



## Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Specification

### General Information

This Graded Unit has been validated as part of the HND Administration and Information Technology (G9M8 16). Centres are required to develop a project-based assessment in accordance with this validated specification.

**Graded Unit title:** Administration and Information Technology:  
Graded Unit 3

**Graded Unit code:** F8KY 35

**Type of Project:** Case Study

**Publication date:** August 2013

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 02

### Graded Unit purpose

This Graded Unit is designed to provide evidence that the learner has achieved the following principal aims of the HND Administration and Information Technology (G9M8 16):

- ◆ Develop a range of specialist IT skills
- ◆ Develop project management, research and planning skills
- ◆ Develop an awareness of professional issues such as legal, data management and ethical considerations
- ◆ Develop the ability to work flexibly and co-operatively with others
- ◆ Develop critical and evaluative thinking
- ◆ Prepare learners for employment in an administrative role
- ◆ Prepare learners for progression to degree courses

### Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 8: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8)

## Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Specification: General Information (cont)

### 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:

F84D 35	<i>Office Management</i>
F84W 35	<i>Information and Communication Technology in Business</i>
F84E 35	<i>Presentation Skills</i>
F84A 35	<i>IT in Business: Advanced Word Processing</i>
F849 35	<i>IT in Business: Advanced Spreadsheets</i>
F848 35	<i>IT in Business: Advanced Databases</i>
F870 34 or F86Y 35	<i>Developing the Individual within a Team</i>

### Core Skills

Achievement of this Graded Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Core Skill component(s)      *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6

There are also opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills which are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Graded Unit specification.

### Assessment Support Pack

The Assessment Support Pack for this Unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable instrument of assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the Assessment Support Pack to ensure a comparable standard. Assessment Support Packs are available on SQA's secure website.

### 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](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements)**

# Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Specification: Designing the project and assessing learners

**Graded Unit title:** Administration and Information Technology:  
Graded Unit 3

## 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.

## 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 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 has to be achieved before the next is undertaken. This means any remediation or re-assessment of stages must be undertaken before proceeding to the next stage.

At SCQF level 8 learners should work independently. Discussions should take place between the learner and lecturer to establish the suitability of the learner's chosen issue from the outset of the investigation. It is the responsibility of the centre to take reasonable steps to ensure that the project is the work of the learner. For example, centres may wish to informally question learners at various stages on their knowledge and understanding of the project 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.

## Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Specification: Designing the project and assessing learners (cont)

**Graded Unit title:** Administration and Information Technology:  
Graded Unit 3

### 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.

Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements	Mark Allocation
Stage 1 — Planning	<p>In order to achieve a pass in the Planning stage, the learner must include the following minimum evidence, and achieve a minimum of 15 marks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Evidence of analysing and interpreting the outlined scenario, ie setting objectives and identification of the key factors influencing the project, how they relate to one another and their relative importance</li> <li>◆ Evidence of developing an approach to deal with the project, eg the learner may select a new approach to the project or modify an existing approach</li> <li>◆ Justification for selecting this approach, eg by referring to the key factors, the resources and time available, comparison with other possible approaches</li> <li>◆ Evidence of developing a plan to carry out the project based on the analysis undertaken</li> <li>◆ Identification of the resources required to carry out the project, eg sources of information, procedures to be followed, people, equipment and other physical resources; resources should be wide ranging and some should be unfamiliar to the learner</li> <li>◆ Evidence of obtaining these resources</li> </ul>	30 marks

## Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Specification: Designing the project and assessing learners (cont)

**Graded Unit title:** Administration and Information Technology:  
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Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements	Mark Allocation
Stage 2 — Developing	<p>In order to achieve a pass in the Developing stage, the learner must include the following minimum evidence, and achieve a minimum of 25 marks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Evidence of the learner carrying out the project by identifying and researching associated issues; consulting relevant individuals, organisations and agencies to develop the outlined scenario; meeting the requirements of the plan and managing the project in the form of product evidence which shows:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— awareness of industry standards and legislation</li> <li>— effective presentation skills</li> <li>— effective integration of interdisciplinary skills</li> </ul> </li> <li>◆ A case study report with conclusions and recommendations. This report should include graphic production and desk top publishing features</li> </ul>	50 marks

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Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements	Mark Allocation
Stage 3 — Evaluating	<p>In order to achieve a pass in the Evaluation stage, the learner must include the following minimum evidence, and achieve a minimum of 10 marks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ An evaluation of the effectiveness of the approach/strategy to include all stages of the activity.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— the analysis of the task</li> <li>— the planning and organisation of the project</li> <li>— the development of the activity</li> <li>— the completion of the activity</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The learner must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ identify and gather appropriate evidence to support their evaluation</li> <li>◆ draw appropriate conclusions</li> <li>◆ make recommendations on possible improvements or alternative strategies</li> </ul> <p>The evaluation should be in the form of a report which includes a retrospective analysis of the degree of effectiveness of each stage of the activity. This should include graphic production and desktop publishing features.</p>	20 marks

## Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Specification: Designing the project and assessing learners (cont)

**Graded Unit title:** Administration and Information Technology:  
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### Assessing and grading learners

The overall project will be marked out of **100**. 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.

Learners will be permitted to remediate work, where any of the minimum Evidence Requirements have not been met. Where a learner submits a stage of the project for assessment and one, or more, areas within the minimum Evidence Requirements are assessed as deficient, that stage of the project may be returned for remediation. To avoid the practice of grade boosting, when a learner re-submits work, only the areas identified as deficient, in the first attempt, should be re-marked. All work produced, first and second attempts, should be retained with the learner evidence. Where the first submission of a stage of the project meets all of the minimum Evidence Requirements and gains at least the minimum marks, resubmission should not be permitted. Resubmission after a single remediation attempt should count as the second assessment attempt.

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. In this case, a learner's grade will be based on the achievement in the re-assessment, if this results in a higher grade.

## Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Specification: Designing the project and assessing learners (cont)

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

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%

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).



## **Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Support Notes**

**Graded Unit title:** Administration and Information Technology:  
Graded Unit 3

### **Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment of this Graded Unit**

This Unit is designed to develop the skills and competencies required of an office manager. The Unit should build skills and competencies which meet the criteria of SCQF level 8 — the ability to present and critically analyse, evaluate and/or synthesise ideas, concepts, information and issues which are within the common understanding of the subject discipline.

The learner should be given a date for completion of the Project. The instructions for the assessment task should be distributed to allow the learner 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 learner's evidence at the time of the completion date.

### **Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills**

#### **Critical Thinking SCQF level 6**

During the planning stage, learners will analyse a case study, identifying key factors involved and the relationship between them. Learners will identify a strategy for tackling the case study tasks; the resources needed and then justify the identified approach.

#### **Planning and Organising SCQF level 6**

The complexity of the case study will require learners to plan and follow concurrent strands of inquiry. They will be able to draw on skills acquired during their studies, refining and further developing their planning and organising skills. Once learners have agreed the plan, they will follow the agreed plan. Where changes are required, these will be recorded and considered during the evaluation stage.

#### **Reviewing and Evaluating SCQF level 6**

During the evaluation stage, learners will consider their effectiveness throughout each phase of the case study. Where modifications to the plan were required, the learner will provide information about what the issues were, the possible options to resolve the issue and justification for the final selection.

Learners will draw on evidence to support their evaluation, considering all major aspects of the case study. They will reflect on the way they have tackled the project and will make recommendations for any future project tasks. Learners will produce a brief report in which they will draw conclusions and make recommendations for future actions.

## History of changes to Graded Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Graded Unit specification transferred to the current Graded Unit shell to provide greater clarity for centres in relation to re-assessment.	21/08/13

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## General information for learners

### Graded Unit title: Administration and Information Technology: Graded Unit 3

This Unit is designed to provide evidence that you have achieved the principal aims of the HND Administration and Information Technology (G9M8 16) which include developing a range of IT skills, developing project management, research and planning skills, being able to work flexibly and co-operatively with others, being able to problem solve and use critical and evaluative thinking. The Unit will cover a range of knowledge and skills from the mandatory core.

In order to complete this Unit successfully you will be required to achieve a satisfactory level of performance on one piece of assessed work. The assessment will be a case study from which you will have to complete a project.

You will need to work independently with guidance and support from your tutor. You will also agree a timeline and submission dates for your project.

The case study may draw from the content of the following Units:

F84D 35	<i>Office Management</i>
F84W 35	<i>Information and Communication Technology in Business</i>
F84E35	<i>Presentation Skills</i>
F84A 35	<i>IT in Business: Advanced Word Processing</i>
F849 35	<i>IT in Business: Advanced Spreadsheets</i>
F848 35	<i>IT in Business: Advanced Databases</i>
F870 34 or F86Y 35	<i>Developing the Individual within a Team</i>

If you fail the project overall or wish 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 this case, your grade will be based on the achievement in the re-assessment, if this results in a higher grade.

Successful achievement of the Unit will be graded based on the final mark attained as follows:

Grade A: 70–100%  
Grade B: 60–69%  
Grade C: 50–59%

This grade applies only to the Graded Unit and not the Group Awards as a whole.