



## Higher National Unit specification

### General information

**Unit title:** International Business Environment: Geographical Influences

**Unit code:** H3MF 34

**Superclass:** AD

**Publication date:** March 2013

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 01

**Unit purpose:** This Unit will enable learners to understand the importance of geography in shaping current and future international business and trade patterns, through examining physical, economic, political, cultural and social factors. It is aimed principally at learners who aspire to work in any internationally focused organisation and is appropriate for those involved in major business functions or for anyone with an interest in the topic.

### Outcomes

On successful completion of the Unit the learner will be able to:

- 1 Explain the importance of physical geography and environment on the development of international business.
- 2 Explain the importance of political, economic and cultural geography on the development of international business.

### Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7)

### Recommended entry to the Unit

Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre; however it would be beneficial if the learner has good written and oral communication skills by possession of Higher English or a suitable HN Communication Unit at SCQF level 6. Some knowledge of Geography and/or Economics might also be useful.

## Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

**Unit title:** International Business Environment: Geographical Influences

### Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes for 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 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.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this Unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard. A list of existing ASPs is available to download from SQA's website (<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46233.2769.html>).

### Equality and inclusion

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

## Higher National Unit Specification: Statement of standards

**Unit title:** International Business Environment: Geographical Influences

Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

### Outcome 1

Explain the importance of physical geography and environment on the development of international business

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Elements of physical geography and environment
- ◆ Population centres
- ◆ International transport and trade routes
- ◆ International markets

### Outcome 2

Explain the importance of political, economic and cultural geography on the development of international business.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Political influences
- ◆ Economic factors
- ◆ Cultural and social influences

### Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Assessment can be completed under supervised, open book conditions.

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills across all Outcomes by showing that they can:

#### Outcome 1

- ◆ Describe, with examples, four elements of physical geography and environment which have a direct impact on international business.
- ◆ Explain the importance of physical geography and environment on the following:
  - Population centres
  - International transport and trade routes
  - Investment in international markets

## Higher National Unit Specification: Statement of standards (cont)

**Unit title:** International Business Environment: Geographical Influences

### Outcome 2

- ◆ Explain the influence of two of the following factors on the operation of international business:
  - National sovereignty
  - Local laws
  - Political stability
  - Economic situation
  
- ◆ Explain the influence of two of the following factors on the operation of International business:
  - Social institutions
  - Material culture
  - Belief/value systems
  - Language
  
- ◆ For one country, describe an approach that could be adopted by an international business organisation to:
  - reduce commercial risk from political issues
  - reduce commercial risk from cultural issues

## **Higher National Unit: Support Notes**

**Unit title:** International Business Environment: Geographical Influences

Unit Support Notes are offered as guidance and 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**

In this Unit the learner will develop an understanding of the importance of physical and human geography in the development of international trade and business.

It will identify the key geographical influences on the international business environment and the relationship that climate, topography, physical resources, politics, economics and culture have on businesses and how they operate. Of particular interest will be the impact of geographical influences on international marketing, investment, economic risk, transportation and trade routes.

Outcome 1 requires learners to describe key elements of physical geography which directly impact on international business, and then explain how population centres, international transport and trade routes, and investment in international markets are directly influenced by the physical environment.

In Outcome 2 learners are required to explain how elements of human geography influence international business and trade, in particular the political and economic environment; cultural and social factors; and finally to consider ways that the commercial risk associated with these influences could be reduced.

### **Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit**

Where delivered as part of the HND in Global Trade and Business, it is recommended that this Unit is delivered early in the first year of the Group Award programme. However it may form part of other Group Awards and can be delivered on a stand-alone basis.

Teaching and learning should be contextualised in terms of international business and might include videos, case studies, visiting speakers and possibly visits to companies such as manufacturers and retailers. Learners should be encouraged to read and research into businesses where geography has had an important impact on their international commercial activities.

## Higher National Unit: Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** International Business Environment: Geographical Influences

### Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of instruments of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

This Unit may be assessed using an integrative assessment approach for Outcomes 1 and 2, or by using an individual instrument of assessment for each Outcome. This could take the form of structured questions based on appropriate case material and could be completed under supervised, open book conditions. Where an integrated assessment is used, an overall word count of approximately 1,500–2,000 words would be envisaged.

As with any Unit, centres should ensure they can authenticate learners' assessments. This may be done by questioning learners about their work, by viewing drafts of partially completed assessments or by using an online anti-plagiarism tool, such as Turnitin or SafeAssign.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

### Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at [www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment](http://www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment).

## Higher National Unit: Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** International Business Environment: Geographical Influences

### Opportunities for developing Core and other essential 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
<b>Communication</b>	Level 6	All three Outcomes can contribute to the reading and writing aspects of this Core Skill.
— Written Communication (Reading)	Level 6	Learners are expected to read and understand complex written information.
— Written Communication (Writing)	Level 6	There are opportunities to develop written communication where learners produce written responses as these have to be well-structured and clear, addressing the Evidence Requirements. Evidence is required in the form of the production of a structured report.
<b>Problem Solving</b>	Level 5	In Outcomes 1 and 2, there are opportunities to develop the Core Skill of the components <i>Problem Solving</i> (Critical Thinking) and <i>Problem Solving</i> (Planning and Organising) at SCQF level 5 when learners have to explain the impact of specific influences on business and suggest approaches that might be adopted by international businesses for reducing commercial risk.
<b>Information and Communication Technology (ICT)</b>	Level 5	Learners are likely to use Information and <i>Communication Technology (ICT)</i> when undertaking research into the geographical influences on international organisations.

## History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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## General information for learners

### **Unit title:** International Business Environment: Geographical Influences

This Unit will enable you to understand the importance of geography in shaping current and future international business and trade patterns, through examining the political, economic, physical and human environment in which business operates.

On completion of the Unit you will be able to:

- 1 Explain the importance of physical geography and environment on the development of international business.
- 2 Explain the importance of human geography, ie political, economic and cultural geography, on the development of international business.

In Outcome 1 you will describe key elements of physical geography which directly impact on international business, and go on to explain how population centres, international transport and trade routes, and investment in international markets are directly influenced by the physical environment.

In Outcome 2 you will consider how elements of human geography influence international business and trade, in particular the political and economic environment; cultural and social factors; and then consider ways that the commercial risk associated with these influences could be reduced.

Over the course of this Unit, there may be opportunities for you to develop Core Skills in the areas of *Communication, Problem Solving, and Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*. The practical skills gained in the planning and organising of your research will be useful in further study or in employment.