



National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Spreadsheets for Administrators (SCQF level 6)

CODE F5A5 12

SUMMARY

This Unit is designed to develop IT and problem solving skills using a spreadsheet package. The candidate should be able to use the functions of the spreadsheet package to solve problems in an administrative situation. The candidate will be required to construct a spreadsheet, perform complex analysis, provide solutions and use a range of spreadsheet facilities.

This Unit is suitable for candidates who have completed an introductory spreadsheet Unit and who wish to further their spreadsheet application skills and knowledge and/or to prepare them for the Higher National Certificate in Administration and Information Technology.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Construct a spreadsheet to clarify an administrative situation.
- 2 Perform complex analysis of the administrative situation and provide solutions.
- 3 Use a range of spreadsheet facilities.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained:

- ◆ *Information Technology for Administrators* (SCQF level 5)

Administrative Information

Superclass: CD

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CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Higher (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*).

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

CORE SKILLS

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills in this Unit.

The Unit provides opportunities for candidates to develop aspects of the following Core Skills:

- ◆ Information Technology (SCQF level 5)
- ◆ Numeracy (SCQF level 5)
- ◆ Problem Solving (SCQF level 5)

These opportunities are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit Specification.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

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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 SQA.

OUTCOME 1

Construct a spreadsheet to clarify an administrative situation.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Design a spreadsheet model for a given administrative situation.
- (b) Model is designed using effective formulae and functions.
- (c) Model presentation meets given administrative requirements.
- (d) Protection facilities are used where appropriate.

OUTCOME 2

Perform complex analysis of the administrative situation and provide solutions.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Spreadsheet model is analysed to provide solutions to given administrative situations.
- (b) Spreadsheet solutions are presented in suitable formats.

OUTCOME 3

Use a range of spreadsheet facilities.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Use spreadsheet facilities to enhance user performance.
- (b) Use spreadsheet facilities to link data to another software package.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Product evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have achieved all Outcomes to the standard specified in the Outcomes and Performance Criteria. For Outcomes 1 and 2 candidates must produce a workbook containing a minimum of three worksheets; this will allow the candidate scope for linking and grouping worksheets. For Outcome 3 candidates should be given prepared files and provide print-outs as evidence. Candidates will design the worksheets and develop them in line with the demands of the assessment to ensure that all Evidence Requirements are covered.

The assessment for this Unit could be holistic and integrative across all Outcomes

The assessment(s) will be carried out under open-book supervised conditions where candidates should have access to notes and online help. Assessment(s) should take place at appropriate points during delivery of the Unit.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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The evidence for each of the Outcomes is shown below:

Outcome One

print and page format

- ◆ group worksheets
- ◆ orientation
- ◆ print formulae
- ◆ print selection
- ◆ protect workbook

cells

- ◆ formatting — alignment, bold, borders and shading, column width, currency, date, fill (colour), italic, percentage, row height

formulae

- ◆ add, divide, multiply, subtract, sum
- ◆ average, max, min
- ◆ absolute cell referencing

Outcome Two

function

- ◆ conditional formatting
- ◆ consolidate worksheets
- ◆ data sort
- ◆ filter
- ◆ freeze panes
- ◆ hide columns
- ◆ if function
- ◆ today or now

charts

- ◆ simple line, column, pie

Outcome Three

- ◆ allocate macro to toolbar
- ◆ link data to another software package

The Assessment Support Pack for this Unit provides sample assessment material. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the Assessment Support Pack to ensure a comparable standard.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Spreadsheets for Administrators (SCQF level 6)

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

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

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

This Unit is an optional Unit in the National Certificate Group Award in Administration at SCQF level 5, but can also be used as a free-standing Unit.

This Unit is designed not only to strengthen the candidates' knowledge of spreadsheet design and functionality but also to enhance the candidates' problem solving skills. It is not enough that the candidate can manipulate the software. The tasks they are set should allow them to demonstrate that they can analyse spreadsheets; know when and why they need to protect their spreadsheets; use spreadsheets to aid problem solving in an administrative situation and present solutions in a format which demonstrates their skills in layout and style of presentation.

Outcome 1 and 2

Candidates should be aware of and be able to deal with:

- ◆ creating workbooks
- ◆ print and page formatting
- ◆ cell formatting
- ◆ data manipulation
- ◆ creating a range of formulae
- ◆ using a range of functions, eg: conditional formatting, sorting, filtering
- ◆ production of a range of charts

Outcome 3

Candidates should be aware of and be able to deal with:

- ◆ creation and use of Macros
- ◆ data linking within spreadsheets
- ◆ data linking with other software packages

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

Initially, candidates will need to develop skills to manipulate the software to meet the demands of the Unit. Thereafter, emphasis should be placed on helping candidates use these skills in problem solving and to produce material which will satisfy the demands of tasks they are given both in terms of accuracy of content and in suitability of presentation. Candidates should be encouraged to take a positive attitude to the quality of work they produce.

Candidates should be thoroughly prepared in the use of the spreadsheet software. Thereafter practical tasks should be set to develop and expand their problem solving skills.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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OPPORTUNITIES FOR CORE SKILL DEVELOPMENT

It is envisaged that candidates, by using the appropriate Spreadsheet software, will be able to develop aspects of the Core Skills in *Information Technology*. Candidates, by using effective formulae and functions should be able to develop aspects of the Core Skills in *Numeracy*, and by performing complex analysis of the administrative situation and providing solutions they should be able to develop aspects of the Core Skills in *Problem Solving*.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

The assessment for this Unit could be holistic and integrative across all Outcomes, however, a centre may choose to assess Outcome 3 as a standalone assessment. It is appropriate to use a case study approach. The candidate should not need to input large volumes of data in Outcome 1, for example, a candidate could design a worksheet for the Northern Region, then copy and modify to represent the Southern Region. A third worksheet would be the result of consolidation of worksheets one and two. For Outcome 3 candidates should be provided with files which requires no modification but are to be used to link data with another software package. For example, the candidate may be provided with a workbook containing a worksheet and a chart which they then link to a word processed report or presentation software file. It should be sufficiently testing to address the problem solving nature of the Unit. The assessment can be carried out over more than one occasion but must take place under controlled conditions with candidates having access to software 'help' menus and/or paper based IT manuals. The work produced by the candidate must meet the Unit criteria and be of a standard acceptable in a workplace situation.

On first submission the work produced should be fit for purpose and error free. Where errors occur, the teacher/lecturer can point them out to the candidate. Candidates should be given one opportunity to correct the errors and resubmit. Resubmitted work must be error free.

Reference should be made to the Assessment Support Pack available for this Unit.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Opportunities for the use of e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by information and communications technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or e-checklists. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Further advice is available in *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education (AA1641, March 2003)*, *SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools (BD2625, June 2005)*.

CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES AND/OR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (www.sqa.org.uk).

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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History of changes:

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Assessment changed from closed book to open book.	01/07/2010