

SQA Advanced project-based Graded Unit Specification

General information for centres

This Graded Unit has been validated as part of the review of SQA Advanced Certificates within the Built Environment award suite. 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: Built Environment: Graded Unit 1
(SCQF level 7)

Graded Unit code: HR4P 47

Type of project: Case study

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 Certificate in Built Environment:

General aims — to develop:

- ◆ skills of study, research and analysis
- ◆ ability to define and solve problems
- ◆ transferable skills
- ◆ ability to be flexible and work cooperatively with others
- ◆ responsibility for own learning
- ◆ planning, organisational and review/evaluation skills
- ◆ technical skills — broadening and deepening
- ◆ oral, written and pictorial communication skills
- ◆ numerical and ICT skills
- ◆ resource management ability

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- ◆ flexibility, knowledge, skills and motivation as a basis for progression to graduate and postgraduate studies

Principal aims are to:

- ◆ Prepare learners for employment as technicians in the mainstream construction industry with a range of employers including architects, contractors, building control, housing associations and other property responsibilities.
- ◆ Provide learners with a range of basic contemporary vocational skills utilising modern equipment and techniques available for surveying, setting out, construction drawing and correct use of building materials thus enabling learners to make an immediate contribution in employment in the built environment sector
- ◆ Combine the skills that will allow learners to develop areas relevant to future employment or progression via an SQA Advanced Diploma in another built environment discipline or higher education.
- ◆ Provide learners with a range of skills to support learning in the SVQ 3 and SVQ 4 Construction: Technical Modern Apprenticeship Frameworks.
- ◆ Enable learners to achieve appropriate professional body recognition, in particular but not exclusively, the Chartered Institute of Building.

The Built Environment: Graded Unit 1 integrates several elements from the mandatory Units in the framework to provide a coherent, co-ordinated and relevant case study which will encourage the learner to demonstrate the extent of their knowledge and understanding of the subject area.

Credit points and level

1 SQA Advanced Credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7)

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:

Unit title	Unit code	SCQF credit points	SCQF level	SQA credit
Mandatory				
Architectural Design Sketching and Drawing	HR3P 47	8	7	1
Building Measurement and Cost Studies	HR4D 47	8	7	1
Building Science	HT85 47	8	7	1
Building Services: Introduction	HR42 46	8	6	1
Construction Materials and Specification	HR45 47	8	7	1
Construction Site Surveying A	HR48 47	8	7	1
Construction Technology: Domestic Construction	HR46 46	8	6	1
Construction Technology: Substructure	HT87 47	8	7	1
Sustainability and Modern Methods of Construction	HR4K 48	8	8	1
Mandatory option				
CAD: 2D I	HR3L 47	8	7	1
CAD: 2D II	HR3H 47	8	7	1

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Core Skills

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skill Problem Solving at SCQF level 6

Core Skill component None

There are also opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills which are highlighted in the support notes of the Unit specifications for this course.

Equality and inclusion

This Graded Unit 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 SQA's website:

www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

SQA Advanced project-based Graded Unit Specification: Designing the project and assessing learners

Graded Unit title: Built Environment: Graded Unit 1
(SCQF level 7)

Assessment

This Graded Unit will be assessed by the use of a project-based *case study* developed by centres. The project should provide the learner with the opportunity to produce evidence that demonstrates she/he has met the aims of this Graded Unit.

The project undertaken by the learner must be a complex task which involves:

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

The project must require the learner to:

- ◆ analyse the task and decide on a course of action for undertaking the project
- ◆ plan and organise work and carry it through to completion
- ◆ reflect on what has been done and draw conclusions for the future
- ◆ produce evidence of meeting the aims which this Graded Unit has been designed to cover

The assessment task should be a project-based case study within the context of a domestic building development project (new build or refurbishment). The range of the tasks to be undertaken should be defined in relation to the context of the particular building development, and what it is reasonable to expect of learners in the time scales available. The issues selected should focus on the main aims of the SQA Advanced Certificate programme, and the need to demonstrate an ability to integrate knowledge and skills across the mandatory Units in the award.

The investigation should allow the learner(s) to demonstrate valid and realistic responses to the current and future needs of an ongoing development including, where appropriate, issues of Health and Safety and sustainability. Safe working practices should be looked at in accordance with current safety codes of practice and regulations. Sustainability should include reference to criteria affecting sustainability, the impact of not implementing sustainability on the environment and the legislation promoting sustainability.

NOTE:

Where learners are progressing from an SQA Advanced Certificate to an SQA Advanced Diploma programme the centre may wish to consider whether the *SQA Advanced Diploma Graded Unit 2* task/s might be an extension of the tasks for the *SQA Advanced Certificate Graded Unit 1*. A similar progression might also be considered for learners progressing through the three Graded Units credits of an SQA Advanced Diploma.

Conditions of assessment

The learner should be given a date for completion of the project. However, the instructions for the project should be distributed to allow the learner sufficient time to assimilate the details and carry out the project. During the time between the distribution of the project instructions and the completion date, assessors may answer questions, provide clarification, guidance and give reasonable assistance. The project should be marked as soon as possible after the completion date. The final grading given should reflect the quality of the learner'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 should be achieved before the next is undertaken. Thus any re-assessment of stages can be undertaken before proceeding to the next stage.

If a learner 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 learner's grade will be based on the achievement in the re-assessment.

The learner should be given a date for submission of each stage and for final completion of the case study. Parameters should be agreed with the tutor/supervisor by the learner(s) on a continuing basis providing clarification, guidance and reasonable assistance.

Each assessment task should be marked as soon as possible after the submission date. The final grading given should reflect the quality of the learner's evidence at the time of the completion date, including any oral examination. Re-assessment of this Graded Unit should be based on a significantly different assessment task.

At this level, learners should work independently within the context of a typical working environment. It is up to centres to take reasonable steps to ensure that the learners bring their specialist knowledge and experience to the project. For example, centres may wish to informally question learners at various stages on their knowledge and understanding of the project/case study 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 learner does not receive undue assistance. Learners should be allowed to use appropriate technology within and out with the college environment.

To ensure authentication of work it is advisable for learners to complete a log or diary recording progress and tasks completed. There should be regular meetings between the tutor and learner(s) to review progress and these meetings should be recorded.

The final evaluation should include an oral examination of each learner's understanding of the evidence submitted. Where possible the involvement of an employer in the oral examination is encouraged.

Evidence Requirements for this Graded Unit

The project undertaken by learners will consist of three stages: planning; developing; and evaluating. The following table specifies the minimum evidence required to pass each stage.

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Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements	% Mark Allocation
Stage 1 — Planning	Develop a plan for completion of tasks 2 and 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Suitable time line action plan ◆ Record of associated activities 	15%
	<i>The learner must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Planning stage.</i>	
Stage 2 — Developing	Use appropriate methods in undertaking the specified tasks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Select criteria with reasoning/justification ◆ Identify required data ◆ ‘First principles’ evaluation of agreed elements of the task ◆ Evaluation using computer packages or other alternative processes Produce evidence (reports, drawings, schedules, calculations, specifications), etc: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Adequate reports, drawings, schedules, calculations, specifications, etc, to justify understanding and completion of required tasks ◆ Rationale and justification for proposal submitted Create a project portfolio: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Portfolio including executive summary and evidence of development and conclusions ◆ Presentation as introduction to an oral examination to include design objectives and summary of chosen solutions 	70%
	<i>The learner must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Developing stage.</i>	
Stage 3 — Evaluating	Reflect on the Outcomes of Stages 1 and 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Critical evaluation of Outcomes achieved compared with the time line action plan ◆ Critical comparison of submitted evidence against initial objectives ◆ Identification of feedback to inform future similar tasks 	15%
	<i>The learner must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Evaluating stage.</i>	

Assessing and grading learners

The overall project will be marked out of **200**. Only whole marks should be used. The percentage of marks allocated to each stage of the project is outlined in the **Evidence Requirements**.

It is a requirement that learners must meet the minimum *Evidence Requirements* for the *Planning* stage before progressing to the *Developing* stage before progressing to the *Evaluating* stage. Learners may produce evidence over and above that specified in the minimum *Evidence Requirements* and deserve more than half the available marks for that stage. Assessors should use the grade-related criteria outlined below to judge learner performance.

Learners are required to work independently to meet the *Evidence Requirements* of the Graded Unit. At the same time, learners need appropriate support. SQA uses the term ‘reasonable assistance’ to describe the balance between supporting learners in their project and not providing too much assistance.

At the end of *each* stage there should be opportunities for remediation and re-assessment of learners for that particular stage. This includes the final *Evaluation* stage. Any re-assessment should be carried out in line with the centre’s own assessment policy.

Grade-related criteria	
Grade A	Grade C
<p>Is a seamless, coherent piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <i>has sufficient evidence for the three essential phases of the project, is produced to a high standard, and is quite clearly inter-related</i> ◆ <i>demonstrates an accurate and insightful interpretation of the project brief</i> ◆ <i>is highly focused and relevant to the tasks associated with the project brief</i> ◆ <i>is clear and well-structured throughout and language used is of a high standard in terms of level, accuracy and technical content</i> ◆ <i>effectively consolidates and integrates required knowledge and skills</i> ◆ <i>demonstrates the learner’s ability to work autonomously</i> 	<p>Is a co-ordinated piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <i>has sufficient evidence of the three essential phases of the project, is produced to an adequate standard</i> ◆ <i>demonstrates an acceptable interpretation of the project brief</i> ◆ <i>is focused and relevant to the tasks associated with the project brief</i> ◆ <i>is satisfactorily structured and language used is adequate in terms of level, accuracy and technical content</i> ◆ <i>consolidates and integrates knowledge and skills but this may lack some continuity and consistency</i> ◆ <i>demonstrates independent learning with minimum support and revision during project</i>

The marks allocated to each stage will then be aggregated to arrive at an overall mark for the project. 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%

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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 project, ie all stages are undertaken using a new project (case study, investigation or practical assignment). 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).

SQA Advanced project-based Graded Unit support notes

Graded Unit title: Built Environment: Graded Unit 1
(SCQF level 7)

Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment of this Graded Unit

It is intended that this Unit will integrate and consolidate the skills and knowledge gained through study of the other constituent Units in the SQA Advanced Certificate Built Environment framework. As a result, the learner should be introduced to the case study only after the introductory Units have been completed. The delivery of the Graded Unit can run concurrently with that of the specialism Units. In this way the learner should be adequately prepared to meet the challenges presented by the case study.

It is possible that the tutor/assessor may have to recapitulate some of the content of the other Units in order to reinforce the learning and knowledge of the learner in specific areas. This recap of previous work would be entirely appropriate, but must be left to the discretion of the tutor/assessor to decide to what extent any review would be required.

The case study brief/assessment instructions must be issued to allow the learner sufficient time to assimilate the details and carry out the assessment tasks. During the time between the issue of the project brief and the submission date, the tutors/assessors may answer questions, provide clarification, guidance and give '*reasonable assistance*'.

As the case study is produced in three distinct stages, it is recommended that regular progress/guidance interviews are scheduled with each learner to ensure that actual progress is apparent and valid evidence is in production. These should enhance student experience and performance, but also allow early identification of misinterpretation or disengagement.

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

Throughout the natural processes of preparation and production of evidence for this case study, the learner will develop and demonstrate many elements of each Core Skill as follows:

Communication — Analysis of research materials to prepare both written and oral presentations.

Numeracy — Graphical presentation of Land Surveying operations and Measurement and Cost research and development outcomes.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) — Accessing information for base research purposes. Assimilation and analysis of research information. Creation of graphical and narrative materials for presentation purposes.

Working with Others — Co-operatively, as part of a team in practical situations.

Problem Solving — Critical Thinking, Planning and Organisation, Review and Evaluation are fundamental to all elements of this case study.

The case study will allow the learner to develop a variety of supplementary skills and attributes which enhance life skills and the educational experience. Such skills tied to

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enterprise, employability, sustainable development and citizenship are deemed essential to success in learning, life and work. They should be nurtured wherever possible. The wide range of work to be completed within the case study will provide the learner with opportunity to reflect upon collateral soft skills found, for example, in career development, developing self-confidence, team working, inter-dependence, problem solving, understanding rights and responsibilities, etc.

This Unit has the Core Skill of Problem Solving embedded in it, so when candidates achieve this Unit their Core Skills profile will be updated to show that they have achieved Problem Solving at SCQF Level 6.

History of changes

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 learners

Graded Unit title: Built Environment: Graded Unit 1
(SCQF level 7)

This Unit is suitable for learners with limited experience in the construction industry aiming for a career as a technician, technologist or other construction professional. The Unit forms part of a Group Award designed to provide learners with technical and professional knowledge and skills when working within the built environment arena.

Principal aims are to:

- ◆ Prepare learners for employment as technicians in the mainstream construction industry with a range of employers including architects, contractors, building control, housing associations and other property responsibilities.
- ◆ Provide learners with a range of basic contemporary vocational skills utilising modern equipment and techniques available for surveying, setting out, construction drawing and correct use of building materials thus enabling learners to make an immediate contribution in employment in the built environment sector
- ◆ Combine the skills that will allow learners to develop areas relevant to future employment or progression via an SQA Advanced Diploma in another built environment discipline or higher education.
- ◆ Provide learners with a range of skills to support learning in the SVQ 3 and SVQ 4 Construction: Technical Modern Apprenticeship Frameworks.
- ◆ Enable learners to achieve appropriate professional body recognition, in particular but not exclusively, the Chartered Institute of Building.

Built Environment: Graded Unit 1 integrates several elements from the mandatory Units in the framework to provide a coherent, co-ordinated and relevant case study which will encourage you to demonstrate the extent of your knowledge and understanding of the subject area.

Assessment of the Unit takes the form of a case study. You will develop your ability to apply knowledge and skills, gained through study of other component parts of the course, to the solution of real or hypothetical building design problems. These will mimic real life scenarios where designers have to respond positively to a range of factors and provide valid and coherent solutions to a range of challenges.

You will investigate the planning and design strategies for a construction project based on a low-rise domestic building. Site surveys will be carried out and a site appraisal will be compiled. You will produce sketch designs and construction drawings of the proposed design solution. Opportunity exists to support design proposals with technical investigations on the environmental impact of the project. An evaluation stage towards the end of the project will allow you to reflect on project development and to provide a written explanation of performance, progress and product.

The Graded Unit case study is considered to be the culmination of a formal course of study leading to an SQA Advanced Certificate or SQA Advanced Diploma qualification. As such, the assessment will normally be issued towards the end of that study programme with submission of the completed work being the final element of the qualification. You will be given a date for completion of the case study. Parameters should be agreed by yourself and your tutor/supervisor who will provide clarification, guidance and reasonable assistance on a continuing basis.

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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 you for this Graded Unit based on the following grade boundaries.

A = 70%–100%

B = 60%–69%

C = 50%–59%

Note: You must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified for each stage of the project in order to achieve the Graded Unit.

Throughout the natural processes of preparation and production of evidence for this case study, you will develop and demonstrate many elements of each Core Skill such as *Communications, Numeracy, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Working with Others* and *Problem Solving*.