards set out in the *National Unit Specification: statement of standards* for each Unit. Full details of the Outcomes, Performance Criteria and evidence requirements may be found in the Unit Specifications for *Managing Organisations: The External Environment* (Advanced Higher), *Managing Organisations: The Internal Environment* (Advanced Higher) and *Researching a Business* (Advanced Higher). Further details about Unit assessment for this Course can be found in the National Assessment Bank (NAB) materials produced for each Unit.

Course Assessment

The Course assessment has two components, a Question Paper and a Business Report:

	Time allocation	Mark allocation
Question Paper	2 hours 45 minutes	100
Business Report	Completed during Course	50

Question Paper

- ◆ The paper examines knowledge and understanding, problem solving, critical thinking and decision making
- ◆ The paper requires candidates to apply their knowledge and understanding to the current situation of a particular business
- ◆ The paper will consist of two sections, A and B
- ◆ Section A will consist of extended response interpretation items related to a case study of a business while Section B will be extended response questions
- ◆ The paper will have a total of 100 marks
- ◆ Questions in both sections may focus on particular areas of Course content but there will also be questions which provide an opportunity to integrate topics across all areas of the Course content. These integrative questions may cover topics from two or more of the three Units which comprise the Course

Section A — total marks available 50

This section of the paper will assess knowledge and understanding, problem solving, critical thinking and decision making.

It will consist of a case study of a business organisation with a number of extended response questions totalling 50 marks. Candidates will be expected to attempt all questions. The questions will require candidates to interpret the information in the case study and to explain, analyse and evaluate the situation faced by the company. Candidates may be required to assume a management position and make decisions necessary to solve problems.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

The case study will be about 1250 words long and will explain the current situation of a Scottish based organisation. It will be based on information from company annual reports but may also include information from newspaper or magazine articles and from company websites or other Internet sources. The case study will be supplemented by a small number of ‘exhibits’ containing additional information such as extracts from company accounts, details of the internal and external environments faced by the company and quotes from leading managers in the company.

Candidates may be asked to:

- ◆ analyse the information given and identify the problems
- ◆ evaluate the significance of the context in which the case study is located
- ◆ examine critically the issues faced by managers and any constraints on them
- ◆ devise solutions and make recommendations for managerial action
- ◆ justify their recommendations.

Section B — total marks 50

This section of the paper will assess knowledge and understanding and critical thinking.

It will consist of four questions drawn from any part of the Course content. Candidates should attempt any two questions. Each question will require extended answers and will be worth 25 marks.

In section B candidates are expected to make use of wider knowledge and understanding in their answers. The case study may provide a stimulus for questions and candidates may use examples from it in their responses. Section B questions will widen the coverage of the assessment to reflect more fully the Course content. Candidates are expected to refer to examples of other organisations and to refer to business issues which are not covered directly in the case study.

Business Report

This part of the Course assessment has 50 marks available. It will assess the ability of candidates to:

- ◆ apply their knowledge of business management in a critical way to an actual business situation
- ◆ gather and evaluate information
- ◆ draw valid conclusions and make realistic predictions from this information

Candidates are required to assess the current situation of a business of their choice and to explain, analyse and evaluate the future strategy of the business. In particular, they will be expected to:

- ◆ explain what the business intends to do and how this strategy fits in with the objectives of the business
- ◆ analyse how the future strategy relates to current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
- ◆ analyse the resource requirements of the intended strategy
- ◆ analysis the implications of this for the current marketing, operational and human resources of the business
- ◆ evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the information used by the business to decide on its future strategy

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

- ◆ assess the extent to which the future strategy meets the expectations of key stakeholders in the business
- ◆ make an overall evaluation of the extent to which the strategy is likely to be successful

Candidates will be required to produce a report on the above. It should be between 2,500 and 3,500 words in length, excluding any appendices. The report will be externally marked. Centres will be informed by the SQA of the date by which reports must be received.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

Relationship between Unit and Course assessment

With the exception of the *Researching a Business (Advanced Higher)*, the Unit assessments sample the knowledge and understanding gained during the learning and teaching process. Each Unit assessment is self-contained and covers only the content relevant to that Unit. A significant purpose of the Unit assessment is to enable candidates to demonstrate that they have grasped the essential aspects of business management introduced during a Unit. Unit assessments allow candidates to apply their knowledge and understanding but in contexts which are familiar to them. As such, they provide an on-going benchmark against which candidates can measure their progress.

Unit assessment for the *Researching a Business (Advanced Higher)* will require candidates to research a business of their choice and assess its current situation. This assessment will form the basis of subsequent work examining the likely future situation of the business and the strategy that it intends to pursue. This work will be written up as the Business Report which is a component of the Course assessment.

The Course assessment is split into two parts. The Question Paper samples all aspects of the Course content. It tests knowledge and understanding but does so in a way which involves integration of topics from across the whole of the Course Content. In addition, it requires candidates to demonstrate an approach which involves critical thinking, problem solving and decision making. Unlike the Unit assessments, it requires them to apply their knowledge and understanding to an unfamiliar case study. The case study is challenging and candidates must also demonstrate an ability to rapidly assimilate and make sense of new information.

The Business Report builds on the Unit assessment in that candidates must take forward their initial assessment of a business situation. They will be required to gather information and present it in a logical sequence. They will be required to analyse the likely future situation of the company they choose and to draw conclusions about it. To do this, they will be expected to make use of topics from across the Course content. In this way this component of the Course assessment provides a more demanding challenge than that required by the Unit assessments.

The different emphases of the Unit and Course assessments will ensure that there is no unnecessary duplication of assessment. On occasions, it is possible that the same topic may feature in both assessments but candidates will be expected to carry forward the knowledge and understanding of a specific topic from the Unit assessment and apply it in unfamiliar contexts and/or in association with other topics in an integrative way.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

The ‘added value’ of the Course

The Unit and the Course assessments complement each other. Candidates may undertake Units on a stand-alone basis. The holistic approach to Unit assessment means those who take this route will be able to demonstrate specific achievement in a particular aspect of Business Management. The Units all build on work at Higher level and those who successfully complete them will be able to show that they have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of contemporary issues in Business Management. Candidates who undertake the Course will have additional demands imposed upon them which will enable them to gain significant benefits over and above those gained by completing the Units.

The additional demands will require candidates to:

- ◆ demonstrate the retention of knowledge from all areas of the Course content
- ◆ integrate knowledge and understanding from all areas of the Course content
- ◆ respond to questions relating to unfamiliar and more complex contexts
- ◆ interpret a case study of a company and display critical thinking, problem solving and decision making in responding to questions based on the case study
- ◆ present a lengthy reasoned assessment of the future strategy of a business of their choice

The additional 40 hours for the Course is to allow these additional demands to be met. It also gives those delivering the Course the opportunity to make use of a wide range of teaching and learning strategies to assist candidates in meeting these additional demands

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

The candidate’s grade will be based on the total score obtained from the Course assessment.

The descriptions below indicate the nature of achievement required for an award at Grade C and Grade A in the Course.

For an award at Grade C, candidates should be able to:

- ◆ apply knowledge and understanding to a wide range of different contexts
- ◆ demonstrate some ability to integrate material drawn from the Course content
- ◆ demonstrate a capacity to recognise the implications for business management of the wider national and international context within which organisations operate
- ◆ show an understanding of how business management concepts can be applied to the decision making process of different types of business and different business situations

For an award at Grade A, candidates should be able to:

- ◆ consistently apply knowledge and understanding to a wide range of different contexts, including some which are complex
- ◆ demonstrate a high degree of ability to integrate material drawn from the Course content

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

- ◆ demonstrate a capacity to recognise the different implications for business management in different types of organisations of the wider national and international context within which their organisations operate
- ◆ show an understanding of how business management concepts can be applied to a wide range of actual and hypothetical business situations and to different types of business
- ◆ demonstrate a high degree of clarity and logic in the presentation of their answers

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

ESTIMATES AND APPEALS

Estimates

In preparing estimates, evidence of performance should be considered from across the breadth of coverage of the Course and must take account of performance in the whole Course. Evidence used to compile estimates and support appeals must be valid and reliable and must relate to the Course Grade Descriptions. The assessment instruments which are used to generate evidence for estimates must, therefore, allow candidates opportunities to demonstrate attainment against the Course Grade Descriptions.

Further advice on the preparation of estimates is given in the Course Assessment Specification and in the SQA guidance on submitting estimates and appeals.

Appeals

Evidence assembled in support of an Assessment appeal should cover the content of the Course. Ideally, this will comprise evidence generated by a properly constructed, integrated prelim which reflects the Course assessment in range, balance and depth.

For appeals purposes it is mandatory to provide additional evidence for the question paper component. Although a prelim is not mandatory it is desirable. This is because it provides evidence of how well a candidate can perform in conditions which replicate the Course assessment. The prelim can test retention of knowledge and understanding across all areas of the Course content, can provide opportunities for integration, can allow candidates to demonstrate problem solving and decision making and allow them to show that they can apply their knowledge in unfamiliar and more complex contexts. It can also result in evidence which is produced within the same time constraint as that specified by the Course assessment.

When developing prelim papers, centres should bear in mind that past papers, including SQA past papers, will not be accepted in their entirety. However, questions selected carefully from a minimum of three past papers, preferably adapted (to ensure the breadth and depth of coverage required to satisfy the Course Grade Descriptions) can be combined to form a valid assessment instrument for a prelim. Centres must also be certain that the question paper used for a prelim is not in the public domain and has not been previously seen by candidates. It is the responsibility of centres to ensure the validity, reliability and security of assessment instruments used for Estimates and Appeals.

High scoring evidence generated through Unit assessments can lend weight to an appeal. However, evidence from Unit assessment cannot on its own generate sufficient evidence of how a candidate can perform against the Course Grade Descriptions because it does not fully replicate the Course Assessment with respect to integrated questions, coverage of the Course content and retention of topics from the whole of the Course content.

If evidence from Unit assessment is submitted in support of an appeal, therefore, it should be supplemented by additional evidence, which is comparable in depth and breadth to that required in the Course assessment.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

It is more difficult to assemble sound evidence for the Business Report component and in this case examiners would focus on reviewing the Business Report submitted. However, centres should provide any additional material which, in their view, is likely to strengthen the evidence already submitted. It is not mandatory to provide this. Appeals evidence which consists of a wide range of unsorted information is unlikely to be successful.

APPROACHES TO LEARNING AND TEACHING

The Course presents opportunities for candidate-centred learning, with an emphasis on analysis, problem solving, critical thinking and a strong element of practical work. It is designed to build on the knowledge, understanding and skills introduced at Higher level, and learning and teaching approaches should reflect this progression. Thus, while the acquisition of additional content is a significant feature of the Course, it is also concerned with the application to actual business situations of concepts with which candidates should already be familiar.

The Course is set in the context of contemporary UK society and includes coverage of all types of business organisations, for example, self-employed, private limited company, public limited company, voluntary organisation, charity, as well as all types of publicly-funded organisations. Practical examples of business activity and behaviour relevant to business in the contemporary UK, and Scotland in particular, should be used wherever possible. Every effort should be made to relate them to the development of an 'enterprise culture', as the Course does emphasise the significance of enterprise and the generation of new business opportunities to meet changing circumstances. Thus, candidates should be able to recognise that starting a business or self-employment is a realistic and appealing career option, even if it is one that they do not intend to follow in the immediate future.

This Course provides opportunities for the use of imaginative learning and teaching approaches such as case studies, business games, group work, outside speakers and visits to firms (possibly via work experience). The use of such approaches helps to integrate the theoretical and practical aspects of the Course, and also emphasises the vocational nature and relevance of the subject. The *Researching a Business (Advanced Higher)* Unit and the Business Report require an approach in which candidates should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own information gathering and analysis but should be given help, advice and support where appropriate.

Although the Units within the Course can be delivered independently, it is recommended, when they are offered as part of the Advanced Higher Course, that an integrative approach be adopted. This is probably best achieved by delivering the *Researching a Business (Advanced Higher)* Unit concurrently with material from one or other of the remaining two Units. If candidates are able to complete *Researching a Business (Advanced Higher)* relatively early in the delivery of the Course, they should be able to devote sufficient time to producing the Business Report which gives them the opportunity to develop the work started in *Researching a Business (Advanced Higher)*.

The use of case study material in *Managing Organisations: The External Environment (Advanced Higher)* and *Managing Organisations: The Internal Environment (Advanced Higher)* should help candidates to integrate the theoretical and practical aspects of the Course as well as assist them to apply their knowledge and understanding to a practical business situation.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

The Course does refer to e-commerce but does not otherwise make explicit reference to the use of information and communication technology. There is, however, scope to integrate it into the learning and teaching process. A modern integrated software package would, for example, enable candidates to create financial projections and construct databases of customers or suppliers, as well as to make use of tables and charts in the presentation of their Business Report.

Wherever possible, learning and teaching should make reference to examples of business which are likely to be familiar to candidates. These can include local and national examples, particularly ones which candidates may know in their capacity as consumers. Candidates will also be aware of businesses through the employment of family members or friends or their own experience as employees and this can also be a source of examples and illustrations.

There are considerable resources available which can enhance teaching and learning. Newspapers, magazines and journals regularly contain articles and reports on topics which are part of the Advanced Higher Course in Business Management. Candidates can be encouraged to read the business sections of the press which can give a relevant and topical flavour to the Course. There are many learning and teaching resources available on the Internet. These include sites specifically devoted to the learning and teaching of business and management, many of which include useful case studies which can help to provide variety in learning and teaching as well as being a source of examples and a way of illustrating key points. In particular, at Advanced Higher level, candidates are likely to benefit from accessing company websites and those aimed at investors which give financial and other information on company performance.

CANDIDATES WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

This Course specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. 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 *Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (SQA, 2004).

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT IN A BROADER CONTEXT

A number of national initiatives and programmes promote themes that are important to contemporary society such as citizenship and enterprise. These themes contribute to individual subjects and Courses by making connections beyond the subject boundaries and enrich the learning experience of candidates. Similarly, the specialist knowledge and skills developed through study of a particular subject contributes to the understanding of these themes.

Business Management is a subject which is at the very heart of contemporary society. Business is the engine by which wealth is created and its success determines the prosperity of everyone in society. Almost everyone in society comes into contact with business every day as consumers, employees or employers. Business is not just of national importance. In the twenty-first century, the activities of business and related organisations are international and a significant contributor to the global developments which affect everyone in the world. What businesses do affects everyone in society and has an impact on how they live their lives.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

All parts of the Business Management Courses at all levels contribute to building knowledge and understanding about the way businesses operate and about their role and significance in the contemporary national and international environment. Candidates who complete the Course will be better informed about business and as be able to make a strong contribution as citizens in a number of capacities — as consumers, as employees and, in some cases, as employers or as self employed persons. They will be citizens with the background needed to participate in an enterprise economy and with some of the knowledge required to be a force in the continued development of an enterprise and enterprising culture. The Course too will provide a basis for lifelong learning for candidates as well as an awareness of the importance that business has for the UK's place in the world and how business in Europe and elsewhere can have an impact on the UK.

Examples of each of these are given below.

Education for enterprise — the development of an enterprise culture has become a vital part in the policy pursued by the Scottish Executive and the government of the UK, both of whom have introduced a number of programmes designed to encourage people to set up in business and to adopt a more outward-looking innovative approach. Business Management as a subject has direct links to these initiatives. It provides underpinning knowledge and understanding of key business activities such as marketing and finance as well as developing critical business skills such as decision making and problem solving which can help candidates apply their knowledge to actual business situations. It enhances awareness of business and the environment in which businesses operate. Much of the material in the Business Management Courses is very closely related to that used in enterprise courses developed both for adults and young people and in some cases is almost the same. Business Management can help to promote an enterprising culture and enable those doing the Course to realise that self-employment or setting up their own business are options which they can pursue.

Education for citizenship — Business Management increases awareness of key sectors of economic activity. It can help candidates become more discriminating consumers and recognise how the actions of business can have a wider impact on society. Candidates are thus able to make better informed decisions and to ask more careful questions. Business Management also provides preparation for employment by giving candidates a background in the way organisations behave. As a result, candidates can make more considered decisions about the employment options open to them.

Lifelong learning — Business Management increases candidate awareness of a significant part of the social and economic environment. Learning and teaching approaches for the subject are built around the use of current illustrations and examples. It can encourage candidates to take an interest in developments and this can be the basis for an inquiring and inquisitive approach that can permeate all aspects of life. The knowledge and skills gained from the study of Business Management can help throughout life in making personal decisions about work, employment and consumption. Candidates have a foundation which can help them to tackle changes and developments in critical areas of life successfully and effectively.

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Managing Organisations: The External Environment
(Advanced Higher)

NUMBER DV4M 13

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

SUMMARY

This Unit is designed to enable candidates to analyse factors which affect the external environment of business enterprises and which managers have to take account of when making business decisions. It builds on previous knowledge and understanding of business organisations from the Business Management (Higher) Course and concentrates on contemporary issues which are currently important for business.

This Unit is a mandatory Unit of the Course Business Management (Advanced Higher) and is also available as a freestanding Unit.

This Unit is suitable for candidates progressing from Higher Business Management and provides a basis for further study.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Analyse the activities of transnational companies
- 2 Assess the impact of the European Union (EU) on UK business
- 3 Analyse a current issue affecting the operation of business enterprises

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates will normally be expected to have attained the following, or equivalent:

- ◆ Higher Business Management or its Units

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Advanced Higher (8 SCQF points at SCQF level 7*)

Administrative Information

Superclass: AG

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT Managing Organisations: The External Environment
(Advanced Higher)

**SCQF points are used to allocate credit in qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF points at a SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to doctorates.*

CORE SKILLS

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skills	none
Core Skill component(s)	Critical Thinking at SCQF Level 6

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT **Managing Organisations: The External Environment (Advanced Higher)**

Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1

Analyse the activities of multinational companies.

Performance criteria

- (a) Explain the advantages and disadvantages of the operation of multinational companies in a particular situation
- (b) Analyse the impact of multinational companies on the environment faced by businesses
- (c) Draw conclusions about the activities of multinational companies
- (d) Use relevant concepts from business management correctly in the analysis

OUTCOME 2

Assess the impact of the European Union (EU) on UK business.

Performance criteria

- (a) Examine the costs and benefits for UK businesses of a particular aspect of the EU
- (b) Draw conclusions about the effects of an aspect of the EU on the business environment in the UK
- (c) Use relevant concepts from business management correctly in the analysis

OUTCOME 3

Analyse a current issue affecting the operation of business enterprises.

Performance criteria

- (a) Explain the importance of the issue to business
- (b) Draw conclusions about the ways in which the issue influences the operation of businesses
- (c) Use relevant concepts from business management correctly in the analysis

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Managing Organisations: The External Environment (Advanced Higher)

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE UNIT

The contents for this Unit are specified in Appendix 1 — Unit Content.

Evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have met the requirements of all Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

Candidates are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the Unit content by answering a combination of short answer and extended response questions drawn from all areas of the Unit content and covering all Outcomes.

Evidence will be produced by candidates completing a number of short answer and extended response questions in a closed book assessment. Candidates must attempt this assessment in controlled conditions on a single occasion. The maximum time allowed is 60 minutes.

If re-assessment is required, it should contain a different sample from the range of Unit content.

Achievement can be determined by the use of a cut-off score. The standard to be applied and the breadth of coverage are illustrated in the National Assessment Bank items available for this Unit. If a Centre wishes to design its own assessment for this Unit, it should be of a comparable standard.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Managing Organisations: The External Environment (Advanced Higher)

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

This Unit is set in the context of contemporary UK society, and candidates should be encouraged to relate the ideas in the Unit to the current activities of all types of organisations, for example, private enterprises, publicly-funded bodies and voluntary organisations. Local examples of organisations in Scotland are likely to be particularly valuable in illustrating the ways in which events in the external environment affect businesses in the UK. This could be achieved, for example, by using local branches of transnational (or multinational) corporations as well as locally based small or medium-sized enterprises. Candidates should relate these to the wider national and international business environment.

Examples of EU policies should be related to organisations operating in the UK but candidates may gain a greater appreciation of the effects of the EU in the UK if they are able to contrast what happens in the domestic environment with the effects of the same policies/procedures in other parts of the EU.

There is a very wide range of issues which affect business but the emphasis should be on those which are of relevance at the time the Unit is delivered.

The scope of the Unit is broad and it is important to make reference to a wide range of examples of different types of organisations at different stages of development and facing different kinds of challenges. The wide scope of the Unit means that its major purpose is to make candidates aware of the range of issues which are relevant to business management and it is not always necessary to explore every issue in great depth. The Unit takes account of the fact that organisations differ in the way in which they respond to their external environment and that the effects of it vary depending on the organisation concerned. Organisations differ also in their capacity to influence their external environment and the type of changes which they perceive as important.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

This Unit offers much scope for the use of case studies and for encouraging candidates to find out about current developments for themselves through the use of newspapers, magazines and the Internet. Candidates can also draw on their own experience as stakeholders, for instance as employees or customers. Throughout, the emphasis should be on fostering an enquiring, enterprising approach to study and in developing the self-reliance of candidates who, at this level, ought to be able to assume much of the responsibility for their own learning. They should also be encouraged to make connections with their previous study, particularly in terms of recognising how the Course builds on and develops concepts originally introduced at Higher level.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Managing Organisations: The External Environment (Advanced Higher)

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Extended response questions are likely to be the most suitable method of generating evidence for this Unit. It may be appropriate in certain cases to supplement them with short answer questions, for example to ask candidates to explain a particular term such as transfer pricing. Case studies of multinational companies could be used as stimulus material. All three Outcomes could be assessed using a case study of a single company, perhaps one which operates in the UK and the EU.

CANDIDATES WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering special alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (SQA, 2004).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Managing Organisations: The External Environment (Advanced Higher)

Appendix 1 — Unit Content

NB: This Appendix is within the statement of standards, ie the mandatory requirements of the Unit.

Outcome 1

Multinational companies	Reasons for growth of multinational companies; methods of growth such as foreign direct investment, buying overseas companies
	A recognition of the issues raised by multinational companies, for example, transfer pricing, exploitation of local resources, foreign control of economy, increasing importance of global operations
	Effects on host country — gains in employment, technology transfer, balance of payments changes from greater exports or increased imports, repatriated profits, ‘screwdriver’ plants, loss of government control
	Effects on home country — balance of payments, loss of control by home government, changing skill mix of employees, effects on overall level of employment

Outcome 2

European Union	EU policies, for example, Single European Market (SEM), Social Chapter, European Monetary Union (EMU)
	Candidates should be aware of current developments in EU activities and their likely effect on organisations in the UK

Outcome 3

Business issues	Candidates should be aware of current issues affecting business and how these may influence the way in which organisations operate, for example, business ethics, social responsibility, environmental and green issues, globalisation, degree of government involvement in organisations, expansion of organisations, technological changes like e-commerce
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National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Managing Organisations: The Internal Environment
(Advanced Higher)

NUMBER DV4N 13

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

SUMMARY

This Unit is designed to enable candidates to analyse the internal factors which affect the work of managers in business organisations in a constantly changing business environment. It builds on previous knowledge and understanding of business organisations from the Business Management (Higher) Course and concentrates on critical areas of managerial decision making such as leadership and change.

This Unit is a mandatory Unit of the Course Business Management (Advanced Higher) and is also available as a freestanding Unit.

This Unit is suitable for candidates progressing from Higher Business Management and provides a basis for further study.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Analyse the management of organisations
- 2 Advise on the management of change

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates will normally be expected to have attained the following, or equivalent:

- ◆ Higher Business Management or its Units

Administrative Information

Superclass: AG

Publication date: March 2006

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National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Managing Organisations: The Internal Environment
(Advanced Higher)

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Advanced Higher (8 SCQF points at SCQF level 7*)

**SCQF points are used to allocate credit in qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF points at a SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to doctorates.*

CORE SKILLS

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skill	None
Core Skills component	Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Managing Organisations: The Internal Environment (Advanced Higher)

Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1

Analyse the management of organisations.

Performance criteria

- (a) Explain different approaches to management
- (b) Explain the advantages and disadvantages of an approach to managing in a particular situation
- (c) Evaluate factors which influence the effectiveness of management in a particular situation
- (d) Use relevant concepts from business management correctly in the analysis

OUTCOME 2

Advise on the management of change.

Performance criteria

- (a) Assess the relative significance of driving and restraining forces for change in a particular situation
- (b) Examine the advantages and disadvantages of an approach to managing the change process in a particular situation
- (c) Draw conclusions about the effectiveness of managing change in a particular situation
- (d) Use relevant concepts from business management correctly in the analysis

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Managing Organisations: The Internal Environment (Advanced Higher)

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE UNIT

The contents for this Unit are specified in Appendix 1 — Unit Content.

Evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have met the requirements of all Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

Candidates are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the Unit content by answering a combination of short answer and extended response questions drawn from all areas of the Unit content and covering all Outcomes.

Evidence will be produced by candidates completing a number of short answer and extended response questions in a closed book assessment. Candidates must attempt this assessment in controlled conditions on a single occasion. The maximum time allowed is 60 minutes.

If re-assessment is required, it should contain a different sample from the range of Unit content.

Achievement can be determined by the use of a cut-off score. The standard to be applied and the breadth of coverage are illustrated in the National Assessment Bank items available for this Unit. If a Centre wishes to design its own assessment for this Unit, it should be of a comparable standard.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Managing Organisations: The Internal Environment (Advanced Higher)

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

This Unit is set in the context of contemporary UK society, and candidates should be encouraged to relate the ideas in the Unit to the current activities of all types of organisations, for example, private enterprises, publicly-funded bodies and voluntary organisations. Local examples of organisations in Scotland are likely to be particularly valuable in illustrating the activities and actions of managers in business.

The wide scope of the Unit means that its major purpose is to make candidates aware of the range of issues which are relevant to business management and it is not always necessary to explore every issue in great depth. The Unit takes account of the fact that approaches to managing vary between organisations and between managers within the same organisation and that these different approaches may not always have the same consequences. Approaches to change vary also and organisations differ in type of changes which they perceive as important.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

This Unit offers much scope for the use of case studies and for practical work, some of which could be used to illustrate the ideas raised in Outcome 1, for example, teamwork. For both Outcomes visits to business enterprises and the use of visiting speakers are likely to be of great help in giving candidates a first-hand impression of the intricacies and difficulties of management. Candidates could also draw on their own experience as stakeholders, for instance as employees, and should be strongly encouraged to keep abreast of current developments by reading the business sections of newspapers, business magazines and through the internet. Company websites, for example, often give examples of changes which the organisation has experienced. Throughout, the emphasis should be on fostering an enquiring, enterprising approach to study and in developing the self-reliance of candidates who, at this level, ought to be able to assume much of the responsibility for their own learning. They should also be encouraged to make connections with their previous study, particularly in terms of recognising how the Course builds on and develops concepts originally introduced at Higher level.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Extended response questions are likely to be the most suitable method of generating evidence for this Unit. It may be appropriate in certain cases to supplement them with short answer questions, for example to ask candidates to explain a particular term such as autocratic leadership. Case studies of change could be used as stimulus material and will provide an opportunity to explore a particular situation. Both Outcomes could be assessed using a case study of a single company.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Managing Organisations: The Internal Environment (Advanced Higher)

CANDIDATES WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. 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 Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (SQA, 2004).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Managing Organisations: The Internal Environment (Advanced Higher)

Appendix 1 — Unit Content

NB: This Appendix is within the statement of standards, ie the mandatory requirements of the Unit.

Outcome 1

Role of management	Planning, organising, controlling, co-ordinating, commanding (Fayol); managerial roles (Mintzberg)
Management thought	Different schools of management thought including classical school, such as Taylor; human relations school, such as Hawthorne studies; systems theory, contingency theory
Motivation to work	Methods to increase motivation to work such as job enrichment, job enlargement, job rotation, empowerment, financial incentives, for example, group bonus schemes
Teams	Role of teams in organisations Characteristics of effective teams, for example, commitment to team goals, size, team roles, such as Belbin; communication between team members, nature and clarity of task, appropriate processes and procedures Stages of group development: forming, storming, norming and performing
Leadership	Awareness of different theories of leadership, for example, trait theory, leadership style, contingency theory Different leadership styles: autocratic, participative Recognition of factors affecting leadership style, for example, task, group size, organisational culture, nature of group members
Personal effectiveness of managers	Principles of time management — assigning priority, grouping similar activities together, clear objectives, time logs, controlling interruptions, saying no Personal qualities — behaviours associated with enterprise and entrepreneurship, (including self-employment) such as self-confidence and self-reliance, ability to deal with uncertainty, communication skills, administrative and organisational skills, technical skills

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Managing Organisations: The Internal Environment (Advanced Higher)

Outcome 2

Factors causing change	Analysis of forces driving change and those restraining change (force field analysis)
Stages of change	Preparation, unfreezing, changing, refreezing, evaluation
Approaches to managing change	Awareness of a range of approaches to managing change, for example, directive (top-down), piecemeal initiatives; participation; negotiation, for example, productivity improvements; action-centred; use of experts, use of change agents
	Effects of organisational culture on managing change
	Results of change and effects of change on the organisation

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Researching a Business (Advanced Higher)

NUMBER DV4P 13

COURSE Business Management (Advanced Higher)

SUMMARY

This Unit is designed to enable candidates to apply their knowledge and understanding of the principles of business management to a business organisation of their choice. It builds directly on previous study of business management. It requires candidates to gather information on a business organisation and use this information to assess the current situation of the business. It provides a foundation for an investigation into the likely future conduct of the business. It gives candidates the opportunity to practise information gathering skills as well as giving them a direct insight into the way in which businesses operate in a modern economy.

This Unit is a mandatory Unit of the Course Business Management (Advanced Higher) and is also available as a freestanding Unit.

This Unit is suitable for candidates progressing from Higher Business Management and provides a basis for further study.

OUTCOME

1 Assess a business situation

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates will normally be expected to have attained the following, or equivalent:

- ◆ Higher Business Management or its Units

Administrative Information

Superclass: AG

Publication date: March 2006

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National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Researching a Business (Advanced Higher)

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Advanced Higher (8 SCQF points at SCQF level 7*)

**SCQF points are used to allocate credit in qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF points at a SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

CORE SKILLS

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skills	none
Core Skill component(s)	Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Researching a Business (Advanced Higher)

Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1

Assess a business situation.

Performance criteria

- (a) Present details of the business, including reference to its internal organisation, the markets for its output and its objectives
- (b) Analyse the decision making process within the business in terms of how decisions are made and by whom
- (c) Carry out a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis of the business with respect to its current situation and its external environment
- (d) Identify the main stakeholders in the business and analyse the extent of their involvement and influence

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE UNIT

The contents for this Unit are specified in Appendix 1 — Unit Content.

Evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have met the requirements of all Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

Candidates are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the Unit content by presenting a report on their assessment of a business situation. The report should cover all aspects of Outcome 1.

Candidates will be given guidance to enable them to structure their evidence in a suitable format. The evidence should be the work of the candidate and produced as the natural consequence of undertaking the assessment of the situation of a business.

Achievement can be determined by the use of a cut-off score. The standard to be applied and the breadth of coverage are illustrated in the National Assessment Bank items available for this Unit. If a Centre wishes to design its own assessment for this Unit, it should be of a comparable standard.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Researching a Business (Advanced Higher)

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

This Unit gives candidates the opportunity to assess the current situation of a business. Candidates are required to gather information on the business and they should choose a suitable business carefully. Most candidates are likely to select an established business. This could be one with which they have connections through relatives or friends, or one with which they make links for the purposes of this Unit. It would be possible to assess the situation on the setting up of a new business enterprise if desired. This could be one in which the candidate may be involved in some capacity.

Where candidates choose a larger organisation, their assessment may focus on a part of the organisation, such as a particular department or area of operation or a particular location.

The investigation could be based on any type of organisation. Local operations of those in the voluntary sector may be particularly suitable as they may see the investigation as being in the nature of a consultancy service.

In many respects this Unit requires candidates to apply knowledge and understanding which they have gained in previous study at Higher level. They do, however, have to collect information about the business they choose. An obvious source of information is the owner or manager of the business but candidates may also collect information from other stakeholders such as customers or suppliers. Desk research on, for example, the industry in which the business operates and on the overall business climate may also be useful in assessing the current situation of the business.

The foregoing suggests that the research should have a local context and that it should encourage candidates to recognise the importance of entrepreneurial behaviour in business development.

This Unit enables candidates to gather information which they can use to carry out further investigation into the future strategy of the business. Those candidates who are following the Course in Business Management at Advanced Higher level are required to go on to do this. They will write up their findings in a Business Report which will form a component of the Course assessment for Business Management (Advanced Higher)

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Business Investigation (Advanced Higher)

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

Helping candidates to identify a suitable business will be a major aspect of the learning and teaching process. Candidates should be encouraged to use their own experience or to follow their own interests. Thus, those who have thoughts about setting up in business could develop them for the purposes of their research while others may be able to explore a family business or one with which they have connections. Not all candidates may wish to look at a small enterprise or a self-employment opportunity and these candidates can examine larger organisations, although their assessment may well become unmanageable unless they highlight a specific aspect of the activities of the organisation, for example, the local operations of a national charity.

Much of the responsibility for completing this Unit rests with the candidate and it is important that independent learning is encouraged. The main requirement is that candidates are given advice and assistance appropriate to the needs of their individual investigation. Candidates are likely to benefit from advice and guidance on how to contact a company and how to conduct an interview with an owner or manager.

The Unit can be integrated with the other two Units in Business Management (Advanced Higher) and can be seen as a key step in developing the ability to apply ideas raised there and at Higher level.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

The main method of assessment for this Unit will be a report based on information gathered during the Unit. This report will include information on the business such as its markets, a SWOT analysis, the decision making process in the business and the main stakeholders.

CANDIDATES WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering special alternative outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs (SQA, 2004)*.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Researching a Business (Advanced Higher)

Appendix 1 — Unit Content

NB: This Appendix is within the statement of standards, ie the mandatory requirements of the Unit.

Business details	Internal organisation, for example, structure, organisation chart, nature of jobs; functional activities, such as marketing, financial situation; objectives, for example, profit, survival, growth; strengths and weaknesses (internal), opportunities and threats (external), SWOT analysis
Stakeholders	Examples could include owner(s), shareholders, financial institutions, customers, family members, government, local community, management
Decision making	Structured decision making model: extent to which it is used, alternative ways of making decisions