

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

General information for centres

This graded unit has been validated as part of the SQA Advanced Diploma in Administration and Information Technology (GM68 48). Centres are required to develop the assessment instrument in accordance with this validated specification.

Graded unit title: Administration and Information Technology:
Graded Unit 2 (SCQF level 8)

Graded unit code: HP6J 48

Type of Examination: Closed book

Publication date: August 2017

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 01

Graded unit purpose

This graded unit is designed to provide evidence that the learner has achieved the following principal aims of the SQA Advanced Diploma in Administration and Information Technology GM68 48.

- ◆ Develop a range of specialist IT skills.
- ◆ Develop project management, research and planning skills.
- ◆ Develop an awareness of professional issues such as legal, data management and ethical considerations.
- ◆ Develop the ability to work flexibly and co-operatively with others.
- ◆ Develop critical and evaluative thinking.
- ◆ Prepare candidates for employment in an administrative role.
- ◆ Prepare candidates for progression to degree courses.

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Credit points and level

1 SQA Credit at SCQF level 8: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8)

Recommended entry to the graded unit

It is recommended that the learner should have completed or be in the process of completing the following units relating to the above principal aims prior to undertaking this graded unit:

HP6A 48	<i>Office Management</i>
HP7A 48	<i>Information and Communication Technology in Business</i>
HP79 48	<i>Presentation Skills</i>
HP0N 48	<i>IT in Business: Advanced Word Processing</i>
HP0H 48	<i>IT in Business: Advanced Spreadsheets</i>
HP0G 48	<i>IT in Business: Advanced Databases</i>
HR13 47 or HP3C 48	<i>Developing the Individual within a Team</i>

Core Skills

There are no Core Skills embedded in this graded unit specification.

Assessment Support Pack

The assessment support pack for this unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable instrument of assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the assessment support pack to ensure a comparable standard. Assessment support packs are available on SQA's secure website.

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.

Unit specification: statement of standards

Graded unit title: Administration and Information Technology:
Graded Unit 2 (SCQF level 8)

Assessment

This graded unit will be assessed by the use of a *closed-book examination* developed by centres. The examination should provide the learner with the opportunity to produce evidence that demonstrates she/he has met the aims of this graded unit.

The assessment is an examination lasting three hours. Paper 1 is a 1 hour closed-book examination, comprising restricted response questions. Paper 2 is a 2 hour closed-book examination, comprising extended response questions.

The two papers constitute a single assessment event, however a break may be scheduled between them. If a learner does not pass either paper – or wishes to upgrade – they must re-sit both papers

The examination should be designed to assess the learner’s critical knowledge and understanding of the topics relating to the specific aims which this graded unit is designed to cover.

The examination will be marked out of **100**. Only whole marks should be used.

The questions and corresponding marks should be designed in accordance with the key topics, level of demand and relative mark allocation for each key topic outlined in the tables below.

Paper 1 — 1 hour closed book examination — restricted response		
Key topics	Level of demand	% mark allocation for each key topic
IT in Business — Advanced Word Processing	Description and/or explanation of software features and/or use	8
IT in Business — Advanced Spreadsheets	Description and/or explanation of software features and/or use	8
IT in Business — Advanced Databases	Description and/or explanation of software features and/or use	8
Presentation Skills	Description and/or explanation of software features and/or use	8
Information and Communication Technology in Business	Description and/or explanation of software features and/or use	8
Total marks for Paper 1		40

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Paper 2 — 2 hour closed book examination — extended response		
Key topics	Level of demand	% mark allocation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Operational planning ◆ Budgets ◆ Leadership ◆ Motivation ◆ Delegation 	<p>Analysis/Evaluation/Explanation the role of the office manager in implementing strategic objectives of an organisation.</p>	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Implementing change ◆ Resistance to change ◆ Communications ◆ Interpersonal skills ◆ Application of IT ◆ The administrative functions ◆ Project Management 	<p>Analysis/Evaluation/Explanation the role of the office manager in managing change. Relate this to the implementation of an IT system to support the administrative function.</p>	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Recruitment and selection ◆ Employment legislation ◆ Managing and planning staff requirements ◆ Develop training plans ◆ Implementing methods of training ◆ Evaluating the effectiveness of training 	<p>Analysis/Evaluation/Explanation the role of the office manager in selection management and training of administrative staff.</p>	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Project management ◆ Decision making ◆ Information management ◆ External influences (PESTEL) ◆ IT 	<p>Analysis/Evaluation/Explanation planning the introduction of a new project, evaluate the role of information in supporting the office manager in decision making.</p>	15

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Paper 2 — 2 hour closed book examination — extended response		
Key topics	Level of demand	% mark allocation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Leading and organising◆ Business information◆ IT◆ Budgets◆ Change◆ Staffing◆ Legislation◆ Project management	Analysis/Evaluation/Explanation leading and organising the core activities of office management, evaluate the role of the office manager in the modern business environment.	15
Total marks for Paper 2 (four Key topics from five)		60
Total marks for Examination		100

For Paper 2, learners will be given five questions/tasks from which four are selected. Responses for each question/task will earn a maximum of 15 marks, leading to a maximum of 60 marks available across the paper. Stimulus materials should be developed (case study, etc) based on the key topics identified which provide sufficient context and depth to assess learners' ability to critically analyse, evaluate and synthesise concepts, information and issues within the common understanding of the subject discipline.

Prior to, or in parallel with, the graded unit, learners will complete one of two Personal Development units — *Developing the Individual within a Team* (HR13 47) at SCQF level 7 or *Developing the Individual within a Team* (HP3C 48) at SCQF level 8. These units contain generic knowledge/skills relating to the interpersonal skills necessary for team participation, team development, team dynamics and self-reflection. To ensure learners are not confronted with concepts/theories and knowledge not previously encountered during delivery; writers should ensure that only generic knowledge and skills common to both Units is included in the graded unit assessment, otherwise some learners could be disadvantaged. Graded units are designed to integrate and holistically assess existing content and therefore their design rules preclude the inclusion of content outwith that specified in the key topics and mandatory units already completed.

Conditions of assessment

The examination is *closed book*.

The examination should be unseen and the assessment should be conducted in controlled and invigilated conditions.

The two examination papers may be assessed together or on separate assessment occasions.

The total duration of the graded unit assessment is 3 hours; this consists of two papers — Paper 1 (1 hour) and Paper 2 (2 hours).

Paper 1 and Paper 2 may be delivered separately or in a single assessment event.

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At all times, the security, integrity and confidentiality of the examination must be ensured.

Learners must not be permitted to remove any assessment materials from the assessment venue. All materials (examination papers/learner responses) must be retained by the centre prior to and following the assessment.

Assessing and grading learners

Learners who meet the minimum evidence requirements will have their achievement graded as an A, B or C. The grade related criteria to be used to judge learner performance for this Graded unit is specified in the following table.

Grade Related Criteria	
Grade A	Grade C
<p>Is a seamless, coherent piece of work or exam script which consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ interprets and understands the question in a way that demonstrates insight and clear understanding of issues and relationships◆ demonstrates a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of relevant information◆ offers logically structured and coherently expressed responses, demonstrating consistent use of correct terminology◆ is clear and well-structured throughout, with language and terminology used of a consistently high standard in terms of level, accuracy, and technical content◆ consolidates and integrates required knowledge and skills, linking concepts and ideas, and relating answers explicitly to the question◆ provides evidence of possible alternative approaches and arguments as well as understanding of different interpretations◆ convincingly argues and shows links between discussions and conclusions, demonstrating comprehensive knowledge and understanding as well as analysis and evaluation skills	<p>Is a co-ordinated piece of work or exam script which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ interprets and understands the question in a way that enables the learner to meet the basic criteria required◆ demonstrates limited analysis, evaluation, and explanation of the question and other relevant information◆ offers uneven responses that convey limited understanding although some relevant points are made◆ is satisfactorily structured, with language and terminology used adequate, although not always consistent, in terms of level, accuracy, and technical content◆ consolidates and integrates knowledge and skills but may lack continuity and consistency and fail to show clear links to concepts and ideas◆ is likely to show only one approach and limited understanding of different interpretations◆ argues and justifies conclusions in an acceptable way but these conclusions may lack reasoned understanding, may not link well to discussions, and may show limited knowledge

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The marks achieved by the learner in the examination should be aggregated to arrive at an overall mark for the examination. Assessors will then assign an overall grade to the learner for this graded unit based on the following grade boundaries.

A	=	70%–100%
B	=	60%–69%
C	=	50%–59%

These grade boundaries are fixed and should **not** be amended.

If a learner does not achieve a pass or wishes to upgrade, then this must be done using a substantially different examination. In these circumstances, the highest grade achieved should be awarded.

More information on reasonable assistance, remediation and re-assessment may be found in the SQA publication *Guidance for the Implementation of Graded Units in Higher National Certificates and Diplomas* (SQA, 2008, Publication code: CA4405).

Unit specification: support notes

Graded unit title: Administration and Information Technology: Graded Unit 2 (SCQF level 8)

Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment of this graded unit

This unit would be suitable for anyone wishing to learn and develop the skills and competencies required of an office manager or equivalent. The unit is set in the context of the modern business environment and candidates should be introduced to a range of current software packages (as illustrated within the key topics with designing examination and assessing learners section) and office procedures and practices. The unit is designed to assess the candidate's ability to allow learners to integrate their knowledge across the identified key topics and mandatory Units within SQA Advanced Diploma in Administration and Information Technology GM68 48 Group Award.

Links with the business community would be particularly useful to learners and centres are encouraged to develop links to facilitate this. The notional 40 hours allocated could be used to extend the candidate's ability to present and evaluate arguments, information and ideas which are routine to the subject discipline.

Paper 1

The restricted response paper requires the candidate to answer short answer questions using a range of approaches to formulate evidence based solutions to defined and/or routine problems and issues. One hour is allocated to this closed book examination under controlled conditions.

For restricted response questions, candidates should be aware of the knowledge and skills for the six Units outlined in the Instructions for Designing the Assessment Task. Those assessors delivering the content of the individual IT units that are examined in this graded unit should make candidates aware of how this content will be assessed in the graded unit, for example, content being described in a theoretical way, rather than practical tasks being carried out.

Paper 2

This unit is designed to develop the skills and competencies required of an Office Manager. The unit should build skills and competencies which meet the criteria of SCQF level 8 — the ability to present and critically analyse, evaluate and synthesise ideas, concepts, information and issues which are within the common understanding of the subject discipline.

Extended response paper requires the candidate to critically analyse stimulus materials and formulate extended responses. Two hours is allocated to this closed book examination under controlled conditions.

The use of stimulus materials should underpin the candidate's ability to apply knowledge to current industrial practice at managerial level. Realistic materials and documentation should be used throughout and a thematic approach adopted where possible. At this stage,

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students should be encouraged to read extensively and reference all reading in any work submitted.

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

There are no Core Skills embedded in this graded unit specification.

Administrative information

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: Administration and Information Technology: Graded Unit 2 (SCQF level 8)

This graded unit is designed to allow you to integrate knowledge across a range of mandatory Units within the SQA Advanced Diploma Administration and Information Technology (GM68 48) and apply it in context. The SQA Advanced Diploma is designed to develop skills and knowledge that underpin and support the role of Office Manager or equivalent.

There is no new content, rather the Unit draws on content from other mandatory units within the SQA Advanced Diploma and requires you to apply it to scenarios based on real or hypothetical situations. This often requires knowledge from more than one unit to be applied to a question/task and is designed to enhance your ability to apply what you have learned to broader, more dynamic real-life situations.

The content of the SQA Advanced Diploma — and hence this graded unit reflects modern business practice and the critical role of Information and Communication Technology and Digital Skills in relation to the modern administrative function. It is designed to develop the knowledge and skills associated with those with responsibility for managing the administrative function within an organisation.

The assessment for this graded unit is likely to take place towards the end of your course to allow you to become familiar with the relevant topics and will take the form of an examination consisting of two question papers. The first question paper will be of 1 hour duration, worth a maximum of 40 marks, and will require you to respond to restricted response questions sampled from the following units:

HP0N 48	<i>IT in Business: Advanced Word Processing</i>
HP0H 48	<i>IT in Business: Advanced Spreadsheets</i>
HP0G 48	<i>IT in Business: Advanced Databases</i>
HP79 48	<i>Presentation Skills</i>
HP7A 48	<i>Information and Communication Technology in Business</i>

The second question paper will be of 2 hours duration, worth a maximum of 60 marks and will require you to select and respond to four extended response questions from a choice of five, which will be drawn from the following units:

HP6A 48	<i>Office Management</i>
HR13 47 (SCQF 7) or HP3C 48 (SCQF 8)	<i>Developing the Individual within a Team</i>
HP0N 48	<i>IT in Business: Advanced Word Processing</i>
HP0H 48	<i>IT in Business: Advanced Spreadsheets</i>
HP0G 48	<i>IT in Business: Advanced Databases</i>
HP79 48	<i>Presentation Skills</i>
HP7A 48	<i>Information and Communication Technology in Business</i>

Prior to the assessment, you will be encouraged to research and read widely. In the assessment, you will be expected to reference any sources/authors/articles/academics, etc. you quote to support your responses. As this is a closed-book examination, you will not be expected to use a formal referencing convention but should give a clear indication of the sources you draw from to support your responses.

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Successful achievement of the unit will be graded based on the final mark attained as follows:

Grade A: 70–100%

Grade B: 60–69%

Grade C: 50–59%

This grade will apply only to the graded unit and not to the group award as a whole.