



Higher National unit specification

General information

Unit title: Marketing Research Theory (SCQF level 7)

Unit code: HH9T 34

Superclass: BA

Publication date: February 2017

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Version: 01

Unit purpose

This unit is designed to enable learners 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 learners are not required to undertake marketing research as part of this unit.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Explain the role and nature of marketing research.
- 2 Explain market research methodologies.
- 3 Demonstrate the use of digital, online market research tools.

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 achieved Core Skills *Communications* at SCQF level 5.

Higher National unit Specification: General information (cont.)

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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.

Higher National unit specification: Statement of standards

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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.

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. Learners 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.

Knowledge and/or skills

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

Outcome 2

Explain market research methodologies.

Knowledge and/or skills

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

Outcome 3

Demonstrate the use of digital, online market research tools.

Knowledge and/or skills

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

Higher National unit specification: Statement of standards (cont.)

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Evidence requirements for this unit

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills across all outcome by showing that they can:

Outcome 1

- ◆ 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.

See Support Notes for assessment guidelines for this outcome.

Outcome 2

The assessment for this outcome is on a sample basis, so the six items listed below must be taught and available for assessment.

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

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can explain, with examples, **secondary research and two of the other research methodologies listed above** and identify their relative advantages and disadvantages.

They must demonstrate their awareness and understanding of digital/online **secondary research** sources and resources.

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

Assessment:

This outcome must be assessed as outlined above in the evidence requirements. Restricted open-book conditions means that the learner 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 800 words.

Higher National unit specification: Statement of standards (cont.)

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Outcome 3

Learners 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.

Learners must design a questionnaire for the research project that incorporates at least one attitude scaling technique. Learners 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.

They must demonstrate their ability to use digital software that can be used online in the design of a questionnaire.

See support notes for assessment guidelines for this outcome.



Higher National unit Support Notes

Unit title: Marketing Research Theory (SCQF level 7)

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

For many learners, 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. This unit is therefore 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*.

Outcome 1 is designed to enable learners 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 and primary research, observation, experimental, qualitative and quantitative research. In addition to understanding the different research methodologies, learners should be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of each method in relation to the type of data to be collected.

The outcome is also designed to provide learners with basic understanding of sampling techniques for marketing research.

This outcome should also present learners with an introduction to sources and resources of online secondary marketing research. Learners are to be able to identify and utilise online sources of secondary research. However, it would also be expected that learners will refer to digital/online aspects of the other research methodologies too.

Learners should be encouraged to engage with reputable online secondary research databases, gaining an understanding of the scope and diversity of information available to researchers and how to quickly and accurately source the correct data for specified research objectives.

Higher National unit Support Notes (cont)

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Outcome 3 is designed to allow learners to demonstrate their knowledge of sampling methods and ability to design a questionnaire in response to a brief, using up to date digital online technology. Learners should also demonstrate their understanding of appropriate questionnaire structure, sequence of questions, recognised types of questions and question wording.

NB: While learners would be required to justify their choice of sampling method, they would not be expected to demonstrate any knowledge of statistics.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

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

Within the delivery of this unit, learners should be made aware of relevant digital/online aspects across the range of research methodologies covered.

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*.

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this unit

Evidence for Outcomes 1 and 3 of this unit can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

However, as Outcome 2 is assessed on a sample basis, it must be undertaken as outlined in the evidence requirements. More information is included below too.

It is intended that the emphasis will be on understanding rather than application. The learner is not required to undertake marketing research as part of this unit, but is required to design a questionnaire using up to date online digital technology.

The instrument of assessment for Outcome 1 could take a variety of forms. 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. But other instruments of assessment are also possible.

Higher National unit Support Notes (cont)

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Outcome 2 must be assessed on a sample basis, with all six knowledge and skills items taught and available for assessment. For the assessment, learners need to explain, with examples, **secondary research** plus two of the following research methodologies:

- ◆ Observation research
- ◆ Qualitative research
- ◆ Quantitative research
- ◆ Primary research
- ◆ Experimental research

Learner must demonstrate their awareness and understanding of digital/online **secondary research** sources and resources. However, it would also be expected that learners will refer to relevant digital/online aspects of the other research methodologies. Learners must also identify the relative advantages and disadvantages of the three research methodologies in the assessment.

Assessment must be completed under restricted open-book and supervised conditions. Learners 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 learner is allowed access to a limited amount of material, ie one A4 sheet of notes containing a maximum of 800 words.

Outcome 3 could be assessed in a variety of ways. However, it is recommended that learners are given a market research brief or case study and asked to select and justify an appropriate sampling method, then design an appropriate questionnaire using appropriate and up to date digital software that can be utilised online to meet the objectives of the brief.

To ensure that all evidence requirements are covered, it is recommended that the learner produces an explanation which clearly demonstrates a firm understanding of the attitude scale employed in terms of underlying theory and how scored. The explanation could also be designed to cover:

- ◆ Structure
- ◆ Administration
- ◆ Coding frames

Additional guidance for Outcome 3:

- ◆ Choice and justification of sampling method and 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.
- ◆ Learners to be advised that they should use recognised/established attitude measurement scaling technique (eg Likert, Thurston, Osgood, Kelly, etc) when undertaking this assessment.
- ◆ Learners expected to design and explain their choice of questions used in the questionnaire.

Higher National unit Support Notes (cont)

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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.

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

There are no Core Skills embedded in this unit. However, there are opportunities to develop the following Core Skills:

Communication: Component — Written Communication

Learners will read and understand complex written information to apply to marketing research concepts; they also have to produce well-structured responses in the form of extended response answers and questionnaires, etc.

Problem Solving: Components — Critical Thinking and Planning and Organising

Learners will use problem solving skills to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of a number of marketing research methodologies; then they use these skills to select appropriate sampling methods, and design a questionnaire, based on a research brief or other stimulus material. Learners are to plan and organise the design of a questionnaire using a range of appropriate resources, including up to date digital software that can be utilised online to meet the objectives of the given brief.

Numeracy: Component — Using Number

When designing their survey questionnaire, learners have to construct attitude scales and coding plans.

Information Communication Technology (ICT: Components — Accessing Information and Providing/Creating Information

Learners will access information from a variety of online secondary marketing research databases and gain an understanding of the scope and diversity of information available to researchers and how to quickly and accurately source the correct data for specified research objectives. Learners will use digital software that can be used online in the design of a questionnaire.

History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for learners

Unit title: Marketing Research Theory (SCQF level 7)

This section will help you decide whether this is the unit for you by explaining what the unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

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.

A range of 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. You also will use digital software that can be used online in the design of your 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:

- ◆ explain the role and nature of marketing research in marketing.
- ◆ evaluate market research methodologies.
- ◆ design digital, online market research tools.

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

There are opportunities to develop Core Skills in *Communication*, *Problem Solving*, *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* and *Numeracy*. And achievement of this unit could help you progress to marketing research units at a higher level, such as *Marketing Research Applications* or equivalent.