



Higher National Graded Unit specification

General information for centres

This Graded Unit has been validated as part of the HND Rural Business Management. 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: Rural Business Management: Graded Unit 2

Graded Unit code: F6JD 35

Type of Graded Unit: Project

Assessment Instrument: Investigation

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

**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 National 1 to Doctorates.*

Purpose: This Graded Unit is designed to provide evidence that the candidate has achieved the following principal aims of the HND Rural Business Management.

- ◆ To ensure that candidates gain the skills, knowledge and understanding of business, economics, human resource management, and accounting and finance which are necessary for a position as a trainee/assistant manager in a rural business.
- ◆ To provide a vocational programme based on the skills and knowledge required for employment at supervisory/junior managerial level within a rural business.
- ◆ To ensure that candidates have practical experience of working within a rural business through work experience placement.
- ◆ To ensure that candidates have a sound appreciation of current rural and conservation issues and understand the concept of sustainability.
- ◆ To facilitate progression to degree level education based on a sound foundation in applied business management, technology, Core Skills, and an understanding of the multifunctional nature of rural businesses.

General information for centres (cont)

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: It is 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:

| Unit code | Unit name |
|-----------|--|
| DV0M 34 | Work Experience |
| D7CY 35 | IT Applications Software 2 |
| F137 34 | Using Financial Accounting Statements |
| F26F 35 | Planning, Budgeting and Control |
| DE3G 35 | Economics 1:Micro and Macro Theory and Application |
| DV8N 35 | Marketing Planning Process |
| DE3E 34 | Business Law: An Introduction |
| F2X3 35 | Data Collection and Handling |

Core Skills: There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Problem Solving*, *Numeracy*, *Information Communication Technology* and *Communication* all at SCQF level 6 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Assessment: This Graded Unit will be assessed by the use of an Investigation. The developed 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: F6JD 35

Graded Unit title: Rural Business Management: Graded Unit 2

Original date of publication: May 2009

Version: 04 (October 2019)

History of changes:

| Version | Description of change | Date |
|---------|--|----------|
| 04 | Amendment to Stage 2 minimum evidence requirements | 09/10/19 |
| 03 | Update of Conditions of Assessment | 13/07/18 |
| 02 | Minor revision of wording | 19/01/10 |
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| | | |

Source: SQA

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Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates

Graded Unit title: Rural Business Management: Graded Unit 2

Conditions of assessment

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. Reasonable assistance is the term used by SQA to describe the difference between providing candidates with some direction to generate the required evidence for assessment and providing too much support which would compromise the integrity of the assessment. Reasonable assistance is part of all learning and teaching processes.

In relation to the assessment of Higher National Project-based Graded Units, assessors may provide advice, clarification, and guidance during the time between the distribution of the project instructions and the completion date, ie at each stage of the project.

Remediation allows an assessor to clarify candidate responses, either by requiring a written amendment or by oral questioning, where there is a minor shortfall or omission in evidence requirements. In either case, such instances must be formally noted by the assessor, either in writing or by recording, and be made available to the internal and external verifier.

In relation to Higher National Project-based Graded Units, candidates must be given the opportunity for remediation at each stage of the project.

The evidence for a Higher National Project-based Graded Unit is generated over time and involves three distinct stages, each of which has to be achieved before the next is undertaken. This means that any re-assessment of stages must be undertaken before proceeding to the next stage. The overall grade is derived from the total number of marks *across all* sections, and should reflect the ability of the candidate to work autonomously and the amount of support required. In relation to Higher National Project-based Graded Units, candidates who have failed any stage of the project and have been unable to provide the necessary evidence through remediation must be given the opportunity for re-assessment of that stage.

Any candidate who has failed their graded unit or wishes to upgrade their award must be given a re-assessment opportunity, or in exceptional circumstances, two re-assessment opportunities. In the case of project-based graded units, this must be done using a substantially different project.

The final grading given must reflect the quality of the candidate's evidence at the time of the completion of the graded unit. Candidates must be awarded the highest grade achieved — whether through first submission or through any re-assessment, remediation, and/or reasonable assistance provided.

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 investigation must involve a business enterprise, its usage and management in relation to adding value to the business. The candidate must be asked to take the role of a consultant given the task of giving an assessment of a business and present conclusions in relation to adding value to the core business in a report to the business owner. The investigation must involve a business audit, manipulation of data, either supplied or collected, which must be presented to back up conclusions and recommendations presented in a final report.

The presentation of the report must follow the specified format detailed in the evidence requirements.

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

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.

| Grade A | Grade C |
|--|---|
| <p>Is a seamless, coherent piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ has comprehensive evidence for each of the three phases of the project and that is a coherent whole ◆ demonstrates high standards through presentation style, language, accuracy and technical content ◆ demonstrates an accurate and insightful analysis and interpretation of the project brief and provides justifications for added value solutions ◆ demonstrates a systematic approach and a logical progression to the collection and analysis of data ◆ has sought and made good use of a wide range of supporting evidence ◆ has provided evidence of innovation or dynamism in approach ◆ embodies highly effective integration of knowledge and skills ◆ recognises conflicts and potential drawbacks of ideas ◆ demonstrates independence of thought by successfully completing the stages of the project with minimal tutor support | <p>Is a co-ordinated piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ provides evidence for each of the three phases of the project ◆ is clear in terms of presentation style, language, accuracy and technical content ◆ contains analytical responses to the investigation and provides solutions for adding value to the business organisation ◆ contains data collection and analysis ◆ contains supporting evidence ◆ contains standard approaches to issue ◆ presents evidence of integration of skills and knowledge ◆ tends to consider ideas and proposals in isolation from each other ◆ required tutor intervention to keep the investigation on track |

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%

Note: The candidate must pass the planning stage of the case study before he/she can progress to the developing stage, and must pass the developing stage before he/she can continue to the evaluating stage.

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 |
|--|--|
| Stage 1 — Planning Plan of action 20% | Plan of action which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The rationale for the investigation ◆ A set of aims and objectives for the investigation ◆ Identification of the main issues for research and the techniques and sources to be used ◆ Identification of sources and techniques required and how the information generated will be utilised ◆ Identification of the stages (milestones) involved in the project work and the timescales for completion of each stage (project plan) ◆ Identification of appropriate human resource information <i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Planning stage.</i> |
| Stage 2 — Developing 60% | An investigation report which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Detailed explanation of the business and how the issue affects the business. The explanation should be justified by explicit reference to the data collected and to concepts covered in the Group Award. ◆ Detailed explanation and justification of a proposal to add value to the business. ◆ Assessment of the implications for the business of the adoption of the preferred proposal. ◆ Presentation in a format suitable for a business report, including an executive summary, a contents page, summary, conclusions and references. This may be supplemented by evidence provided orally by the candidate in a discussion with the assessor. Where this is done a written record will be maintained. <i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Developing stage.</i> |
| Stage 3 — Evaluating 20% | Evaluation Report which will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Contain an abstract ◆ Summarise any unforeseen events and how they were handled ◆ Identify knowledge and/or skills which have been gained or developed ◆ Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the output of the investigation ◆ Determine to what extent the investigation met the planning objectives <i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Evaluating stage.</i> |

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

Support notes

The investigation must involve a business enterprise, its usage and management in relation to adding value to the business. The candidate must be asked to take the role of a consultant given the task of giving an assessment of a business and present conclusions in relation to adding value to the core business in a report to the business owner. The candidate must be asked to draw up recommendations for future actions. The presentation of the report must follow the specified format detailed in the evidence requirements.

It is recommended that at the start of the year tutorials are held to introduce the project to the candidates and provide initial direction. Thereafter it is suggested that regular scheduled meetings between the tutor and individual candidates are held to review progress and to provide appropriate guidance. The guidance must not be such that it influences the final grading, but, for example, pointing out to the candidate the consequences of significant deviation from their plan during the development phase, would be legitimate.

It is desirable for notes of the meetings to be made for the purposes of clarity and to further simulate the working environment. The notes should be agreed upon by both parties.

Candidates should be encouraged to keep a notebook incorporating a diary of the progress and tasks completed. This would facilitate the reflective component of the evaluation section of the investigative report and help to ensure that milestones are completed in a business-like manner.

It is expected that most candidates will carry out the investigation individually. However, at the discretion of the centre, candidates may carry out a group investigation and pool information so as not to put undue demand on working rural businesses. Candidates may not, however, produce joint evidence. Each candidate must provide her or his individual responses to each of the three stages of the investigation and assessors must be satisfied that the work has been completed by the individual candidate.

Tutor questions may be used to ascertain the candidates' understanding of the issues contained in the Investigation report and to probe the validity of the conclusions.

Equality and inclusion

This graded 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.

General information for candidates

This is a single credit Graded Unit at SCQF level 8: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8).

This Graded Unit is a project (investigation), to be completed towards the end of your course. It is designed to assess your ability to integrate and apply knowledge and understanding from the following defined Units in order to meet the principal aims of the Rural Business Management award.

| Unit code | Unit name |
|-----------|--|
| DV0M 34 | Work Experience |
| D7CY 35 | IT Applications Software 2 |
| F137 34 | Using Financial Accounting Statements |
| F26F 35 | Planning, Budgeting and Control |
| DE3G 35 | Economics 1:Micro and Macro Theory and Application |
| DV8N 35 | Marketing Planning Process |
| DE3E 34 | Business Law: An Introduction |
| F3X3 35 | Data Collection and Handling |

Your investigation must involve a business enterprise, its usage and management in relation to looking to add value to the business. You will be asked to take the role of a consultant given the task of giving an assessment of a business, and presenting conclusions in relation to adding value to the core business in a report to the business owner. Your investigation will involve a business audit, manipulation of data, either supplied or collected, which must be presented to back up conclusions. You will be asked to investigate a rural business and select one option for adding value to the business, justifying in detail and with costings why this will add value to the business.

The investigation will require you to plan, develop and evaluate. You will be asked to provide an action planning document, an investigation report and a report to evaluate your management and effectiveness in conducting the investigation. You will be given a high degree of autonomy during all stages of the investigation, however your tutor is available for guidance and support. After the submission of your report, your tutor may interview you to probe your understanding of the issues contained in your report and the validity of your conclusions.

The project (investigation) will be assessed in three stages:

| | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|---|---------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| 1 | Planning – 20% of marks | 2 | Developing – 60% of marks | 3 | Evaluating – 20% of marks |
|---|-------------------------|---|---------------------------|---|---------------------------|

You will need to pass all three stage of your investigation by achieving at least 50% of the marks available at each stage. You must pass each separate stage before progressing to the next stage. Assessors will mark each stage of the investigation, taking into account the criteria outlined. Your marks will then be aggregated to arrive at an overall mark for the project. You may be required to answer questions from the assessor to validate the evidence.

Assessors will then assign an overall grade to you for your Graded Unit based on the following grade boundaries:

| | | | | | |
|---|--------------|---|-------------|---|-------------|
| A | = 70% — 100% | B | = 60% — 69% | C | = 50% — 59% |
|---|--------------|---|-------------|---|-------------|

There are opportunities in this Unit to develop your Core Skills in *Problem Solving*, *Numeracy* and *Communication*, all at SCQF level 6, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.