



## Higher National Unit specification

### General information for centres

**Unit title:** Water Operations: Water Industry Structure and Organisation

**Unit code:** F53P 34

**Unit purpose:** This Unit is designed to provide candidates with an understanding of the key factors involved in the structure and organisation of the water industry.

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

- 1 Explain the legislative, regulatory framework and structures of water undertakers in the UK.
- 2 Explain the business of the UK water industry.
- 3 Explain the principal features of financial methods used by private and public water undertakers.

**Credit points and level:** 1 HN credit(s) 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.*

**Recommended prior knowledge and skills:** It is recommended that candidates have communication and numeracy skills level 4 or equivalent.

**Core Skills:** There are opportunities to develop the written component of the Core Skill of *Communication* and the Core Skill *Problem Solving* to SCQF level 6, and the Core Skill *Information and Communication Technology* and *Numeracy* to SCQF level 5, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

**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.

**Assessment:** It is possible to assess candidates on an individual Outcome basis, by combinations of Outcomes, or by a single holistic assessment encompassing all Outcomes. Assessment should be conducted under supervised conditions. The assessment(s) should consist of an appropriate balance of restricted response and structured questions. If a single assessment covering all Outcomes is used, it should not exceed three hours in duration.

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

**Unit title:** Water Operations: Water Industry Structure and Organisation

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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**

Explain the legislative, regulatory framework and structures of water undertakers in the UK

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Legislation:
  - UK
  - EU
- ◆ Organisational structures
- ◆ UK monitoring bodies

#### **Evidence Requirements**

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can explain the:

- ◆ purpose of current Acts and Regulations that govern the water industry in the UK.
- ◆ key features of organisational structures in the water industry. The explanation must include a comparison of two structures chosen from UK water undertakers.
- ◆ key EU legislative provisions and regulatory framework that impact upon the development of UK monitoring bodies for the water industry.

#### **Assessment Guidelines**

The assessment for this Outcome could be a report requiring candidates to compare two UK water companies chosen from England and Wales, Northern Ireland or Scotland.

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

**Unit title:** Water Operations: Water Industry Structure and Organisation

### **Outcome 2**

Explain the business of the UK water industry

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Private and Public sector water organisations
- ◆ Stakeholders
- ◆ Environmental issues
- ◆ Customer Care
- ◆ Information and Communication

#### **Evidence Requirements**

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ describe the structure and characteristics of one private and one public sector water organisation. The description must include responsibilities to stakeholders for both organisations.
- ◆ explain three of the main factors that drive water organisations to address environmental issues. The three factors must be chosen from: Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental factors.
- ◆ explain the importance of customer care in the water industry. The explanation must include at least one example of a customer care policy and how it has been applied.
- ◆ describe how a water organisation utilises its internal and external communication systems to control the flow of information to deal with operational issues.

#### **Assessment Guidelines**

The report could be combined with that of Outcomes 1 and 3, and focus on a suitable water companies customer care policy and communication system.

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

**Unit title:** Water Operations: Water Industry Structure and Organisation

### **Outcome 3**

Explain the principal features of financial methods used by private and public water undertakers

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Asset Management
- ◆ Sources of finance
- ◆ Budget Management

#### **Evidence Requirements**

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ describe the key concepts of asset management. The description must include planning through to decommissioning, replacement of physical assets and the role of asset management in optimising the efficiency of a water undertaker.
- ◆ describe at least two sources of finance for at least one public and at least one private sector water undertaker.
- ◆ explain the objectives of Budget Management, and the requirements of preparing a financial budget for a given situation within the water industry.

The assessment for the first two Evidence Requirements must be conducted under closed-book conditions.

#### **Assessment Guidelines**

Assessment for this Outcome consists of a closed-book end-of-Unit assessment for the first two Evidence Requirements. The third Evidence Requirement could be assessed by candidates preparing a report on a suitable water undertaker's budget management.

## Administrative Information

<b>Unit code:</b>	F53P 34
<b>Unit title:</b>	Water Operations: Water Industry Structure and Organisation
<b>Superclass category:</b>	AA
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### History of Changes:

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Credit value changed from 1.5 HN credits to 1 HN credit	25/05/10

**Source:** SQA

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

### **Unit title: Water Operations: Water Industry Structure and Organisation**

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**

This Unit is designed to give the candidates a sound underpinning knowledge of water industry structure and organisation and the various factors involved in understanding the complexity of the water industry in the UK.

It is suitable for those who are currently employed in, or who are seeking employment in the water industry or related occupational areas, or for those wishing to progress to more advanced study.

Whilst this Unit may be taken as a stand alone Unit it has been written as a mandatory Unit within the framework for the HNC in Water Operations.

The following provides an indication of the content for each Outcome.

#### **Outcome 1**

This Outcome could consider the historical development of legislation in the UK and the parallel development of organisational structure in the water industry. This could lead candidates to explore the principal aims and objectives of current UK legislation and how it governs the organisational structure of the Water Industry in England and Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. The relationship between UK regulatory legislation and EU Directives could also be explored. It is envisaged that candidates will study in detail the country in which they operate.

#### **Outcome 2**

In this Outcome candidates will study the difference between private sector and public water organisations and the demands of the different stakeholders. It also looks at the changes in Environmental factors ie the PESTLE factors and the impact these have on the water business. The importance of Customer Care policies is also explored and candidates could be encouraged to look at how customer care is managed in different water organisations. Finally the need for strong Information and Communication systems to support the business of a water undertaker.

#### **Outcome 3**

This Outcome looks at the main features of Asset Management in the water industry. This can be developed to suit the needs of different operational sectors but emphasis is on physical assets and the importance of operational efficiency. Financing methods of both private and public sector water organisations is explored, from principles of consumer charging and other methods of revenue earning. The objectives of Budget Management are also considered and candidates could look at budgetary management processes in different organisations.

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

**Unit title:** Water Operations: Water Industry Structure and Organisation

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

This Unit forms part of the HNC Water Operations designed to increase the understanding of existing or potential water industry employees currently involved in operational functions. The emphasis should be on ensuring that candidates understand the key factors involved in the organisational structures and systems within the water industry in the UK.

It is recommended that evidence for Outcomes is achieved through well planned course work, reports and input from industry specialists. Assessment may be formative and summative and both may feature as part of the process.

#### *Opportunities for developing Core Skills*

There are opportunities to develop the written component of the Core Skill of *Communication* and the Core Skill *Problem Solving* to SCQF level 6, and the Core Skill *Information and Communication Technology* and *Numeracy* to SCQF level 5, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Candidates may have the opportunity to develop the written component of the Core Skill *Communication* at SCQF 6 through the assessment for Outcomes 1–3 where they may have to research, write and develop a report that meets the requirements of the three Units.

The report for Outcome 1–3 may provide the opportunity for candidates to develop the Core Skill of *Problem Solving* if the report requires candidates to investigate structures and financial management within a water undertaking. If candidates are required to assess a situation and make recommendations for change as part of this report this may provide the opportunity to develop Critical Thinking skills, Planning and Organising skills and Evaluation skills in the Core Skill *Problem Solving* at SCQF 6.

Outcome 2 requires candidates to consider the role of information in the business of a water undertaking and may provide the opportunity to develop the Core Skill of *Information and Communication Technology* at SCQF level 5. Should candidates use packages to aid their understanding of the financial aspects in the industry within Outcome 3 this may also develop the Core Skill *Information and Communication Technology* at SCQF level 5.

Outcome 3 in considering financial information, budgetary management and asset management may also provide the opportunity to develop the Core Skill *Numeracy* at SCQF level 5.

### Open learning

This course may be delivered in a flexible/distance/open learning format with a limited physical tutor support. In this case, a considerable amount of independent study will be required and to relate the knowledge to real events, it is recommended that the candidate should liaise with their employer so that the report for Outcome 2 can be appropriately structured.

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

**Unit title:** Water Operations: Water Industry Structure and Organisation

### **Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs**

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)).



## General information for candidates

### Unit title: Water Operations: Water Industry Structure and Organisation

Whilst this Unit may be taken as a stand alone Unit it has been written as a mandatory Unit in the HNC Water Operations. The Unit will be suited to you if you are already employed in the water industry or are seeking to develop a career in the industry.

It is designed to provide you with an understanding of the complex nature of the Water Industry structure and organisation. The legislative framework under which the Industry operates and the main drivers that regulate it: financial constraints; monitoring bodies; customers and environmental issues are all considered.

The main components of the Unit are described in more detail below:

In Outcome 1 you will cover the historical development of legislation and organisational structures in the UK and the principal features of current legislation in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The relationship between UK and EU legislation and the impact of EU Directives on UK regulatory legislation and on the structures of water undertakings is also included.

The difference between private sector and public water organisations is covered in Outcome 2. The key issues that impact on the operation of the structures namely the Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental (PESTLE factors) are covered. The Outcome also covers customer care policy and information flow and communication systems in the business of a water undertaking.

Outcome 3 looks at asset management, financing models and budgetary management in the industry.

The assessment for the Outcomes 1-3 could include a written report. In addition, for Outcome 3 a closed-book assessment will be used.

You will have the opportunity to develop the written component of the Core Skill of *Communication* and the Core Skill *Problem Solving* to SCQF level 6, and the Core Skill *Information and Communication Technology* and *Numeracy* to SCQF level 5, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.