



Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Visual Communication: Sustainable Design

Unit code: H388 34

Superclass: KA

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Unit purpose

This is an optional Unit in the Higher National Certificate and Higher National Diploma in Visual Communication. It can also be taken as a freestanding Unit.

This Unit is designed to develop candidates' knowledge of the importance of designing for sustainability and will enhance their awareness of the environmental, economic and social impact that design decisions incur. Candidates will also develop investigative skills by researching issues of sustainability within an area of design, and they will produce a design solution that conforms to sustainability design principles.

This Unit is specifically targeted at candidates with an interest in sustainability in the context of design.

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

- 1 Research, and present findings on, issues of sustainability within a chosen area of design.
- 2 Produce a sustainable design solution in response to a project brief.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. It may be beneficial if the candidates have prior knowledge of the design process. They should also have good research and communication skills.

General information (cont)

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.*

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the support notes of this Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

Context for delivery

If this Unit is delivered as part of the Higher National Certificate and Higher National Diploma in Visual Communication, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

The assessment exemplar 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 exemplar to ensure a comparable standard. Assessment exemplars are available on SQA's secure website.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or Skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Please refer to Knowledge and/or Skills for the Unit and Evidence Requirements for the Unit after the Outcomes.

Outcome 1

Research, and present findings on, issues of sustainability within a chosen area of design.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Research skills
- ◆ Environmental, economic and social impact of design
- ◆ Sustainable and ethical design technology, materials and processes

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ identify research and gather information on:
 - environmental, economic and social impact of design decisions within their chosen area of design
 - sustainable and ethical design technology, materials and processes used/available in their chosen area of design
- ◆ evaluate the information gathered with reference to the importance of designing for sustainability
- ◆ collate the information, crediting all sources

Candidates will be given a clear brief covering all of the above Evidence Requirements. They must undertake the research and present their findings on their own, at appropriate points as they develop their knowledge and skills. Centres must ensure that the evidence is the candidate's own work.

The results of the research and findings can be presented in hard copy or electronic format.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Visual Communication: Sustainable Design

Outcome 2

Produce a sustainable design solution in response to a project brief.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Problem solving
- ◆ Design for sustainability
- ◆ Sustainable materials/technology and processes
- ◆ Environmental/social/economic impact of the design solution

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ respond to a project brief by:
 - identifying the sustainable materials and/or technology, and processes required for the design solution
 - producing a minimum of four design concepts for the design solution
 - reviewing the environmental/social/economic impact of each of these design concepts
 - selecting one of these design concepts to develop into a design solution that conforms to design for sustainability principles

Candidates will be given a clear brief covering all of the above Evidence Requirements. They must undertake the research and present their findings on their own, at appropriate points as they develop their knowledge and skills. Centres must ensure that the evidence is the candidate's own work.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Visual Communication: Sustainable Design

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

The Unit is intended to develop the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the importance of designing for sustainability. This will help to inform the design decisions they make and encourage them to work in an ethical and accountable way.

Design for Sustainability is a term that is interchangeable with terms such as Green Design, Eco-Design or Design for Environment. Its role in improving the quality of life for everyone, including future generations, is one which candidates should become fully aware of.

Guidance on the delivery of this Unit

Through lectures and tutor led discussions, the topic of Design for Sustainability should be introduced to expand knowledge of sustainability issues.

Access to resources which allow candidates opportunities to research materials and update workbooks/sketchbooks will be valuable during delivery. Workbooks/sketchbooks can be paper or electronically devised.

Contextualisation of sustainable design should be reinforced during delivery by, for example, offering lectures and tutorials. Visits or guest speakers from organisations involved in designing for sustainability may also add further value to the contextualisation of this area for candidates.

Outcome 1

Tutors may direct formative exercises/discussions to consider the importance of designing for sustainability, and the impact on the candidate's chosen area of design. Candidates should be encouraged to use a variety of information sources to explore sustainability issues and generate annotated visual research findings within their workbook/sketchbook.

Outcome 2

Research for Outcome 1 may direct the assessment criteria set in Outcome 2. Candidates should explore the issues related to designing for sustainability in a manner appropriate to the resources available. Purely technical and/or creative approaches may be considered as appropriate when designing assessment materials.

During delivery there should be opportunity for candidates to explore four design concepts; it is recommended that this is part of a holistic assessment. Candidates should develop and demonstrate a sound understanding of sustainable design principles and explore design concepts which could lead to a final sustainable design solution.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Visual Communication: Sustainable Design

Guidance on the assessment of this Unit

All evidence should be contextualised within the area of sustainable design and produced within the context of designing for sustainability. Although there is a logical sequence to the delivery of the Outcomes, the assessment for Outcome 1 can be combined with Outcome 2 as part of a single assessment for this Unit.

Centres could integrate the delivery and assessment of this Unit with other Units in the Higher National Certificate/Higher National Diploma in Visual Communication using a thematic approach. Appropriate Units may be:

- ◆ *Visual Communication: An Introduction* (SCQF level 7)
- ◆ *Working in the Field of Visual Communication* (SCQF level 7)
- ◆ *Visual Communication: Social Media* (SCQF level 7)

Assessment Guidelines

Outcome 1

This assessment could take the form of a research project. Candidates will present information that reflects research into issues of sustainability in relation to a chosen area of design, in response to a tutor set brief.

Candidates may wish to identify and justify issues they will consider/explore in Outcome 2.

Outcome 2

Assessment should allow candidates to work independently on a tutor set project brief that gives scope to a range of design concepts.

Candidates should develop and demonstrate a sound understanding of the impact of sustainable design principles; this will be evidenced in the design solution that they produce. They should explore diverse design concepts before selecting an effective solution that could lead to a sustainable design product.

Evidence can be in the form of an annotated workbook/sketchbook, which can be in paper or electronic form, or a combination of both. Research sources should be credited.

The assessment may form part of a holistic approach which could combine both Outcomes into one Instrument of Assessment.

Online and Distance Learning

The research element of this Unit, Outcome 1, could be undertaken using the internet if this is appropriate within the centre. This would facilitate an online learning approach. Candidates and centres may also choose to store their evidence in an electronic format which could facilitate remote access for tutors for assessment purposes.

This Unit could be delivered by distance learning; however it would require planning by the centre to ensure sufficiency and authenticity of candidate evidence.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Visual Communication: Sustainable Design

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

During this Unit candidates will be researching, and providing solutions in relation to a given project brief, evaluating and presenting information. They may be using a variety of software packages and/or accessing the internet to gather information and/or images. These activities provide opportunities to develop aspects of the Core Skills of:

- ◆ *Communication*
- ◆ *Problem Solving*
- ◆ *Information and Communication Technology*

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

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General information for candidates

Unit title: Visual Communication: Sustainable Design

In the *Brundtland Report for the World*, sustainability is defined as:

'Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (Brundtland Commission, (1987)).

This Unit is intended to develop your knowledge and understanding of the importance of designing for sustainability. This will help to inform your design decisions and encourage you to make ethical and sustainable choices when developing design solutions.

In Outcome 1, research will give you an opportunity to discover sustainability issues in relation to a chosen area of design, connected to your area of study. Your research will be produced in a paper-based or electronic workbook/sketchbook, and should contain evidence of the environmental, economic and social impact that design decisions can incur within your chosen area of design; this will include sustainable and ethical design technology, materials and processes used/available in this design area. You will evaluate your research and findings with reference to the importance of designing for sustainability.

In Outcome 2, in response to a tutor set project brief, you will identify sustainable materials and/or technology, and processes required that would lead to a sustainable design solution. You will produce four design concepts, and will review the impact of the design choices that you have made, before developing one of these concepts into a design solution that aligns with design for sustainability principles.