

# Higher National Graded Unit Specification

## General Information for Centres

This Graded Unit has been validated as part of the HNC Watch Management (Fire and Rescue Service). 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:** Watch Management (Fire and Rescue Service):  
Graded Unit 1

**Graded Unit Code:** DV05 34

**Type of Graded Unit:** Project

**Assessment Instrument:** Investigation

**Credit points and level:** 1 HN Credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7\*)

*\*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 Access 1 to Doctorates.*

**Purpose:** This Graded Unit is designed to provide evidence that the candidate has achieved the following principal aims of the HNC Watch Management (Fire and Rescue Service):

To enhance the skills of students by developing practical, communication, problem solving and management skills.

To build upon independent study and research skills gained at Crew Management PDA Certificate level.

To develop transferable skills, including core skills via the use of a “themed topic” approach to delivery and assessment.

To provide knowledge of core management disciplines (as identified by the Scottish Fire Service).

**Recommended Prior Knowledge and Skills:** It is recommended that the candidate should have completed the following Unit relating to the above specific aims prior to undertaking this Graded Unit:

Managerial Effectiveness            A767 35

It is also 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:

Managing Information            A76G 34

Leadership and Motivation        A5BA 33

## **General Information for Centres (cont)**

**Core Skills:** There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or a Core Skill component as part of this Graded Unit. However, there may be opportunities to develop the Core Skill of Problem Solving, Working with Others and Communication.

**Assessment:** This Graded Unit will be assessed by the use of an investigation. The “fleshed-out” 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.

## **Administrative Information**

**Graded Unit Code:** DV05 34

**Graded Unit Title:** Watch Management (Fire and Rescue Service): Graded Unit 1

**Date of publication:** August 2005

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## **Higher National Graded Unit Specification: Instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates**

**Graded Unit Title:** Watch Management (Fire and Rescue Service)

### **Conditions of Assessment**

All stages of the investigation should be assessed under open book conditions. 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. Reassessment of this Graded Unit should be based on a significantly different assessment task.

It is recommended that consideration be given to assessing candidates' work at each stage of the investigation — planning, developing and evaluating — to minimise the requirement for a full resubmission should any stage fail to reach a satisfactory level.

At this level, candidates should work independently. It is up to Centres 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 that where research etc, is carried out in other establishments or under the supervision of others that the candidate does not receive undue assistance.

It is advisable that candidates should meet regularly with their Class Tutor, to review their work in progress. They should also be encouraged to maintain a log of their activities which should be produced at these meetings, or faxed/e-mailed if the unit is being undertaken on a distance learning basis. This log should be included in the report appendix.

## **Higher National Graded Unit Specification: Instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)**

### **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
- ◆ 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 project must involve the investigation of an issue which relates to aims of the Fire Service. For example, current Fire Service key aims (as at April 2005) include:

- ◆ Community Safety
- ◆ Integrated Risk Management
- ◆ Integrated Personal Development Systems
- ◆ Fairness and Equality (Diversity)
- ◆ New Dimensions (threat of terrorist attack)

The issue chosen should involve an investigation which provides a solution to a perceived problem or suggests a new approach in response to the changing needs of the Fire Service and/or its customers.

It is envisaged that candidates will work on their own. Group work should only be permitted where there is adequate supervision to ensure that each individual is contributing in equal measure. Groups should not exceed four in number and each participant must submit his/her individual response to each of the three stages of the investigation and assessors must be satisfied that the work has been completed by the individual candidate. Any suspected plagiarism or unfair distribution of tasks should be identified at tutorial meetings.

### **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.

## Higher National Graded Unit specification: Instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Grade A	Grade C
<p>Is a seamless, coherent piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Demonstrates clear, explicit links between the three stages of the investigation and is produced to a high standard.</li> <li>◆ Is highly focused throughout on the objectives set for the investigation.</li> <li>◆ Carefully selects information from a variety of sources to provide strong and valid reasons to support points made.</li> <li>◆ Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of concepts, theories and contemporary issues relating to the Fire Service and uses them accurately and relevantly to support points made.</li> <li>◆ Is clear and well structured throughout and language used is of a high standard in terms of accuracy and specialist content.</li> <li>◆ Offers conclusions and recommendations which are realistic and coherently related to the objectives of the investigation.</li> <li>◆ Includes a careful and considered reflection on the investigation which provides a strong basis for judging its success and making realistic recommendations for the future improvement.</li> </ul>	<p>Is a co-ordinated piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Contains sufficient evidence to meet the minimum requirements of each of the three stages of the investigation and is produced to an adequate standard.</li> <li>◆ Meets the objectives of the investigation but not in a consistent or fully comprehensive manner.</li> <li>◆ Uses information from a limited range of sources, in a manner which does not always support the rationale.</li> <li>◆ Makes limited reference to concepts, theories or contemporary issues relating to the Fire Service but may not always use them accurately or relevantly to support points made.</li> <li>◆ Is satisfactorily structured and uses language which is adequate in terms of level, accuracy and specialist content.</li> <li>◆ Offers conclusions and recommendations, related to the objectives of the investigation, which are limited, weak, or lack coherence.</li> <li>◆ Includes limited reflection on the investigation which fails to provide a comprehensive basis for judging its success or making realistic recommendations for the future improvement</li> </ul>

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%

## Higher National Graded Unit specification: Instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

### 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><b>Brief — 15% of the available marks</b></p> <p><b>Plan — 5% of the available marks</b></p>	<p>An Action plan which includes:</p> <p>A project brief, outlining the proposed investigation of an issue which relates to the current aims of the Fire Service. The brief must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The title of the investigation report.</li> <li>◆ The objective(s) of the investigation.</li> <li>◆ The rationale for choosing this issue for investigation with the anticipated benefits which will result for the Fire Service and/or its customers.</li> <li>◆ Identification of the sources of information which will be used for the investigation with an explanation of why each has been selected.</li> <li>◆ Explanation of how the investigation will be conducted with reasons for the choice of methods adopted.</li> <li>◆ Statement of the criteria which will be used to assess the implications of the issue and the reasons why each has been selected. The criteria chosen and the justification for each criterion should be directly related to a topic or topics covered as part of the Group Award.</li> </ul> <p>A plan, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Timescale for conducting the investigation, including final and interim completion dates.</li> <li>◆ Identification of resources required to carry out investigation.</li> </ul> <p>The project brief and plan must be submitted by a date specified by the Assessor. It may be supplemented by evidence provided orally by the candidate in a discussion with the Assessor. If this is the case, a written or taped record of the points of the discussion should be provided.</p> <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Planning stage.</i></p>

## Higher National Graded Unit specification: Instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Project Stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
<p>Stage 2 — Developing</p> <p><b>60% — of the available marks</b></p>	<p>An investigation report, which clearly demonstrates a solution to a problem or suggests a new approach in response to the changing needs of the Fire Service and/or its customers. It should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Contents page</li> <li>◆ Description of the Fire Service brigade upon which the investigation is based</li> <li>◆ Detailed explanation of the problem or area where a new approach is required in response to the changing needs of the Fire Service and/or its customers</li> <li>◆ The objective(s) to be achieved</li> <li>◆ Relevant theory — directly relating to the topic chosen for investigation from the mandatory units which make up the Group Award</li> <li>◆ Summary of research findings</li> <li>◆ Conclusions drawn from the investigation</li> <li>◆ Specific recommendations</li> <li>◆ A list of acknowledgements of sources and references</li> <li>◆ An appendix containing any additional relevant material (eg copy of questionnaire, photographs, etc)</li> </ul> <p>The report will also include evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Collection and collation of relevant data</li> <li>◆ Interpretation/analysis of research data</li> <li>◆ Effective use of research material</li> </ul> <p>The report should be presented in a format suitable for a business report, which includes an introduction, findings, conclusions and recommendations. It may be supplemented by evidence provided orally by the candidate in a discussion with the Assessor. If this is done, a written or taped record of the main points of the discussion should be provided.</p> <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Developing stage</i></p>

## Higher National Graded Unit specification: Instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

<p>Stage 3 — Evaluating</p> <p><b>20% — of the available marks</b></p>	<p>An evaluation relating to the effectiveness of all parts of the investigation. It should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ A brief outline of the investigation.</li> <li>◆ Assessment of the extent to which the original objectives were achieved. This should include details of any modifications made or considered, with sound reasons given for the action taken.</li> <li>◆ Evaluation of the effectiveness of the planning stage, highlighting any problems which arose, how they were dealt with and any modifications made to the original plan.</li> <li>◆ Commentary on the investigation activity and the effectiveness of research methods adopted, highlighting any difficulties experienced in gathering data and how these difficulties were resolved.</li> <li>◆ The strengths and weaknesses of the main body of the report. This should be supported by credible reasons and cover at least one strength and one weakness.</li> <li>◆ Reflection on the success of the investigation undertaken with recommendations for improvement on future occasions. These should be based on the items stated above and could relate to the personal development of the candidate (eg in terms of the further development of knowledge and skills used in this investigation) and/or aspects of the process or product of the investigation (eg with respect to setting timescales, gathering data and information or possible topics for future investigations).</li> </ul> <p>The length of the project in total (across all three stages) should be 2,500 — 3,000 words.</p> <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Evaluating stage.</i></p>
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### Candidates with Additional Support Needs

This Graded Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering special alternative assessment arrangements. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs*, which is available on the SQA website [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk).