



National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Implementing a Public Relations Campaign (SCQF level 6)

Unit code: FT8X 12

Superclass: BA

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Summary

This Unit aims to develop the decision making and practical skills required to execute a Public Relations (PR) campaign from an agreed brief. Candidates will outline objectives, stakeholders, media techniques and evaluation methods. This will include the identification of an appropriate sponsor. Examples of PR media will be produced in line with current industry practice.

The Unit will be of interest to a wide range of candidates, particularly those directly concerned with marketing, advertising and other consumer behaviour related subjects at SCQF levels 5 and 6.

This is a mandatory Unit in the National Certificate in *Advertising and PR* (SCQF level 6). It is also available as a freestanding Unit.

Outcomes

- 1 Prepare a plan for a PR campaign.
- 2 Produce materials to support the PR campaign.
- 3 Evaluate the PR campaign.

Recommended entry

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

- ◆ English or Communications at SCQF 5
- ◆ The Role and Functions of Public Relations in Organisations (SCQF level 6)

General information (cont)

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Core Skills

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

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

Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 6: (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.*

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

Prepare a plan for a PR campaign.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify qualitative and quantitative objectives relevant to the PR campaign.
- (b) Describe the stakeholders appropriate to the PR campaign.
- (c) Identify the PR techniques to be used in the proposal.
- (d) Identify an appropriate sponsor to support the campaign.

Outcome 2

Produce materials to support the PR campaign.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Produce a newsworthy press release for the media.
- (b) Design a leaflet for a specific group of stakeholders.

Outcome 3

Evaluate the PR campaign.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Evaluate the PR campaign using qualitative methods.
- (b) Evaluate the PR campaign using quantitative methods.

National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Evidence is required which demonstrates that the candidates have achieved all of the Outcomes and Performance Criteria. Assessments for this Unit can be carried out holistically.

Outcome 1

Written and/or oral recorded evidence is required. This will include a minimum of two qualitative and one quantitative objectives, two groups of stakeholders, two PR technique examples and one sponsor with justification.

Outcome 2

Evidence of the candidate's ability to produce a newsworthy press release of about 200 words in length that relates to the PR campaign in Outcome 1 is required. This must cover content and layout including source of release, date issued, press release title, newsworthy heading, quote from opinion leader, sponsor and contact. Correct grammar, spelling and layout/use of white space should also be assessed. The contact and/or response mechanisms should be included.

The candidate will also produce a leaflet that has a clear communication for an identified stakeholder identified in Outcome 1.

This is an open-book assessment.

Outcome 3

Written and/or oral recorded evidence where candidates will evaluate their own PR campaigns from Outcomes 1 and 2 is required. Evidence must include a minimum of 2 qualitative methods and 2 quantitative methods.

This is an open-book assessment.

National Unit specification: support notes

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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

In this Unit candidates will be able to apply their underpinning knowledge of PR to an actual client brief situation. References to a variety of current positive and negative damage limitation PR examples across a range of markets and organisations will be reviewed. The development of PR campaigns will be monitored throughout the Unit through regular media communications auditing.

The main PR planning areas of qualitative/quantitative objectives, profiling PR stakeholders (sometimes referred to as publics) including communities, suppliers, distributors and opinion leaders and identifying and implementing PR media will be examined. The use of social networking will also be referred to. The presentation of the PR campaign is in itself a key PR communication tool. The design and production of a press release is also an essential PR execution. Reviewing current press releases in line with current industry standards will be covered and additional PR support materials such as a leaflet will also be referred to. PR evaluation methods relating to assessing campaign effectiveness is a crucial aspect to the planning process and will address qualitative and quantitative methods relating to PR objectives, media achievement and other available resources.

Guidance on learning and teaching approaches for this Unit

Candidates should be encouraged to refer to PR media in broadcast, non-broadcast and social networking. This can be found through actual or on line sources of PR Consultancies or Press Offices and PR Departments, news sites or repeat programming available on main broadcast channels, press, consumer and professional publications. Candidates should be encouraged to track various PR campaigns throughout the Unit and identify good practice with effective PR planning. It is essential that candidates refer to current press releases that follow professional standards and learn how to apply these when writing their own press releases. Clear criteria for writing a good newsworthy press release must be established. The importance of correct grammar and spelling must be applied for all PR communications and this has to be instilled firmly with learners.

Reference to the Public Relations Consultants Association (PRCA) and the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) websites for guidance, examples and support must be integral. Professional PR publications such as PR Week or Campaign magazine should be referred to. Peer evaluation should be encouraged to identify good practice and opportunities for improvement. This could be applied to Outcome 1 presentations and Outcome 2 PR materials.

Suggested approaches include peer evaluation, in particular when groups/individuals present or cascade information. Cascading current industry examples should be encouraged to develop a wide reference resource for the class.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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By adopting the learning and teaching approaches and/or through the Outcomes and corresponding Evidence Requirements, the Unit should provide candidates with an opportunity to develop the following essential skills for life, learning and work:

Employability — through developing practical skills to industry standards and working on time limited tasks.

Sustainability — through using electronic rather than paper resources to present findings.

Guidance on approaches to assessment for this Unit

One case study PR client could be identified to cover all Outcomes of this Unit. This may be selected by the assessor or the candidates either individually or in groups. It is advised that the candidates select their PR client to increase motivation and ownership for this Unit. The case study brief may be issued in advance to allow the use of resources outwith the classroom.

There has to be consistency across the three Outcomes in relation to response to the assessments. The Outcomes have to follow their stated order as the Unit is devised to convey the progress of a PR campaign.

It is advised that the candidates present themselves as a PR consultancy representing the client in order to convey a professional tone. This will be reflected in their formal presentation in Outcome 1, their proposed PR materials in Outcome 2 and their evaluation report in Outcome 3.

If Outcome 1 is to be administered as a group presentation it is recommended that there are a maximum of 3 members per group with individual accountability integrated into the checklist system to ensure contribution and achievement of the individual. It would be beneficial to film the presentations for feedback and self evaluation for the learners.

It is suggested that Outcome 1 is a short presentation of five minutes in length and use evidence, for example, slide show, web links/sites, exemplars, etc relating to the Performance Criteria. This could be a group or individual presentation.

It is suggested that Outcome 2 has a checklist that covers content and layout including source of release, date issued, press release title, newsworthy heading, quote from opinion leader, sponsor and contact. Correct grammar, spelling and layout/use of white space should also be assessed. The contact and/or response mechanisms for the leaflet should also be part of this checklist.

Appropriate assessment evidence for Outcome 3 would be a short word processed report of a minimum of 300 words evaluating the PR campaign. This could be presented orally.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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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 Communication 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)*.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

In this Unit candidates will develop the decision making and practical skills required to execute a Public Relations (PR) campaign from an agreed brief. Candidates will outline objectives, stakeholders, media techniques and evaluation methods. This will include the identification of an appropriate sponsor. Examples of PR media will be produced in line with current industry practice.

Candidates will:

- ◆ produce a written press release to industry standards
- ◆ carry out research
- ◆ present findings
- ◆ produce a leaflet to industry standards with a specific aim
- ◆ evaluate their own work and explain this to others

As they are doing this Unit candidates will develop aspects of the Core Skills in *Communication*, *Problem Solving* and *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*.

In addition, they may develop aspects of the Core Skills of where specific learning and teaching approaches are adopted:

- ◆ *Communication*: through working in groups to plan a PR campaign and evaluate
- ◆ *Information and Communication Technology*: through use of ICT to produce press releases etc

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Core Skills Component Critical Thinking at SCQF level 5 embedded.	29/09/2011

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