

## Higher National Unit Specification

### General information for centres

**Unit title:** Communication: Using Information Technology and Desktop Publishing

**Unit code:** D7LW 34

**Unit purpose:** This Unit is designed to allow candidates to develop the computer skills required by the communication industries. Candidates will learn to manipulate text using both a word-processing package and a desktop publishing package.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

1. Produce a formatted document using a word-processing application
2. Create a document using industry standard desktop publishing software
3. Research and produce a short communication using desktop publishing software

**Credit value:** 1 HN Credit at SCQF Level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7)

*SCQF (the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework) brings Scottish qualifications into a single framework of 12 levels ranging from SQA Access 1 to doctorates. The SCQF includes degrees; HNC/Ds; SQA National Qualifications; and SVQs. Each SQA Unit is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at a specific level. 1 SCQF point = 10 hours of learning. HN candidates are normally expected to input a further number of hours, matched to the credit value of the Unit, of non-contact time or candidate-led effort to consolidate and reinforce learning.*

**Recommended prior knowledge and skills:** Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, but it would be beneficial if the candidate had skills in IT as shown by possession of at least one of the following:

- Core Skill Information Technology at Intermediate 1
- suitable equivalent work experience

**Core skills:** This Unit gives automatic certification of the following core skill: Information Technology at Intermediate 2.

**Context for delivery:** If this Unit is delivered as part of a group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes.

## **Higher National Unit specification: General information for centres (cont)**

**Unit title:** Communication: Using Information Technology and Desktop Publishing

**Assessment:** The assessment strategy for this Unit is that the candidate should be able to show evidence of the skills necessary to produce a range of different text-based documents for use in the communication industries. To achieve Outcome 1 the candidate will have to produce two documents using a word-processing package. In Outcome 2 the candidate has to be able to recreate a strictly prescribed document and in Outcome 3 the candidate has to design and create a longer document using files from other electronic sources. Outcomes 2 and 3 involve using a desktop publishing package.

Since the core skill of Information Technology at Intermediate 2 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 moderation of the assessment instrument(s) you intend to use to ensure that the core skill is still covered. Please note, candidates must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified for each Outcome, combination of Outcomes, or for the Unit as a whole in order to pass the Unit and achieve the core skill.

An Assessment Exemplar pack for this Unit has been produced to indicate the national standard of achievement required at SCQF level 7.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards**

### **Unit title:** Communication: Using Information Technology and Desktop Publishing

The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and evidence requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

#### **Outcome 1**

Produce a formatted document using a word-processing application

##### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- Effective and responsible use of an IT system
- Keeping data secure and well managed
- Effective page formatting and layouts
- Text formatting appropriate to a purpose
- Use of at least three of the following: spell check, styles, templates, tables, indexer
- Outputting documents in printed and other appropriate modes

##### **Evidence requirements**

The candidate will need evidence to demonstrate his/her knowledge and/or skills by showing that he/she can:

- use an IT system effectively and responsibly
- keep data secure and well managed
- format pages and create effective page layouts
- format text appropriate to purpose using:
  - typeface
  - size
  - style
  - alignment
  - line spacing
- use a spell check and at least one of the following: styles, templates, tables, indexer
- output the document in printed or other format.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

### **Unit title:** Communication: Using Information Technology and Desktop Publishing

Two different types of documents must be produced, one no more than one page long with 150-500 words and one which extends to at least two pages in length with 500-1000 words. These should give the candidate the opportunity to fulfil all requirements. The text should be free of spelling errors. An observation checklist should cover practical elements.

#### **Assessment guidelines**

Candidates should produce two different documents suitable for use in a communication industry such as a letter, a memo, a report, an agenda, minutes of a meeting, a press release. It is acceptable for them to use text produced for other Units. The text should be of a standard that does not impair understanding.

### **Outcome 2**

Create a document using industry standard desktop publishing software

#### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- Text created and formatted
- Text imported from another file or program
- Graphics created using the toolbox
- Graphics imported from another area of application, resized, and cropped
- Page layout software used to alter margins, guides, columns
- Page layout software used to incorporate text and graphics
- Documents printed out
- Understanding electronic searches
- Using a scanner

#### **Evidence requirements**

The candidate will need evidence to demonstrate his/her knowledge and/or skills by showing that he/she can, to a given specification:

- create the prescribed page size and layout
- import text
- search for appropriate text and graphics
- add typed-in text
- import a graphic
- crop and size as appropriate to the specification
- create additional graphics using the toolbox
- print out the document.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

### **Unit title:** Communication: Using Information Technology and Desktop Publishing

#### **Assessment guidelines**

The evidence generated for this assessment could be a leaflet, a poster, an advertisement or some other document appropriate for use in a communication industry. The candidate should be given all the necessary information to produce the document such as page dimensions, typeface, size, style and alignment. The candidate should also be given information about where to find the text and graphics to be imported. A printout of the completed document could be used for reference with each candidate required to produce and print his/her own version with his/her name included in print.

#### **Outcome 3**

Research and produce a short communication using desktop publishing software

#### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- Document design suitable for an in-house or community publication
- Use of relevant text, graphics or tables from other electronic data sources
- Integration of different types of data from other applications
- Use of the Internet

#### **Evidence requirements**

The candidate will have to demonstrate his/her knowledge and/or skills by creating a document of at least two pages. The page layout, text formatting and text content should be appropriate for the purpose and audience. The candidate will show evidence of the ability to:

- design a document suitable for an in-house or community publication
- type text into word-processing software and save in an exportable format
- use the Internet to gather relevant information
- extract information which matches several search criteria
- find and integrate relevant text, graphics or table from other electronic data sources
- record search strategies, activities and sources.

The completed document should contain:

- a page layout appropriate for the purpose, using columns and headings
- text imported from a word-processing package
- at least one graphic imported from other software
- at least two items included as a result of two different searches of other electronic sources to include the Internet and one of CD-ROM/database/other electronic source.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Communication: Using Information Technology and Desktop Publishing

### **Assessment guidelines**

This should be the final assessment as it builds on the skills acquired in the first two Outcomes. The candidate will have the opportunity to design and create a document to his/her own specifications. Examples of in-house and community publications should be available. There should be some instruction on and examples of basic design principles. Guidance should be given on the length of the body-text/copy required.

The candidate should also apply skills from two further areas of application such as text, graphics, communication. At least two items should be found from other electronic sources: one from the Internet and another from database/CD-ROM. Information about search activities and sources should be recorded for assessment purposes.

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### **Administrative Information**

**Unit code:** D7LW 34

**Unit title:** Communication: Using Information Technology and Desktop Publishing

**Superclass category:** KH

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## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes**

### **Unit title:** Communication: Using Information Technology and Desktop Publishing

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

### **Guidance on the content and context for this Unit**

In this Unit the candidate should be able to manipulate text using both applications. It may be helpful for the candidate if a course booklet is prepared with a number of assignments to build up to the required skills in both applications. This booklet can then be used as a reference document, even during assessments, if necessary. It should contain a number of assignments which cover the following in the word-processing package:

- creating and formatting text and the use of spell check
- cutting, copying and pasting text
- saving text in an exportable format
- inserting page breaks, headers and footers, page numbers
- altering the page layout – margins, tabs, indents, numbering, bullet points, columns

For the desktop publishing package it should cover:

- the text skills above
- creating graphics using the toolbox
- combining text and graphics using guides, autoflow
- importing text and graphics from other sources
- resizing and cropping graphics

### **Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit**

The assessment in Outcome 1 ensures familiarity with a word-processing package and the candidate should be able to manipulate page dimensions and text for a variety of layouts. The body-text used for assessment documents can be from work completed in other Units, if appropriate.

As this Unit deals with computer skills the candidate should not be assessed on the quality of the text produced, other than that it should be free of spelling errors and of a quality which does not impede understanding.

## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)**

### **Unit title:** Communication: Using Information Technology and Desktop Publishing

The underpinning knowledge of how to use IT systems responsibly does not have to be assessed discretely, but the assessor should check that each candidate complies with acceptable standards. The candidate should understand the need for, and be able to back-up files, use passwords and virus checkers as is appropriate for both packages. A checklist could be used to support the candidate.

The assessment in Outcome 2 should be some form of advertisement, leaflet or poster that is already created by the assessor for comparison purposes. There is no reason why the candidate cannot view the finished document, as this assessment is testing the ability to create a document to prescribed specifications. All sizes, styles and layout instructions should be given to the candidate as part of the assessment instructions. There is no scope here for the candidate's creative skills.

The assessment in Outcome 3 gives the candidate the freedom to plan and execute a layout to his/her own specifications. Some candidates may find this very difficult and some time should be spent on basic design features; symmetry, asymmetry, repetition, use of guides, use of white space, etc.

The assessor should make examples available and give some time for discussion of these. The main point of this assessment is the candidate's ability to find, select and incorporate text and graphics of his/her own choice and for a purpose linked to one of the subjects within the course. The use of text or graphics used in other Units is quite acceptable.

Candidates should also be able to access material from other sources. It would be ideal if candidates could scan their own graphics, or create them in a drawing package, and use text and/or graphics obtained from CDs, e-mail or the Internet.

### **Open and distance learning**

This Unit would be suited to open, distance and online learning if it was conducted in conditions where arrangements have been put in place to assure the authenticity of the candidate's work: assessments could, for example, be verified by a professional person who can confirm that the work was done solely by the candidate.

For further information and advice, please see *Assessment and Quality Assurance for Open and Distance Learning* (SQA, February 2001 – publication code A1030).

### **Special needs**

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering special alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document



*Guidance on Special Assessment and Certification Arrangements for Candidates with Special Needs and Candidates for whom English is an Additional Language (SQA, 2000).*

## **General information for candidates**

### **Unit title:** Communication: Using Information Technology and Desktop Publishing

This Unit is about using word-processing and desktop publishing programs in order to create a number of different documents that would be suitable for use in the communication industries.

In the first assessment you have to create two documents with different layouts using word-processing software.

In the second assessment you have to create a document using desktop publishing software to a clearly prescribed layout.

In the third and final assessment you have to design and create a document suitable for use in a communication industry. You will be required to find and use text and graphics created in other programs and from electronic data sources such as CDs and the Internet.

On completion of the Unit you should be able to:

1. Produce a formatted document using a word-processing application
2. Create a document using industry standard desktop publishing software
3. Research and produce a short communication using desktop publishing software