



Higher National Unit specification

General information

Unit title: Copywriting (SCQF level 8)

Unit code: HP8E 35

Superclass: KD

Publication date: July 2017

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 01

Unit purpose

This unit is designed to provide an overview of copywriting, and how copy can be used for various different media types, including online, print and broadcast. It also balances the creativity of the craft of copywriting with the conventions found in the industry itself.

Learners will cover what copywriting is, why it's important to achieving campaign objectives, and will identify copywriting conventions across a range of media types; legal aspects are also covered. The unit then allows learners to apply this theory to practice and create their own copy to professional standards — including copy layout, style, call to action, media type, use of SEO keywords and ensuring consistency of branding.

Outcomes

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

- 1 Evaluate copy across a range of media.
- 2 Create copy appropriate to print, broadcast and online media.

Credit points and level

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

Higher National Unit specification: General information (cont)

Unit title: Copywriting (SCQF level 8)

Recommended entry to the unit

Access to this unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, it is recommended that learners have an awareness of the advertising industry which could be demonstrated by achievement of the HN Unit *Advertising: The Advertising Industry* or equivalent. Also competence in communications is beneficial. This may be demonstrated by possession of Core Skill *Communications* at SCQF level 5.

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

Unit title: Copywriting (SCQF level 8)

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

Evaluate copy across a range of media.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Target audience
- ◆ Content, language and style of copy appropriate for target audience
- ◆ Media types
- ◆ Campaign objectives
- ◆ Legal and voluntary constraints

Outcome 2

Create copy appropriate to print, broadcast and online media.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Target audience recognition
- ◆ Content, language, length and layout of copy appropriate for target audience
- ◆ Copy adapted across media types
- ◆ Consistency of brand messaging across media types
- ◆ SEO keyword justification
- ◆ Professional formats for broadcast copy

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:

For Outcome 1:

Evaluate copy from a range of media. For each piece of copy learners will:

- ◆ identify and discuss key copywriting conventions, including copy length, copy layout and language.
- ◆ discuss the importance of selecting the right media to suit the target market and key messages.
- ◆ identify objectives based on copy.
- ◆ identify the key legal and voluntary controls which apply to copy.

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Copywriting (SCQF level 8)

For Outcome 2:

Create copy appropriate to the brief. Learners will interpret and fulfil a creative client brief for print, broadcast and online media, which comply with legal and voluntary legislation, including:

- ◆ copy length, layout, language, style and call to action appropriate for target audience and media type.
- ◆ consistency of brand messaging.
- ◆ select and justify SEO keywords for online media.
- ◆ professional format and recognition of client deadlines.

Assessment guidance

It is suggested that this unit is assessed as two separate outcomes; however the knowledge and skills gained in Outcome 1 contribute to the required knowledge and skills for Outcome 2.

A variety of assessment methods could be used for this unit which are outlined in the support notes.



Higher National Unit support notes

Unit title: Copywriting (SCQF level 8)

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

The unit encourages learners to think about the text used in creating marketing materials, but it is important that a holistic approach is taken. Where possible, learners should consider how copy links to images and sounds to create an overall message, whether that is in an advertisement or in a piece of web copy. Learners should also consider how the final copy impacts on the customer or consumer, and what the call to action is.

Outcome 1

Covers what copywriting is; why it's important; and copywriting conventions across a range of media types. Learners will demonstrate their level of understanding by evaluating copy over different media types.

Outcome 2

This is designed as a project. The theory learned in Outcome 1 is put into practice and learners create copy to a professional standard. This includes interpreting and producing a creative client brief for print, broadcast and online media, which comply with legal and voluntary legislation, including:

- ◆ copy length, layout, language, style and call to action appropriate for target audience and media type.
- ◆ consistency of brand messaging.
- ◆ select and justify SEO keywords for online media.
- ◆ professional format and recognition of client deadline.

The unit links into a number of others within HN Advertising and PR and HN Marketing.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

Learners could work in groups in class analysing and evaluating copy from different media types, which would help them to develop their skills. Learners could also be encouraged to bring in examples of copy they have seen which could be shared with the groups.

Higher National Unit support notes (cont)

Unit title: Copywriting (SCQF level 8)

In Outcome 1, learners are to consider the target audiences that copy is reaching out to, and how different copy works to reach different market segments. Consideration should be given to conventions in copywriting, such as the use of buzz words, persuasive language, action words and page layout/white space, to generate a call to action. Learners should be aware of the legal and voluntary constraints which copywriters need to consider, for example, the ASA's codes of practice.

For Outcome 2, learners could be presented with a client brief, and asked to produce appropriate copy for a variety of media types. The tutor could issue learners with a 'live' client brief, working with a local business, etc. The local business person could be invited to brief the learners in person at the beginning of the project and give feedback to learners on their finished work. Alternatively, tutors could source a brief from an advertising agency, or create their own brief.

Learners should be encouraged to access copy from a wide range of sources, including print, television, radio, outdoor and online, to familiarise themselves with as many different types of copywriting as possible.

Where learners are working with online copy, they should be mindful of search engine optimisation keywords, and the use of Google PageRanking. It is suggested that case studies are used by the tutor to illustrate this prior to undertaking the assessment.

It is suggested that the time allocated to the unit is split equally between the two outcomes. Learners should complete Outcome 1, which sets out the theory behind copywriting prior to moving onto Outcome 2, where they put the theory into action.

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.

It is suggested that Outcome 1 is undertaken as a series of questions, answered by learners under controlled closed book conditions where they are presented with copy from two of three different media types: online, print and broadcast. Learners should not have seen in advance the copy they are to be assessed on.

Outcome 2 is designed as a project, where learners are issued with a client brief and are required to produce appropriate copy based on the client's needs. This could simulate the process clients and agencies go through together — where learners have a series of 'meetings' with their tutor who adopts the role of the client, and refresh and revise ideas based on feedback. The final submission of copy could be presented to the client/tutor orally as a pitch or submitted in written form.

Higher National Unit support notes (cont)

Unit title: Copywriting (SCQF level 8)

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

Depending on the teaching, learning and assessment approaches adopted there are opportunities to develop Core Skills as follows:

Problem Solving: Components Planning and Organising; Critical Thinking; and Review and Evaluation

Learners are to plan, organise and complete the task of developing appropriate copy/text for a client based on a given brief. When developing their creative copy, learners will analyse and seek solutions to a range of theoretical and practical issues. They also have to work towards specific objectives. Within the unit, learners also have to deconstruct and evaluate existing copy/text — thus providing opportunities for learners to develop elements of planning, critical thinking and general problem solving skills.

Communications: Components Oral Communication and Written Communication

For both outcomes, learners are expected to read and understand complex written information. Assessments for this unit will include written work as 'copywriting' involves the sourcing and production of creative text to industry standards. This has to be in appropriate copy length, style and language across print and online media.

There are also opportunities for oral presentations, eg responses to questions for outcome one and also industry-standard copy for broadcast media.

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

Within this unit, learners are to access a wide range of information on copywriting which will include the use of on-line sources, including search engines for SEO keywords. They can also use a range of digital tools to present their evidence, including creative copy which meets the demands of a client brief.

As learners progress through this unit, they will acquire skills and knowledge necessary for producing effective copy across print, broadcast and online media in response to a client brief. These could be used to enhance learners' employability prospects.

History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2017

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged.

Additional copies of this unit specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. Please contact the Business Development and Customer Support team, telephone 0303 333 0330.

General information for learners

Unit title: Copywriting (SCQF level 8)

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 is a stand-alone unit at SCQF level 8 and also included in a range of HN Marketing, Advertising and PR awards. It is for those studying marketing, advertising and PR and would like to work in this type of area (or related area) in the future. Also achievement of this unit could help you with further study of marketing and promotion at SCQF level 9 or above.

This unit is specifically designed to give you a competent grounding in producing text for a range of different media types. It also balances creativity with the conventions found in industry itself.

The unit focuses not only on what you are producing, but also crucially who the target audience is. It is important to put yourself in your target audience's position. Broadly speaking, who are they? What language are they familiar with? What will engage them? What will turn them off?

Firstly you will evaluate copy then discuss it and deconstruct it. This also will give you the knowledge and skills required to complete the second part of the unit, which sees you creating copy/text for a range of media types — including traditional print, broadcasting and digital.

On achievement of this unit you should be able to:

- ◆ evaluate copy across a variety of media.
- ◆ create copy appropriate to print, broadcast and online media.

The assessments for this unit can take a variety of forms and your tutor will advise as you progress through the unit. They are likely to include responding to questions and then production of professional creative copy based on a client brief.

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