



# Higher Business Management — draft Course rationale and summary

May 2011



This edition: May 2011, draft version 1.0

Published by the Scottish Qualifications Authority  
The Optima Building, 58 Robertson Street, Glasgow G2 8DQ  
Ironmills Road, Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 1LE

[www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2011

# Contents

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Course rationale</b>   | <b>1</b> |
| Background  | 1        |
| Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles | 2        |
| Purpose and aims of the Course  | 2        |
| Information about typical learners who might do the Course                                    | 3        |
| <b>Course summary</b>   | <b>5</b> |
| Course outline  | 5        |
| Course structure and conditions of award  | 6        |
| Assessment  | 8        |

# Course rationale

## Background

All new and revised National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

In this Course, and its component Units, there will be an emphasis on skills development and the application of those skills. Assessment approaches will be proportionate, fit for purpose and will promote best practice, enabling learners to achieve the highest standards they can.

This Course provides learners with opportunities to continue to acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities as well as skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

All Courses provide opportunities for learners to develop breadth, challenge and application, but the focus and balance of the assessment will be appropriate for the subject area.

## **Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles**

The Higher Business Management Course provides learners with the knowledge and skills needed to understand contemporary business.

The Course gives learners a greater understanding of the dynamic, changing, competitive and economic environment of industry and commerce. It develops skills in communicating and presenting vital business-related information, in a variety of formats, to the various stakeholders of an organisation.

The development of skills explicit to the Course will enable learners to succeed in life with determination and the ability to think creatively. These skills will support learners in becoming more confident, particularly regarding their own future education and place in the world of work.

Understanding the economic and financial environment in which business operates will help learners to contribute responsibly to society.

By encouraging working with others, the Course will help learners to participate effectively in our ever-changing global business environment.

The Course covers a broad spectrum of learning that allows for further progression and depth of study at a later date. It provides opportunities that allow learning to develop in a challenging and enjoyable way. It relates the study of Business Management to real-life business contexts and is therefore of great relevance.

## **Purpose and aims of the Course**

Business plays an important role in society. We all rely on businesses to create wealth and wellbeing, prosperity, jobs and choices. Therefore, it is essential that society has effective businesses and business managers to sustain this role.

This Course will build on the skills, knowledge and understanding gained in Business Management (National 5) or, for some learners, can act as an introduction to the world of business.

The purpose of the Course is to highlight the way in which organisations operate and the steps that they take to achieve their strategic goals. This will be done through combining theoretical and practical aspects of learning through the use of real-life business contexts. The skills, knowledge and understanding gained are embedded in current business theory and practice, and reflect the integrated nature of organisations, their functions and decision-making processes.

A main feature of this Course is the development of enterprising and employability skills; learners will be able to understand and make use of business information to interpret and report on overall business performance in a range of contexts. The Course therefore includes the study of organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors.

The Course underpins the important impact businesses have on everyday life, thereby giving learners experiences which are topical. It develops skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work that will be of instant use when entering into the workplace. It supports personal financial awareness through knowledge of financial management in a business context.

Learners will be given the opportunity to be involved in learning opportunities which are challenging, motivating and inspiring.

The Course aims to enable learners to develop and extend:

- ◆ knowledge and understanding of the way society relies on business to satisfy our needs
- ◆ an in-depth understanding of a range of methods businesses use to ensure customers' needs are met
- ◆ enterprising skills, and to adopt enterprising attributes by providing opportunities to study complex business issues and to develop understanding of business-related financial matters
- ◆ an in-depth understanding of the ways businesses can use resources to achieve maximum efficiency
- ◆ an understanding of the steps taken by businesses to improve overall performance and effectiveness
- ◆ knowledge and understanding of the important effect that external influences, such as economic impact and sustainability, have on organisations

## **Information about typical learners who might do the Course**

The study of business management is suitable for all learners interested in entering the world of business, whether that be as a manager, employee or self-employed person, as it gives learners knowledge and awareness of the business environment.

The Course develops a greater understanding of how people contribute positively to business success. As a consequence, learners will be better informed about business and be able to make a strong contribution to society as consumers, employees, employers or self-employed people.

The combination of knowledge of current business theory and practical aspects of learning will enable learners to apply their skills and knowledge to real-life business situations.

By developing many transferable skills, the Course prepares learners for everyday life, the world of work or further study of business and other business-related disciplines. It extends and deepens an understanding of business and highlights a range of business-based career opportunities that are available within all business sectors.

The Course develops the necessary skills of enterprise, employability, ICT and citizenship, and supports literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. It takes into account the needs of all learners by providing sufficient flexibility to enable them to achieve in different ways and at a different pace.

By studying this Course, learners will develop skills and attributes which include: an enterprising attitude and critical appreciation of taking calculated risks in a business context; an in-depth understanding of the importance to businesses of being customer-focused; and decision making, by interpreting, analysing and evaluating a range of complex business-related information to make critical, ethical, responsible and effective business decisions.

Learners will also develop skills and attributes including: numeracy, through detailed knowledge of financial management, in a business context, that supports and further develops personal financial management; and using ICT to investigate, analyse, evaluate and communicate business information efficiently and effectively. Learners will also develop skills of communicating effectively in a business context by working co-operatively with others to complete activities, some of which may be complex, and by being able to work independently or to lead activities, some of which may be complex, when appropriate.

Successful completion of this Course opens up a range of vertical and lateral progression routes for learners. These include other National Qualifications, National Certificates, Higher National Certificates, Higher National Diplomas and degrees in business-related subjects. It may also lead to employment and/or training in various industries.

## **Course summary**

**Course title: Higher Business Management**

**SCQF level 6 (24 SCQF credit points)**

### **Course outline**

#### **Mandatory Units**

Understanding Business (Higher) (6 SCQF credit points)

Management of People and Finance (Higher) (6 SCQF credit points)

Management of Marketing and Operations (Higher) (6 SCQF credit points)

#### **Course assessment**

(6 SCQF credit points)

This Course includes six SCQF credit points for 40 additional programmed hours to allow preparation for Course assessment. The Course assessment covers the added value of the Course. Further information on the Course assessment is provided in the Assessment section.

## **Course structure and conditions of award**

The Course is theoretical and experiential in its nature. Skills, knowledge and understanding are enhanced through a range of real-life contexts within the broad discipline of business management.

The Course consists of three mandatory Units. Within each Unit there is a degree of flexibility in how study is undertaken. By its nature, the Course develops a wide range of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work, through providing opportunities for active learning and real-life contexts within which learning takes place.

These skills include: essential employability skills and attitudes, including flexibility and adaptability, independence, reliability and working with others; numeracy, by being able to interpret data, tables, charts and other graphical displays to draw business conclusions; and effective use of ICT in a business context.

Units are statements of standards for assessment and not programmes of learning and teaching. They can be delivered in a variety of ways.

However, there is scope in the design of the Units to allow the Course to be taught in an integrated, experiential way.

### **Understanding Business (Higher)**

In this Unit, learners will develop skills and knowledge that will deepen their understanding of the ways in which organisations in the private, public and third sectors operate and the effect the external environment has on them. Learners will carry out activities that highlight the opportunities and constraints on these organisations in the pursuit of their strategic goals. This Unit allows learners to analyse and evaluate the important impact that the external environment has on an organisation's activity, and to consider the implications of a range of external factors that affect an organisation's decision making.

### **Management of People and Finance (Higher)**

In this Unit, learners will develop skills and knowledge that will deepen their understanding and critical awareness of the issues facing organisations in the management of people and finance. This Unit will allow learners to carry out activities that will extend their grasp of relevant theories, concepts and procedures used in planning for an organisation's success, including leadership, motivation and finance. It also allows learners to explain, analyse and evaluate relevant business information, in each of these contexts, relating to business structure and activity.

### **Management of Marketing and Operations (Higher)**

In this Unit, learners will develop skills and knowledge that will deepen their understanding of the importance of having effective marketing and operations systems. The Unit will allow learners to carry out activities that will extend their grasp of relevant theories, concepts and procedures used by organisations in

*successful learner, confident individual, responsible citizen, effective contributor*

order to improve quality and competitiveness. It will provide learners with an in-depth grasp of the importance of satisfying customers' needs, along with a critical awareness of the issues facing organisations in relation to marketing and operations.

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all the Units as well as the Course assessment. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

Draft

## Assessment

Information about assessment standards for the Course will be included in the *Course Assessment Specification*, which will provide full details including advice on how a learner's overall attainment for the Course will be determined.

### Unit assessment

All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in Unit specifications.

They will be assessed pass/fail within centres.

SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgements are consistent and meet national standards.

Exemplification of possible assessment approaches for these Units will be provided in the *National Assessment Resource*.

### Course assessment

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of [added value](#)<sup>1</sup>. At National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, the added value will be assessed in the Course assessment. The added value for the Course must address the key purposes and aims of the Course as defined in the Course Rationale. It will do this by addressing one or more of breadth, challenge or application.

In the Higher Business Management Course, added value will focus on:

- ◆ breadth
- ◆ challenge
- ◆ application

This will be assessed through a combination of a Business Management [question paper](#)<sup>2</sup> and a business [assignment](#)<sup>3</sup>.

The question paper will require demonstration of a breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills accumulated from across the Course.

The business assignment will extend the learners' business management knowledge and/or skills and will be sufficiently open and flexible to allow for personalisation and choice.

---

<sup>1</sup> Definitions can be found here: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html)

<sup>2</sup> See link above for definitions.

<sup>3</sup> See link above for definitions.