



Higher National Unit specification

General information

Unit title: Advertising: Media Sales and Buying (SCQF level 7)

Unit code: HP8D 34

Superclass: BA

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Version: 01

Unit purpose

This unit is designed to enable learners to understand the media planning, the media sales and buying process and how different media is pitched to potential clients. Learners will also develop knowledge of the competitive nature of the media business and the key aspects of selling advertising space on online and offline platforms — and how this fits into the process of media planning.

Learners will apply their knowledge by creating and presenting media proposals.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Explain the process of media planning and media buying.
- 2 Explain the function and roles within a media sales operation.
- 3 Present a media proposal to a client.

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 useful if the learner has *Communication* Core Skills at SCQF level 6 or equivalent.

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.

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.

Outcome 1

Explain the process of media planning and media buying.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Competitive nature of the media industry
- ◆ Research and planning of media
- ◆ Media buying process
- ◆ Identification of potential media
- ◆ Relationship between media choice and creative proposition
- ◆ Media briefs and schedules

Outcome 2

Explain the functions and roles within a media sales operation.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Role of media sales
- ◆ Structure of the media sales team
- ◆ Impact of digital media on the media sales operation

Outcome 3

Present a media proposal to a client.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Quantitative and qualitative aspects of each chosen media
- ◆ Presentation of media proposals
- ◆ Cross platform solutions
- ◆ Media schedules

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards

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Evidence requirements for this unit

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

Outcome 1

- ◆ describe the competitive nature of the media industry.
- ◆ explain the importance of research and planning in media buying based on consumer insights.
- ◆ identify potential media.
- ◆ explain the process of media buying.
- ◆ describe the relationship between the media choice and creative proposition.
- ◆ identify the key points on a media brief and a media schedule.

Outcome 2

- ◆ explain the role of the media sales department within a media organisation.
- ◆ explain the structure of the media sales team.
- ◆ explain the impact of digital media on the media sales operation.

Outcome 3

- ◆ identify potential media for a chosen client.
- ◆ explain the quantitative aspects of each chosen media.
- ◆ explain the qualitative aspects of each chosen media.
- ◆ present, in a persuasive way, a media proposal which includes a cross-platform solution, ie appropriate online and offline platforms.
- ◆ create a media schedule that meets the client's needs.

Assessment for Outcome 1 and 2 could take a variety of forms.

Outcome 3 can be undertaken on an individual basis or as a group project. It is assessed as a presentation.

More details can be found in *Guidance on approaches to assessment of this unit* in support notes, eg examples of role(s) that learners could adopt for their presentation; inclusion of question and answer session, etc.



Higher National Unit support notes

Unit title: Advertising: Media Sales and Buying (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

This unit is designed to give learners the opportunity to gain insight and understanding into the media buying operation. Learners will gain knowledge and understanding of the research and planning that goes into media buying, as well as the relationship between media choice and creative proposals. This unit will also explore the roles and responsibilities of the media sales team. This will range from general characteristics and attributes of sales people and managers, to the specific roles and responsibilities of the media sales executive and the media sales manager.

In Outcome 1, learners explore the process of media planning and buying and the importance of research in this area. It is important, not only to discuss the relationship between the media and the media buyers — covering areas such as the importance of research and planning; budgets; the relationship between the media and creative departments; the media brief and media schedule; and media ranking. Learners will also develop the knowledge and skills to create media schedules including online and offline media opportunities. Learners will identify the key information that media planners require to match the best media to their clients target audiences.

Outcome 2 looks at the media sales operation of an organisation. Learners would specifically examine the role and function of the media sales team and the sales managers of different media organisations. Areas such as product knowledge; competitor analysis; management skills; negotiation; and media packs would be discussed, together with the importance of working in a target-driven environment and the merits of telesales and field sales.

Outcome 3 gives learners the opportunity to present a media proposal for a chosen client. This can be based on a case study or brief. It is important to acknowledge the newer online platforms available to advertisers; and learners are to propose a cross-platform solution to the brief. The learner's proposal would include a qualitative breakdown of the media with information such as circulation, readership/viewership/listenership profiles and brand image and value. The proposal will also give a quantitative breakdown which would include costs and frequency of advertising, and the extent to which the client's target market matches the reader/viewer/listenership profiles. All choices of media should be justified to meet the brief. Learners are to present their proposal in a persuasive way — this should include information on more than one media and it is expected that there will be a question and answer session to clarify points, etc.

Higher National Unit support notes (cont)

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It is important to note that this subject area is constantly changing due to the advances in technology. It is important to reflect a modern media sales function by acknowledging the blend of traditional media platforms (offline) and the more contemporary digital (online) opportunities available to buyers.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

This unit is in the HN Advertising and PR framework and related HN frameworks. It could also be delivered as a stand-alone unit. In terms of delivery, a variety of approaches should be used — and due to the content, there is the opportunity to use creative methods of learning such as role play; exercises; group work; and discussions. The research and presentation aspects of the unit would allow a practical, learner-centred approach to be adopted.

Learners should be encouraged to broaden their knowledge of the media landscape, particularly in their local area. They should be encouraged to actively seek out and consume different media channels and research current trends in this industry.

It may be useful to contact a media planner/buyer of an advertising/media agency to be guest speaker(s) or visit(s) to a media sales environment as these would provide further contexts for learning.

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this unit

Evidence 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.

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.

Outcome 1 could be assessed by:

- ◆ learners providing responses to a brief in the format of a feature article or blog/wiki.
- ◆ post covering the role of the media department within an agency.
- ◆ production of a report or response to questions.
- ◆ oral, written or poster presentation.

Outcome 2 could be assessed by:

- ◆ setting a brief for the learner to design and produce a job advert for the roles of both a media sales manager and a media sales executive.
- ◆ production of a report or response to questions.
- ◆ oral, written or poster presentation.
- ◆ the use of blogs, wikis, etc.

Higher National Unit support notes (cont)

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Assessment for Outcome 3 can be on either an individual or group basis and would include learners compiling an appropriate list of media for a chosen client, presenting media proposals covering online and offline platforms.

Learners could take one of several roles, eg:

- ◆ a media planner/buyer and present a media proposal to a client
- ◆ a newspaper representative making a media sales pitch to a client

As outlined earlier in the support notes, the evidence requirements state that the presentation is to be made in a persuasive way. It is therefore expected that learners will include information on more than one media and there will be a question and answer session to clarify points, etc as part of the assessment.

Learners' supporting documentation/material could be used to cover evidence requirements of this outcome together with the presentation.

A combination of tutor checklists, recordings of presentations and/or peer assessment could be used to ensure all evidence requirements of the unit are covered.

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

This unit will provide opportunities to develop Core Skills in:

Communication: learners will have many opportunities to develop both Written and Oral skills in conveying information and opinions regarding the role and structure of media sales teams; identification of media and ranking; online and offline platforms; etc. They will apply their knowledge by presenting creative media proposals to a media buyer, ie client — which includes handling a question and answer session.

Problem Solving: learners will have many opportunities to develop all aspects of problem solving. They will use analysis and reasoning to make decisions and develop creative media proposals to a media buyer; they also have to plan, organise and present their media proposals and schedules based on their research, media ranking, etc. They will also deal with the competitive nature of the media industry.

Higher National Unit support notes (cont)

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Working with Others: where learners work in a group in Outcome 3, they will have opportunities to Work Co-operatively with Others to plan and present their media proposals to a media buyer.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT): learners will have opportunities to use ICT to access a wide range of online information about the role of media sales team; impact of digital media; as well as using software and digital media for analysing and designing their media proposals; it is also possible for learners to use ICT in their presentation required in Outcome 3.

History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for learners

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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.

This unit is designed to help you understand the media sales and buying operations and how different media is pitched to potential clients. You will develop knowledge of the competitive nature of the media business and the key aspects of selling advertising space — as well as and how this fits into the process of media planning. You will cover traditional media platforms (offline) and digital platforms (online) as well. You will also have the opportunity to apply your knowledge by creating and presenting interesting media proposals to a client.

To undertake this unit, it would be helpful if you have *Communication Core Skills* at SCQF level 6 or equivalent.

On achievement of this unit, you will be able to:

- ◆ explain the process of media planning and media buying.
- ◆ explain the function and roles within a media sales operation.
- ◆ present a media proposal to a client.

Your tutor will outline the exact assessment arrangements for this unit — but these could include designing job adverts for media sales manager and executive; production of reports, feature articles or blogs/wikis. The final assessment is a presentation of media proposals to a client which is likely to include a question and answer session too.

This unit is part of HN in Advertising and PR and other related HN awards — and successful achievement of the unit and these HN awards could provide opportunities for progression to HE, employment in marketing, advertising and PR or related sectors.

There are also opportunities to develop Core Skills in *Communication, Problem Solving, Working with Others and Information* and *Communication Technology (ICT)*.