

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

General information for centres

This Graded Unit has been validated as part of the SQA Advanced Diploma in Business with Information Technology GM55 48. Centres are required to develop the assessment instrument in accordance with this validated specification. Centres wishing to use another type of Graded Unit or assessment instrument are required to submit proposals detailing the justification for change for validation.

Graded Unit title: Business with Information Technology:
Graded Unit 2

Graded Unit code: HP0L 48

Type of Graded Unit: Project

Assessment Instrument: Investigation

Publication date: August 2017

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 01

Unit purpose

This Graded Unit is designed to provide evidence that the candidates have met the following principal aims of the SQA Advanced Diploma in Business with Information Technology (GM55 48):

- ◆ Develop competencies in a range of specialised areas of their choice in line with their preferred career pattern or courses of further study.
- ◆ Provide a basis for future career and personal development.
- ◆ Adopt an innovative and creative approach to their work and be able to respond quickly to the challenges posed by changes in the business environment.
- ◆ Enable candidates to consider and revisit core business issues and develop a depth of understanding from a managerial perspective.
- ◆ Further developed organisational and investigative skills.
- ◆ Promote the development of transferable skills in planning, organising and evaluation and enable the candidate to investigate business issues and problems in depth.
- ◆ Promote advanced level of entry to further academic or professional qualification.
- ◆ Develop underpinning knowledge which supports SVQs.

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

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

HP7K 47	<i>Business Accounting</i>
HP7O 48	<i>Preparing Financial Forecasts</i>
HP6T 47	<i>Economic Issues: An Introduction</i>
HP6P 48	<i>Economics 1: Micro and Macro Theory and Application</i>
HP72 48	<i>Economics 2: The World Economy</i>
HP6N 47	<i>Marketing: An Introduction</i>
HP71 47	<i>Managing People and Organisations</i>
HP6R 48	<i>Business Culture and Strategy</i>
HP7A 48	<i>Information and Communication Technology in Business</i>
HP6L 47	<i>Information Technology: Applications Software 1</i>
HP78 47	<i>IT in Business: Spreadsheets</i>
HP75 47	<i>Communication: Business Communication</i>
HP6W 48	<i>Behavioural Skills for Business</i>
HP6Y 47	<i>Business Law: An Introduction</i>
HP6X 47	<i>Business Contractual Relationships</i>
HP6V 48	<i>Statistics for Business</i>

Credit points and level

2 SQA credits at SCQF level 8: (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8*)

**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 National 1 to Doctorates.*

Core Skills

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skill *Problem Solving* (SCQF level 6)

There are also opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills which are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit specification.

Assessment

This Graded Unit will be assessed by a project investigation. The developed investigation should provide the candidate with the opportunity to produce evidence that demonstrates she/he has met the aims of the Graded Unit that it covers.

Since the Core Skill of *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6 is embedded in this Unit, it is strongly recommended that you follow the assessment guidelines given. If you wish to use a different assessment model, you should seek prior verification of the assessment instrument(s) you intend to use to ensure that the Core Skill is still covered.

Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates

Graded Unit title: Business with Information Technology:
Graded Unit 2

Conditions of assessment

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

The evidence for the project is generated over time and involves three distinct stages, where each stage has to be achieved before the next is undertaken. Thus any re-assessment of stages must be undertaken before proceeding to the next stage.

Where a learner submits a stage of the project for assessment and one or more areas within that stage are assessed as deficient, that stage of the project may be returned for remediation in these areas only. To avoid the practice of grade boosting, the parts of the project that gain the minimum marks on the first submission should not be altered or re-marked. Where the first submission of the project meets all of the minimum Evidence Requirements and gains at least the minimum marks resubmission should not be permitted.

If a candidate fails the project overall or wishes to upgrade, then this must be done using a *substantially different* project, ie all stages are undertaken using a new project, assignment, case study, etc. In this case, a candidate's grade will be based on the achievement in the re-assessment, if this results in a higher grade.

At this SCQF level, candidates should work independently. Discussions should take place between the candidate and tutor to establish the suitability of the candidate's chosen issue from the outset of the investigation. It is the responsibility of the centre to take reasonable steps to ensure that the project is the work of the candidate. For example, centres may wish to informally question candidates at various stages on their knowledge and understanding of the project on which they have embarked. Centres should ensure, where research etc is carried out in other establishments or under the supervision of others, that the candidate does not receive undue assistance.

Instructions for designing the assessment task

The assessment task is a project. The project undertaken by the candidate must be a complex task which involves:

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

The assessment task must require the candidate to: analyse the task and decide on a course of action for undertaking the project. A detailed brief should be developed which

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

would enable the candidate to carry out the investigation. This should include an appropriate title, the issue(s) and/or business(es) to be investigated, objectives to be achieved, clear identification and justification of the resources to be used and an explanation of the methodologies to be adopted during the investigation.

Instructions for assessing candidates

Candidates must show that they can:

- ◆ plan and organise work and carry it through to completion. A plan must be produced with appropriate and realistic timeframes and required resources.
- ◆ organise and implement that plan through to completion.
- ◆ reflect on and evaluate the planning and development stages including any personal development of skills knowledge or understanding and draw conclusions for the future.
- ◆ produce and/or present evidence of an evaluation of the investigation and the candidate's performance as well as the personal development of the candidate through the task.
- ◆ produce evidence of meeting the aims which this Graded Unit has been designed to cover.

The project must involve the investigation of a business issue and the assessment of its implications for a business or a number of businesses. The candidate will choose the issue to be investigated in consultation with the tutor but it should be one which can be directly related to topics, concepts or models studied as part of the mandatory section of the SQA Advanced Diploma in Business with Information Technology. However, the issue investigated must relate to the way in which the business or businesses meets the needs of its internal and/or external customers.

The term 'business' refers to any organisation operating in the private, public or voluntary sector of the economy. 'Customers' refers to any internal or external customer of the organisation or to a number of such customers.

It is expected that candidates will carry out the investigation individually. Candidates should not produce joint evidence. Each candidate must provide her or his individual responses to each of the three stages of the investigation and assessors must be satisfied that the work has been completed by the individual candidate.

Guidance on grading candidates

Candidates who meet the minimum Evidence Requirements will have their achievement graded as C — competent, or A — highly competent or B somewhere between A and C. The grade-related criteria to be used to judge candidate performance for this Graded Unit is specified in the following table.

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

Grade-related criteria	
Grade A	Grade C
<p>Is a seamless, coherent piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ demonstrates clear, explicit links between the three stages of the investigation ◆ is highly focused throughout the investigation on the SMART objectives identified by the candidate ◆ carefully selects information from a variety of primary and secondary sources to provide strong and valid reasons to justify points made ◆ uses a range of concepts and topics from the SQA Advanced Diploma in Business with Information Technology accurately and relevantly to justify points made ◆ is logically structured and language and terminology used throughout will be appropriate and precise to the issues, topics and situations ◆ includes a careful and considered reflection of the investigation and the skills and knowledge used, which will inform realistic recommendations ◆ is based on a well-chosen, apposite methodology and innovative methods of gathering information which are congruent with each other ◆ provides well thought-out and logical justification of points made ◆ the evaluation is coherently related to the SMART objectives of the investigation and concepts and topics from the SQA Advanced Diploma in Business with Information Technology provide a strong basis for judging its success ◆ negotiation and discussions are conducted confidently and constructively, questions are dealt with confidently and answers fully and logically justified 	<p>Is a co-ordinated piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ contains sufficient evidence to meet the minimum requirements of each of the three stages ◆ meets the objectives of the investigation but may not always be highly focused or fully comprehensive ◆ uses information from a limited range of primary and secondary sources to support reasons given ◆ makes limited reference to concepts and topics from the SQA Advanced Diploma in Business with Information Technology which may not be fully justified in relation to the points made ◆ is satisfactorily structured and uses language which is adequate in terms of accuracy and technical content ◆ has some reflection but it is not comprehensive and this is reflected in the nature of any recommendations for the future that are made ◆ uses a suitable methodology and conventional methods of gathering data but does not consider carefully the relationship between them ◆ provides some justification of points made but reasons given may be limited and may lack clarity and focus ◆ the evaluation is related to the investigation but is limited in scope and may lack substantial support from concepts and topics within the SQA Advanced Diploma in Business with Information Technology ◆ negotiation and discussions are entered into positively and questions are answered accurately and concisely

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

The project will be marked out of 100. Assessors will mark each stage of the project, taking into account the criteria outlined. The marks will then be aggregated to arrive at an overall mark for the project. Assessors will then assign an overall grade to the candidate for this Graded Unit based on the following grade boundaries.

A = 70%–100%

B = 60%–69%

C = 50%–59%

NOTE: The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified below for each stage of the project in order to achieve the Graded Unit.

Candidates must attain a minimum of 50% of available marks for each stage to pass. The distribution of marks is highlighted in the table below.

Stage	Element	Available Marks	Minimum Pass Marks	Total Marks
Planning	Brief	18	9	24
	Plan	6	3	
Development	Report	52	26	52
Evaluation	To be negotiated	24	12	24

Evidence Requirements

The project consists of three stages: planning; developing; and evaluating. The following table specifies the minimum evidence required to pass each stage.

NOTE: The candidate must achieve **all of the minimum evidence** specified below for each stage of the project in order to pass the Graded Unit.

Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
<p>Stage 1 — Planning</p>	<p>Develop a brief to investigate a business issue and assess its implications for an organisation or organisations. The issue must involve meeting the needs of internal or external customers. The brief must include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Initial personal assessment of the candidate's skills. 2 An appropriate title of the project. 3 Statement of the issue to be investigated. This should cover how it involves meeting the needs of customers and who the relevant customers are. 4 Aims and objectives of the project. 5 Reasons for the choice of issue which must be directly related to a topic or topics covered as part of the Group Award. 6 Justification for the choice of business or businesses involved. 7 Explanation of the range of primary and secondary sources of information which will be used for the investigation and justification for the choice of each source. 8 Explanation of the how the investigation will be conducted with justification for the choice of methods used. <p>Devise an action plan to carry out the investigation. The plan must include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9 Negotiated dates for the planning, development and evaluation of the project. 10 Interim and final timescales and dates for conducting the investigation, which should be related to the objectives of the investigation. 11 Identification of the resources (including time) required to carry out the investigation. <p>Producing a log of activities carried out by the candidate. The log must include activities undertaken, resources used and time allocated.</p> <p>Evidence of all of the above should be presented. It may be supplemented by evidence provided orally by the candidate in a discussion with the assessor. If oral evidence is provided by the candidate, a record of the main points of the discussion should be recorded. The candidate should retain evidence of their progress and experience to record the progress of the planning stage of the investigation and personal development of the candidate to facilitate and support the evaluation stage by matching those experiences against the plan.</p> <p><i>The brief is worth 18% of the marks for the investigation while the plan is worth 6% of the marks.</i></p> <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Planning stage.</i></p>

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
<p>Stage 2 — Developing</p>	<p>Preparation of a report of the investigation of a business issue and its implications for an organisation or organisations. It must include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Detailed explanation of how the issue affects the organisation or organisations chosen. The explanation should be justified by explicit reference to the data collected and to concepts covered as in the mandatory Units of the Group Award. The explanation should be consistent with objectives at the planning stage. 2 Analysis of the primary and secondary sources of information and data collected 3 Assessment of the implications of these effects for the chosen organisation or organisations should be analysed in relation to the organisation(s), the business environment and the impact upon customers and should make reference to concepts and topics studied within the mandatory section of the Group Award. 4 Statement of the conclusions drawn from the investigation and any appropriate recommendations to be made to the organisation(s). These should be explicitly related to the issues being investigated and the needs of customers. <p>Producing a log of activities carried out by the candidate. The log must include activities undertaken, resources used and time allocated.</p> <p>The report should consist of 2,500–3,500 words or equivalent, if presented verbally, and must be presented in a format suitable for a business report. This must include a contents page, a summary of findings, acknowledgements and references. The Evidence may be supplemented by evidence provided orally by the candidate in a discussion with the assessor. If this is done, a record of the main points of the discussion should be recorded. The candidate should retain evidence of their progress and experience to record the progress of the development stage of the investigation and personal development of the candidate to facilitate and support the evaluation stage by matching those experiences against the plan.</p> <p><i>The report is worth 52% of the marks for the investigation.</i></p> <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Developing Stage.</i></p>
Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
<p>Stage 3 — Evaluating</p>	<p>Providing an evaluation of the effectiveness of all parts of the investigation.</p> <p>The evaluation should include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 A brief outline of the investigation. 2 Assessment of the extent to which each of the original objectives of the investigation have been met. This should include reference to any modifications made during the course of the investigation

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

	<p>and their importance and to any alternative courses of action considered but rejected. Throughout, the assessment should be supported with credible reasons.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">3 Commentary on aspects of the planning and developing stages which worked effectively and why and/or aspects of the planning and development stages which did not work as effectively as expected. Three separate aspects should be covered — one for the planning brief, one for the plan and one for the development report.4 Assessment of the reliability and validity of the primary and secondary sources of information.5 Assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the report of the investigation. This should be supported by credible reasons and cover at least one strength and at least one weakness.6 Recommendations for future investigations. These should be based on items above and must relate to the personal development of the candidate (eg in terms of the further development of skills used in this investigation) and aspects of the process or product of the investigation (eg with respect to setting timescales, gathering information or possible future investigations). It should be clear from the recommendations that the candidate has reflected on what happened and has drawn conclusions from this reflection.7 Assessment of new skills and knowledge gained during the process of the investigation. <p><i>The evaluation section of the practical assignment will be assessed by the submission of 1,500 words or equivalent, if presented verbally. Candidates may present this evidence in a manner which they consider appropriate but it must be negotiated and agreed with the tutor. Evidence may be submitted using more than one type of assessment instrument. The Evidence may be supplemented by evidence provided orally by the candidate in a discussion with the assessor. If this is done, a record of the main points of the discussion should be recorded.</i></p> <p><i>The evaluation stage is worth 24% of the marks for the investigation.</i></p> <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Evaluation stage.</i></p>
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Unit specification: support notes

Graded Unit title: Business with Information Technology: Graded Unit 2

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 80 hours.

This Unit is mandatory within the SQA Advanced Diploma in Business with Information Technology (GM55 48) Group Award. It is suitable for anyone wishing to develop the skills and competences required to operate within a business organisation with some supervisory or managerial responsibility. The Unit is set in the context of the modern business environment and candidates should be introduced to the many different aspects of business activity and expected to apply the knowledge gained throughout the mandatory section of the SQA Advanced Diploma in Business with Information Technology (GM55 48). This Unit is designed to assess the candidate's ability to integrate knowledge and skills, and display organisational and investigative skills to a chosen business issue.

This Unit is designed to develop the skills and competences required for those engaged in entry level administrative, managerial or commercial positions within a business organisation. The Unit should develop skills and competences that meet the criteria of SCQF level 8 — the ability to analyse, present and evaluate arguments, information and ideas that are routine to the subjects' disciplines. Additionally, candidates should be able to develop competencies in a range of specialised areas of their choice in line with preferred career options or courses of further study.

Candidates should select a topic which must be discussed and agreed with the lecturer. Where a topic relates to more than one Unit, candidates may choose a combination of mandatory Units, provided all the Units are part of the programme of study followed by the candidate for this Group Award. When choosing a topic, candidates should make sure that it will be a sufficient basis for an investigation which meets all the requirements of this Graded Unit.

The Unit is designed to build upon previously acquired transferable skills which can be best developed through application to an issue or issues identified by the candidate in relation to an organisation or organisations. This approach will facilitate the contextualisation of the knowledge and skills from the Group Award and promote the importance and understanding of integration of the knowledge of business topics and concepts and the development of transferable skills including planning, organisation, time management, research techniques, problem solving, evaluation and presentation. Using this approach, candidates will be able to develop their knowledge and understanding of the key business competencies and will be provided the opportunity to apply innovative and creative approaches to issues pertinent to their chosen business environment. The issue must involve meeting the needs of internal and/or external customers of the organisation. It is anticipated that opportunities to integrate content from Units within the mandatory section of the Group Award will promote greater knowledge and understanding of the interdependency of business topics and concepts. It is recommended that preparation for the investigation primarily takes the form of candidate/tutor discussions and candidate led research and development.

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

The investigation requires the candidate to demonstrate required knowledge and skills through the assessment of a challenging business situation. The issue(s) and organisation(s) should test the breadth and application of the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the specific aspects of the mandatory section of the Group Award. This should enable the candidate to demonstrate their depth of knowledge in specific areas of these Units and provide innovative and creative problem-solving approaches and evaluation of a challenging issue(s) in a business environment.

The Unit should be delivered and assessed over an extended period of the SQA Advanced Diploma course programme to enable candidates to have completed or be in the process of completing the mandatory Units prior to embarking upon the Graded Unit. It is strongly recommended that a centre utilises the appropriate SQA exemplar material and support documentation that exist to support the validity and reliability of assessment evidence. Staff delivering and assessing this Unit would be advised to discuss examples of Outcomes from within the mandatory Units of the Award that would make suitable topics for an investigation of this nature. It is expected this will facilitate the negotiation of a suitable topic for the project between the lecturer and candidate.

It is best practice for a centre to ensure that all the staff involved in the delivery of the course programme and in particular, those involved in the delivery of the mandatory Units of recommended prior knowledge and skills are made aware of the requirements of the Graded Unit. While there is no one best way to deliver and assess the Unit, many instances of good practice have been noted where subject experts discuss possible options for investigation with the candidates. Centres should be aware that the scheduling of mandatory Units within the course programme will have an impact upon the choice of suitable topics and the development of chosen topics. Candidates are likely to have studied, or be in the processes of studying topics on which they base their investigation.

It is recommended that candidates discuss the feasibility of possible investigations with their tutor and negotiate appropriate resources, including time that should be utilised and managed throughout the course of the investigation. Candidates must keep a record of their experience through the planning and development stages to facilitate and support the evaluation process. This could be done through some form of reflective log, diary or blog. The tutor should provide a mentor/support role and facilitate a candidate-led investigation. The importance of planning, SMART objectives, time management, organisation and evaluation should be discussed and reinforced on a regular basis by the tutor. In addition, examples of good practice in terms of assessment verification have existed where second marking or cross marking has taken place to satisfy the requirements of internal and external quality processes.

Centres may wish to use previous investigations as a useful stimulus for candidates to assist them in their choice of issue(s) and organisation(s). This can in turn provides an opportunity for delivery staff to provide reflective feedback and promote constructive discussion. In general terms, the more specific the topic chosen for the investigation, the more manageable the investigation shall be for candidates and staff alike. This will facilitate the formulation of SMART objectives which in turn provide focus and structure for the candidate investigation.

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

Candidates should be encouraged to research a range of primary and secondary sources of information to ensure appropriate data is available for the investigation. The methodologies chosen for investigation should be clearly explained and justified by the candidate. The sources of information and research methodologies should be consistent with objectives identified by the candidate and should enable them to identify source material as the basis of explanation, evaluation, analysis and recommendation.

The evaluation section of the practical assignment will be assessed by the submission of approximately 1,500 words or equivalent. Possible opportunities for presenting the evidence for the evaluation could include a submission of work in a format suitable for a business report, though evidence for specific elements such as 1, 6 and 7 could be presented using options which could include an oral presentation, a poster type presentation (eg a blog), a meeting or a question and answer session and the candidate should negotiate and agree how this is to be done with the tutor in advance. Tutors and/or fellow candidates may ask questions of candidates to elucidate further evidence and allow the candidate to provide further explanation. Where this is done a record of the questions and responses should be kept.

The presentation of the evidence may provide opportunities for the development of the Core Skills of *Communication* and *Information and Communication Technology* at SCQF level 6, and *Working with Others* at SCQF level 6.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There are no Core Skills embedded in this Unit, however it does offer opportunities for candidates to gather evidence which could help them demonstrate achievement for all Core Skills. The following table gives further information on the Core Skills to which the Unit may contribute and on the opportunities which the Unit provides for Core Skills development.

Core Skill	SCQF level	Opportunities for development
Problem Solving	6	<p>Investigation and analysis of a complex problem. Plan, organise and carry out a suggested approach using identified objectives and resources.</p> <p>Analyse the problem-solving activity and assess progress, implement remedial action where appropriate and evaluate process.</p>
Communication	6	<p>The reading and understanding of complex information relating to the vocational area, with analysis and evaluation of key concepts and terminology.</p> <p>Produce a well-structured document containing complex information.</p> <p>Discuss a complex issue through an interview and during discussions and negotiation with the tutor.</p>

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

Core Skill	SCQF level	Opportunities for development
ICT	6	Presentation of information using appropriate software packages. Accessing and communicating information using ICT facilities. Keeping information secure.
Numeracy	6	Statistical analysis of organisational and/or market data. Production, analysis and presentation of graphical data.
Working with Others	6	Review of involvement in the presentation of evidence of the evaluation stage. Negotiation with lecturing staff to agree suitable topics. Organisation of and participation in presentation of evaluation stage of the investigation. Seek support of others and provide support for others through audience interaction.

Equality and inclusion

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

Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

Administrative information

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges have made to the development of SQA Advanced Qualifications.

FURTHER INFORMATION: Call SQA's Customer Contact Centre on 44 (0) 141 500 5030 or 0345 279 1000. Alternatively, complete our [Centre Feedback Form](#).

General information for candidates

Graded Unit title: Business with Information Technology: Graded Unit 2

In this Unit you will develop skills in bringing together and applying the knowledge you have gained in the following Units:

HP7K 47	<i>Business Accounting</i>
HP7O 48	<i>Preparing Financial Forecasts</i>
HP6T 47	<i>Economic Issues: An Introduction</i>
HP6P 48	<i>Economics 1: Micro and Macro Theory and Application</i>
HP72 48	<i>Economics 2: The World Economy</i>
HP6N 47	<i>Marketing: An Introduction</i>
HP71 47	<i>Managing People and Organisations</i>
HP6R 48	<i>Business Culture and Strategy</i>
HP7A 48	<i>Information and Communication Technology in Business</i>
HP6L 47	<i>Information Technology: Applications Software 1</i>
HP78 47	<i>IT in Business: Spreadsheets</i>
HP75 47	<i>Communication: Business Communication</i>
HP6W 48	<i>Behavioural Skills for Business</i>
HP6Y 47	<i>Business Law: An Introduction</i>
HP6X 47	<i>Business Contractual Relationships</i>
HP6V 48	<i>Statistics for Business</i>

It is important, therefore, that you are familiar with the content of these Units. While there is no new content within the Unit, you will however work with your lecturer in identifying a suitable topic for investigation and in developing the necessary techniques and approaches to enable you to use the knowledge and understanding you have already gained and apply it to a complex business situation.

To achieve this Unit you will produce an investigative project. This will be based on a business issue(s) and organisation(s) you identify in discussion with your tutor. The issue must involve meeting the needs of internal and/or external customers of the organisation. The choice of an appropriate investigation and SMART objectives are vital and it is strongly recommended that tutor support and mentoring is provided to ensure a realistic and manageable issue(s) is chosen for your investigation. You must keep a record of your experience through the planning and development stages to facilitate and support the evaluation process. This could be done through some form of reflective log, diary or blog.

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

The investigation is divided into three stages; Planning, Development and Evaluation. Planning incorporates a brief and plan and this provides the basis for the subsequent stages. The Development Stage is the output of your practical activities as you collect and collate data, interpret and analyse information and summarise findings and draw conclusions. The evaluation section of the practical assignment will be assessed by the submission of approximately 1,500 words or equivalent. Possible opportunities for presenting the evidence for the evaluation could include a submission of work in a format suitable for a business report, eg a written report, an oral presentation, a blog, a meeting involving other candidates. The method to be used should be negotiated and agreed with the tutor.

This Unit gives automatic certification of the Core Skill *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6. There may also be opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Numeracy, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Communication* and *Working with Others* at SCQF level 6 during the course of this Unit.

This Graded Unit is marked out of 100 and to pass you must obtain at least 50% of the marks. You must also pass each of the three stages.

You must attain a minimum of 50% of available marks to pass each stage. The distribution of marks is listed in the table below.

Stage	Element	Available Marks	Minimum Pass Marks	Total Marks
Planning	Brief	18	9	24
	Plan	6	3	
Development	Report	52	26	52
Evaluation		24	12	24

On successful achievement of the Unit a grade will be awarded based on your final mark as follows:

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

This grade will apply only to this Unit and not to the full SQA Advanced Diploma in Business with Information Technology Group Award.