



## Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Specification

### General Information

This Graded Unit has been validated as part of the HNC in Career Information Advice and Guidance Practice. Centres are required to develop a project-based assessment in accordance with this validated specification.

**Graded Unit title:** Career Information, Advice and Guidance Practice: Graded Unit 1 (SCQF level 7)

**Graded Unit code:** H6VP 34

**Type of Project:** Practical Assignment

**Publication date:** March 2014

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 01

### Graded Unit purpose

This Graded Unit is designed to provide evidence that the candidate has achieved the following principal aims of the HNC in Career Information Advice and Guidance Practice.

- ◆ To ensure understanding of the context, values and principles underpinning the provision of CIAG service delivery.
- ◆ To deliver excellent customer service by developing own techniques in a range of specific areas: CIAG interviewing, CIAG group work and developing customer's employability.
- ◆ To develop the knowledge and skills necessary to support customers to access and use career related information.
- ◆ To be able to assess customer needs through the use of appropriate diagnostic tools and methods.
- ◆ To deliver CIAG services through a variety of channels, ie Face to face, by telephone or internet based communication.
- ◆ To ensure awareness of legislation relevant to CIAG service delivery, including H&S, Equality and Data Protection.
- ◆ To develop skills in self-evaluation and reflection to inform own practice and service delivery.

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

### **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 Graded Unit**

It is recommended that the candidate 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:

- ◆ CIAG: Context and Principles for Delivery of Services
- ◆ CIAG: Supporting Customers to Access and Use Career Related Information
- ◆ Evaluating Own Practice and Planning for Self Development
- ◆ CIAG: Interviewing Skills
- ◆ CIAG: Employability

### **Core Skills**

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Graded Unit specification.

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

### **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 candidates 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 candidates

**Graded Unit title:** Career Information, Advice and Guidance Practice:  
Graded Unit 1 (SCQF level 7)

### Assessment

This Graded Unit will be assessed by the use of a project-based *practical assignment* developed by centres. The project should provide the candidate with the opportunity to produce evidence that demonstrates she/he has met the aims of this Graded Unit.

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 unfamiliar to the candidate

The project 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 work necessary to undertake this assignment will consolidate skills and knowledge acquired throughout the HNC CIAG Practice. Candidates will plan, carry out and evaluate a CIAG customer interview. They will use knowledge and employ skills developed through a combination of the mandatory Units from the Group Award. When planning, carrying out and evaluating a CIAG customer interview, candidates must ensure that sufficient evidence is provided to meet the requirements of the Graded Unit.

### Conditions of assessment

The candidate should be given a date for completion of the project. However, the instructions for the project should be distributed to allow the candidate 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 candidate's evidence at the time of the completion date.

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

**Graded Unit title:** Career Information, Advice and Guidance Practice:  
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### **Project Brief Practical Assignment**

This assignment relates to working with a customer in a Career Information, Advice and Guidance setting to plan, carry out and evaluate an activity which promotes the career development skills and employability of the customer. The candidate should identify an appropriate activity in discussion with their course tutor and/or manager.

The assignment is not concerned exclusively with the practical activity; candidates should demonstrate their interpersonal, organisational, evaluative, reflective and management skills to help assess their overall insight and understanding of the activity.

The project will follow three stages:

- ◆ Planning
- ◆ Developing
- ◆ Evaluating

The Planning stage will be assessed by a short planning document.

The Developing stage will be assessed by a report of the activity.

The Evaluating stage will be assessed by an Evaluation report.

The Tutor's role is that of a facilitator so to gain high marks the candidate must demonstrate a high degree of autonomy in all stages of the assignment.

### **Stage 1 — Planning**

Select a customer with whom you are working:

- ◆ Describe the current context for delivery of CIAG services.
- ◆ Explain the values and principles that underpin CIAG practice.
- ◆ Analyse the current career development skills and employability of the customer.
- ◆ Apply a CIAG approach to plan an activity which promotes the career development skills and employability of the customer.
- ◆ Identify key legislation and policies and procedures which are designed to protect the customer, including confidentiality considerations, within the context of the planned activity.

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

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### **Stage 2 — Developing**

Give an account of the activity that describes how you applied the knowledge and skills gained from the underpinning Units in the course to the activity with the customer, making reference to:

- ◆ How you supported the customer to access and use relevant career-related information.
- ◆ How you supported the customer in the development of their employability.
- ◆ How you ensured that the beliefs and preferences of the customer were respected and considered throughout the activity.

### **Stage 3 — Evaluating**

Provide an Evaluation and review of the activity which includes:

- ◆ Evaluation of the effectiveness of the original plan.
- ◆ Reflection on own practice throughout all stages of the project.

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

**Graded Unit title:** Career Information, Advice and Guidance Practice:  
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### Evidence Requirements for this Graded Unit

The project undertaken by candidates 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	Produce a plan to carry out a CIAG activity which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ An outline of the current context for delivery of CIAG services.</li> <li>◆ An explanation of the values and principles that underpin CIAG practice.</li> <li>◆ An assessment of the needs of a customer.</li> <li>◆ A description of the activity.</li> <li>◆ A rationale for the selection of the chosen activity in terms of appropriateness and benefits to the customer.</li> <li>◆ Clearly defined aims of the project and steps required to reach these.</li> <li>◆ Identification and assessment of potential risks and evidence of a plan to minimise these, ensuring safe practice throughout the activity.</li> <li>◆ Realistic timescales which are set and agreed with relevant others, for carrying out the activity and completing the assignment.</li> <li>◆ Identification of key legislation and policies and procedures which are designed to protect the individual, including confidentiality considerations, within the context of the planned activity.</li> </ul>	30
	<p><i>The candidate <b>must</b> achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Planning stage.</i></p>	

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

**Graded Unit title:** Career Information, Advice and Guidance Practice:  
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Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements	% Mark Allocation
Stage 2 — Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Is based on the final plan agreed prior to the activity taking place.</li> <li>◆ Demonstrates how the candidate ensured that the beliefs and preferences of the customer were respected and considered throughout the activity.</li> <li>◆ Demonstrates ability to manage materials and resources to carry out the activity.</li> <li>◆ Supports a customer to access and use relevant career- related information.</li> <li>◆ Supports a customer in the development of their employability.</li> <li>◆ Demonstrates how equality and inclusion were promoted.</li> </ul>	35
	<p><i>The candidate <b>must</b> achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Developing stage.</i></p>	
Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements	% Mark Allocation
Stage 3 — Evaluating	<p>Produce an evaluation of the activity which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Evaluation of own practice.</li> <li>◆ Review of the effectiveness of a CIAG activity.</li> <li>◆ Review of the effectiveness of the career-related information given to support the customer.</li> <li>◆ An assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of original plan.</li> <li>◆ A review of the plan and modifications made to inform improvements to own work.</li> <li>◆ Identification of any problems encountered and skills gained during the process of completing the assignment.</li> </ul>	35
	<p><i>The candidate <b>must</b> achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Evaluating stage.</i></p>	

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

**Graded Unit title:** Career Information, Advice and Guidance Practice:  
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### Assessing and grading candidates

Below is a suggested marking scheme for each stage of this project which has been provided for guidance only and is not mandatory. Centres may prefer to devise their own scheme.

The Guidance on the Grading Table should also be consulted when identifying an overall grade for candidates.

#### **Planning Stage** — 30% of total marks

It is suggested that the plan should be 1,200 to 1,700 words.

This stage is worth 30 marks. The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified in the Evidence Requirements section to pass the planning stage.

The planning stage is assessed by; a short planning document and two individual interviews with the tutor.

For the planning stage the marks can be allocated in the following way:

- ◆ **Up to 6 marks** for a comprehensive outline of the current context for delivery of CIAG services.
- ◆ **Up to 4 marks** for a clear explanation of the values and principles that underpin CIAG practice.
- ◆ **Up to 2 marks for a clear assessment of the abilities, aptitudes and aspirations of a customer.**
- ◆ **Up to 4 marks should be allocated for the appropriateness of the selected activity.**
- ◆ Candidates should give details of what they plan to do, how they will do this and when this will happen. Aims and objectives should be clearly stated and the objectives should detail the steps they will take to achieve their aims. The timescale for the planning, development and evaluation should be included.
- ◆ **Up to 8 marks should be allocated for the following:**
  - Detailing the resources and sources of information required. The candidate should show how they consulted with and involved the customer in planning the activity.
  - Identification of relevant legislation, discussion of safe practice and highlighting of issues surrounding confidentiality.
  - Identification of risks and risk assessment of the activity.
  - Identification of a contingency plan.
- ◆ **Up to 6 marks** for the justification of the approach taken in the plan and for developing and adhering to realistic timescales. The plan should be appropriately structured and referenced.



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

**Graded Unit title:** Career Information, Advice and Guidance Practice:  
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To achieve high marks in the planning stage the candidate would be expected to fulfil the following criteria:

- ◆ Candidate is required to have selected the customer and activity prior to the first meeting with tutor.
- ◆ Candidate would be expected to discuss the assessment of needs and to examine first draft of plan at second meeting with tutor.
- ◆ Submission and presentation completion date has to be established and adhered to.

**Developing Stage** — 35% of total marks

It is suggested that the report should be 1,200 to 1,700 words.

This stage is worth 35 marks. The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified in the Evidence Requirements section to pass the developing stage. Assessment is based on a report of the activity.

Up to 15 marks for showing that the activity has been followed through according to the plan.

Candidates who provide a detailed account of the activity, which is related to the plan including the contingency plan if relevant, should be given a high mark. Candidates who do not relate the activity to the plan but give a good account of how they undertook the activity in a logical fashion should pass. Candidates who give an account of the activity, which shows little coherence or organisation and does not relate to the plan, should not be allocated a pass mark.

**Up to 5 marks** should be allocated for the ability to manage materials and resources. This may depend on the activity the candidate has chosen, and the complexity of the organisation required to carry out the activity. In order to achieve full marks the materials used should be appropriate to the activity and reference should be made to Health and Safety requirements and adherence to specific policies.

**Up to 5 marks** for demonstration of how the candidate ensured that the beliefs and preferences of the customer were respected and considered throughout the activity and promoted equality and inclusion.

To achieve high marks candidates should demonstrate how their practice in carrying out the activity has been in accordance with values and principles that underpin CIAG practice.

**Up to 10 marks** for an explanation of how the candidate supports a customer to access and use relevant career-related information and in the development of their employability.

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

**Graded Unit title:** Career Information, Advice and Guidance Practice:  
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**Evaluating Stage** — 35% of total marks

It is suggested that the evaluation should be 1,000–1,500 words.

This stage is worth 35 marks. The candidate must achieve the minimum criteria specified in the Evidence Requirements section to pass the evaluating stage. The evaluating stage is assessed by an evaluation report. The marks for this stage can be allocated in the following way:

- ◆ **Up to 15 marks** should be given to those candidates who are able to review the quality of their own work with some reflection shown. Candidates who can identify areas of new learning and can relate the activity to the plan, including identification of gaps or omissions should be awarded a high mark. To gain high marks candidates should also identify the impact of any new learning on their practice.
- ◆ **Up to 5 marks** should be awarded for an objective review of the effectiveness of the career-related information given to support the customer
- ◆ **Up to 5 marks** for a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the original plan and analysis of whether the plan was sufficient in meeting the aims of the activity. High marks should be given where a candidate uses feedback in evaluating the activity. This feedback could be written, for example in the form of a questionnaire, or oral feedback from the individual customer(s), other members of the CIAG team or the manager.
- ◆ **Up to 5 marks** should be given for the review of the whole project and any modifications or improvements including recommendations for future planned activities, which should be achievable and realistic. The candidate who does this should achieve high marks. A candidate who makes some suggestions but does not always relate them to the plan or development should receive a pass mark. The candidate who does not suggest improvements and who has not related the evaluation of their work across the whole project should not receive a pass mark.
- ◆ **Up to 5 marks** should be awarded for identification of the way the project integrated knowledge and understanding of the component Units of the HNC Career Information Advice and Guidance: Practice. High marks should be awarded to candidates who identified skills gained and integration of theory and practice consistently during the project. A candidate who does not identify any new or enhanced knowledge and skills should not pass this section.

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 candidates must meet the minimum *Evidence Requirements* for the *Planning* stage before progressing to the *Developing* stage before progressing to the *Evaluating* stage. Candidates 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 candidate performance.

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

**Graded Unit title:** Career Information, Advice and Guidance Practice:  
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Candidates are required to work independently to meet the *Evidence Requirements* of the Graded Unit. At the same time, candidates need appropriate support. SQA uses the term reasonable assistance to describe the balance between supporting candidates 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 candidates 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.

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

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

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If a candidate 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:** Career Information, Advice and Guidance Practice:  
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### **Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment of this Graded Unit**

It is envisaged that this Graded Unit would be started towards the end of the candidate's studies. Centres could concentrate the time available for the Graded Unit towards the end of the course. It should not be seen as a repeat of previous Unit assessments. The emphasis should be on the integration and application of existing knowledge and skills.

Time management is an important aspect of planning, developing and evaluating a practical activity and in order to help candidates manage their time effectively, lecturers should consider setting up individual progress reviews with candidates at the start of the delivery of the Graded Unit. Lecturers may consider developing a centre pro forma to record their discussions with candidates. These discussions or mentoring activities are an essential part of the Graded Unit and should help ensure that candidates keep to timelines. Records of meetings will form part of the candidate's evidence. The grade finally achieved by the candidate depends on the work submitted. It is therefore very important that staff do not give undue assistance to students. The level of assistance should be fully discussed course team level and any assistance given should be logged in the candidate's mentoring records

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

In this Unit, candidates will collect and organise information from a number of sources. This is a good opportunity to develop *Communication* and *Problem Solving* skills.

## History of changes to Graded Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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## General information for candidates

### **Graded Unit title:** Career Information, Advice and Guidance Practice: Graded Unit 1 (SCQF level 7)

This Unit has been designed to allow you integrate your learning across a range of Units in the HNC in Career Information, Advice and Guidance Practice.

You should be able to draw upon your learning and practical experience from the following Units:

- ◆ CIAG: Context and Principles for Delivery of Services
- ◆ CIAG: Supporting Customers to Access and Use Career Related Information
- ◆ Evaluating Own Practice and Planning for Self Development
- ◆ CIAG: Interviewing Skills
- ◆ CIAG: Employability

You will be asked to complete an assignment where you will plan, carry out and evaluate an activity which promotes the career development skills and employability of a CIAG customer. You should identify an appropriate activity in discussion with your course tutor and/or manager.

The assignment is not concerned exclusively with the practical aspects; you should demonstrate interpersonal, organisational, evaluative, reflective and management skills to demonstrate your overall insight and understanding of the activity.

You will be given a date for completion of the project. However, the instructions for the project will be distributed to allow you 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 to you.

The final grading given will reflect the quality of your evidence at the time of the completion date.

In this Unit, you will collect and organise information from a number of sources. This is a good opportunity to develop Core Skills in *Communication* and *Problem Solving*.