



Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Marketing Research Theory

Unit code: FK8M 34

Superclass: BA

Publication date: November 2014

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 02

Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to enable candidates to demonstrate an understanding of the key theoretical concepts and ideas underpinning marketing research. This Unit is intended as an introduction to *Marketing Research Theory* or as a precursor to more specialised marketing research Units such as *Marketing Research Applications*. The emphasis is therefore on understanding rather than application so candidates are not required to undertake marketing research as part of this Unit.

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

1. Explain the role and nature of marketing research in marketing.
2. Explain market research methodologies.
3. Demonstrate the use of market research tools.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, it would be beneficial if the candidate has achieved Core Skills *Communications* at SCQF level 5.

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit 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.*

General information (cont)

Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Numeracy* at SCQF level 5; *Communication* at SCQF level 6; and *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6 in this Unit, 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

Assessment for Outcome 1 can take a variety of forms, eg it could be set of structured questions requiring extended responses, completed under controlled conditions.

However in Outcome 2, assessment is on a sample basis and responses must be completed in restricted open-book and supervised conditions.

Outcome 3 could be assessed in a variety of ways. For example, candidates may be given a market research brief or case study; asked to select and justify an appropriate sampling method, and then design an appropriate questionnaire to meet the objectives of the brief.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Marketing Research Theory

Unit code: FK8M 34

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 role and nature of marketing research in marketing.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Market research as part of marketing activities
- ◆ The market research process
- ◆ Research briefs and proposals
- ◆ The nature and structure of the market research industry

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ explain the role of market research as part of the marketing process
- ◆ describe the stages of the market research process
- ◆ explain the role of the research brief and the research proposal
- ◆ describe the nature and structure of the market research industry.

Assessment Guidelines

The instrument of assessment for Outcome 1 could take a variety of forms, for example it could be a set of structured questions requiring extended response answers which could be completed under controlled conditions.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Marketing Research Theory

Outcome 2

Explain market research methodologies.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Secondary research
- ◆ Observation research
- ◆ Qualitative research
- ◆ Quantitative research
- ◆ Experimental research

Evidence Requirements

The assessment for this Outcome is on a sample basis so the five items listed above in Knowledge and/or Skills must be taught and available for assessment.

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can explain with examples, **three** of the research methodologies listed below and identify their relative advantages and disadvantages.

- ◆ Secondary research
- ◆ Observation research
- ◆ Qualitative research
- ◆ Quantitative research
- ◆ Experimental research

The evidence for this Outcome must be completed under restricted open-book and supervised conditions. Candidates must not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Assessment Guidelines

This Outcome must be assessed as outlined above in the Evidence Requirements above. Restricted open-book conditions mean that the candidate is allowed access to a limited amount of material. For this assessment, this is one A4 sheet of notes and for standardisation this is to contain a maximum of 500 words.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Marketing Research Theory

Outcome 3

Demonstrate the use of market research tools.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Sampling techniques
- ◆ Questionnaire design
- ◆ Attitude scaling techniques

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ explain, with reasons, the choice of an appropriate sampling technique for a market research project
- ◆ design a questionnaire for a market research project which incorporates two different attitude scaling techniques.

Assessment Guidelines

This Outcome could be assessed in a variety of ways. For example, candidates could be given a market research brief or case study and asked to select and justify an appropriate sampling method, and then design an appropriate questionnaire to meet the objectives of the brief. To ensure that all Evidence Requirements are covered, it is recommended that the candidate produces an explanation of their questionnaire design covering:

- ◆ Structure
- ◆ Administration
- ◆ Coding frames
- ◆ Relevance of questions to objectives

Candidates are also required to identify and use a range of question types and where written evidence is provided, they must pay careful attention to spelling, grammar, layout etc.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Marketing Research Theory

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

For many candidates, this Unit may be their only exposure to Marketing Research and as such is designed to give an over-all understanding of the subject area.

- ◆ **Outcome 1** is designed to enable candidates to demonstrate an understanding of the role and nature of marketing research as an important part of the marketing activity (information source for decision making). It covers the steps in the marketing research process, the industry use of research briefs and proposals, and the nature and structure of the industry (agencies/in-house, co-operation of respondents, ethics, code of practice, etc).
- ◆ **Outcome 2** looks at the key methodologies used in marketing research — secondary research, observation, qualitative and quantitative research and finally experimentation. In addition to understanding the different research methodologies, candidates should be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of each method in relation to the type of data to be collected.
- ◆ **Outcome 3** is designed to provide candidates with basic understanding of sampling techniques and questionnaire design.

It may be helpful, where appropriate in the teaching of this Unit to make candidates aware of the impact that the rapid growth of digital media is having on marketing. The use of relevant digital techniques for marketing research such as on-line research tools could be covered but teaching should emphasise the continued need for traditional marketing research methodologies and techniques.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

It is intended that the emphasis will be on understanding rather than application. The candidate is not required to undertake marketing research as part of this Unit, but is required to design a questionnaire.

This Unit is intended as an introduction to marketing research theory or as a precursor to more specialised marketing research Units such as *Marketing Research Applications* or *Advertising: Research Techniques for Media Sales*.

The explanatory nature of Outcome 1 lends itself to an assessment along the lines of a set of structured questions requiring extended responses, completed under controlled conditions.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Marketing Research Theory

Outcome 2 **must** be assessed on a sample basis, with all five Knowledge and Skills items taught and available for assessment. For the assessment, candidates need to explain, with examples, **three** of the following research methodologies:

- ◆ Secondary research
- ◆ Observation research
- ◆ Qualitative research
- ◆ Quantitative research
- ◆ Experimental research

This could include the application of research through a digital medium.

Candidates must also identify the relative advantages and disadvantages of the three research methodologies.

Assessment must be completed under restricted open-book and supervised conditions and candidates must not be told in advance which research methodologies they will be assessed on. Different research methodologies should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

For this Outcome, restricted open-book conditions mean that the candidate is allowed access to a limited amount of material ie one A4 sheet of notes containing a maximum of 500 words.

A research brief or Case Study could be provided for the two tasks in Outcome 3. This would be a general introduction to sampling methods and while candidates would be required to justify their choice of sampling method, they would not be expected to demonstrate any knowledge of statistics. The design of a research questionnaire could also be based on the same market research brief or case study. Part of this questionnaire will be designed to collect attitudinal data. Candidates must be advised that they should use recognised/established attitude measurement scaling technique (eg Likert, Thurston, Osgood, Kelly, etc) when undertaking this assessment. Candidates will be expected to design and explain their choice of questions used in the questionnaire. The candidate must design a suitable questionnaire for this assessment and provide an explanation that clearly demonstrates a firm understanding of the attitude scale employed in terms of underlying theory and how scored.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Marketing Research Theory

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There are no Core Skills embedded in this Unit. However, the following table gives some examples of the opportunities for developing Core Skills within this Unit.

Core Skill	SCQF level	Opportunities for development
Communication	Level 6	All three Outcomes can contribute to the reading and writing aspects of this Core Skill.
Written Communication (Reading)	Level 6	Candidates are expected to read and understand complex written information and to apply theoretical marketing research concepts to a marketing research brief or case study.
Written Communication (Writing)	Level 6	Candidates have to produce well-structured and clear responses addressing the Evidence Requirements. Written evidence is required in the form of extended response answers, reports and questionnaire construction.
Problem Solving	Level 6	There is the opportunity to develop problem solving Skills. Two Outcomes can contribute to critical thinking. In Outcome 2 the candidate will use problem solving skills to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of a number of marketing research methodologies. In Outcome 3 the candidate will use these skills to select appropriate sampling methods, and design a questionnaire, based on a research brief or other stimulus material.
Numeracy	Level 5	When designing the survey questionnaire, candidates will have the opportunity to develop numeracy skills when constructing attitude scales and coding plans.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Marketing Research Theory

Open learning

If this Unit is delivered by open or flexible learning, additional resources and material will be required for candidate support, assessment and quality assurance. Further information and advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk.

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Insertion of short guidance in Support Notes (in Guidance on the content and context) of this Unit re inclusion of the impact of digital marketing on marketing research.	04/11/14

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2011, 2014

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged.

Additional copies of this Unit specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. Please contact the Customer Contact Centre, telephone 0845 279 1000.

General information for candidates

Unit title: Marketing Research Theory

In this Unit, you will look at how marketing research has a crucial role to play in the marketing process and examine industry structure and practice.

Research methodologies will be explored and you will be required to understand the key techniques and benefits associated with them.

Finally, you will be asked to design appropriate research tasks such as sample selection and designing a questionnaire. It is likely that this will be based on a research brief or case study given to you by your tutor.

On completion of the Unit, you will be able to:

- 1 Explain the role and nature of marketing research in marketing.
- 2 Evaluate market research methodologies.
- 3 Design market research tools.

There are a range of assessments for this Unit. These include the production of responses in supervised conditions as well as the production of a short report and designing a questionnaire. However, your tutor will confirm the exact assessment arrangements.