



Higher National Unit Specification

General information

Unit title: Social Media (SCQF level 7)

Unit code: HT9W 34

Superclass: CB

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Unit purpose

The purpose of this unit is to introduce learners to the personal, vocational and societal applications of social media. It is a non-specialist unit, suitable for learners in a wide range of vocational fields who wish to explore the different ways that social media is used at home, in the workplace and across society.

The unit covers the historical development of social media, the different types of social media, social media products and services, and the benefits and drawbacks of social media. The social and ethical implications of social media are also explored, including its impact on personal privacy. The unit includes enterprise social networks and the impact of social media on business including social marketing. Its wider socio-economic impact is also examined. Concepts such as social presence, social capital and social production are also explored.

Learners will gain practical skills in using social media, and have the opportunity to apply it to their chosen vocational field.

On completion of the unit learners will possess the knowledge, skills and behaviours necessary to use social media in their vocational field. More specifically, learners will understand how social media has evolved, appreciate the different types of social media, know how it is used in the workplace, and be able to use it for a vocational purpose.

Learners may progress to other computing-related units such as *Digital Skills (SCQF level 7)*, *Big Data (SCQF level 7)* or *Social Media for Business (SCQF level 8)*.

Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

Unit title: Social Media (SCQF level 7)

Outcomes

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

- 1 Describe the historical development of social media.
- 2 Explain the personal and vocational applications of social media.
- 3 Use social media for a vocational purpose.

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

This is an introductory unit. There are no recommended entry requirements.

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: Social Media (SCQF level 7)

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

Describe the historical development of social media.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Characteristics of social media
- ◆ Types of social media
- ◆ Milestones in the evolution of social media
- ◆ Technological aspects of the development of social media
- ◆ Network effects
- ◆ Contemporary social media services including enterprise social networks
- ◆ Contemporary developments in social media
- ◆ Socio-economic impact of social media

Outcome 2

Explain the personal and vocational applications of social media.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Personal uses of social media
- ◆ Business uses of social media
- ◆ Community and societal uses of social media
- ◆ Benefits of social media to individuals, groups (including businesses) and communities
- ◆ Criticisms of social media including privacy and trustworthiness concerns
- ◆ Measures to reduce adverse effects of social media including regulation

Outcome 3

Use social media for a vocational purpose.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ User skills in contemporary social media services
- ◆ User skills in applying social media to a vocational area
- ◆ Communication skills
- ◆ Digital writing skills
- ◆ Online safety and responsibility
- ◆ Social presence, social capital and social production

Higher National Unit Specification: Statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Social Media (SCQF level 7)

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 produce:

- ◆ knowledge evidence
- ◆ product evidence
- ◆ performance evidence

The knowledge evidence will comprise the descriptions and explanations required in Outcome 1 and Outcome 2. Evidence is normally required for all the associated knowledge; however, sampling is permissible in certain circumstances (see below). The level of treatment for each topic need not be deep. The focus is breadth, not depth. However, it is important that no key piece of knowledge is omitted (such as a key milestone in the development of social media). This evidence may be produced over the life of the unit, under loosely controlled conditions (including access to reference materials). Authentication will be necessary (see below).

The knowledge evidence may be sampled when testing is used. Given that the focus is breadth rather than depth, sampling should be wide and shallow (such as the use of selected response or short answer questions) rather than narrow and deep (such as the use of an extended response question on one element of the knowledge domain). When testing is used, it must be controlled in terms of location, timing and access to reference materials.

The product evidence will comprise evidence that the learner has applied social media in a specific vocational field as required in Outcome 3. The evidence will take the form of a product that demonstrates the learner's use of at least one social media service for a vocational purpose. At this level, it is anticipated that the type of application will be non-complex but must be non-trivial. The evidence will take the form of a description of an actual or simulated application of social media in a specific vocational field. This evidence may be produced under loosely controlled conditions.

The performance evidence will comprise evidence that the learner demonstrates correct behaviours when s/he uses social media as required in Outcome 3. The correct behaviours will be pre-defined, and learners must be observed using social media so that they can be judged using these behavioural standards. It is permissible to assess learners by exception, whereby they are presumed to adhere to the defined standards unless their conduct demonstrates otherwise.

Higher National Unit Specification: Statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Social Media (SCQF level 7)

The SCQF level of this unit provides additional context on the nature of the required evidence and the associated standards. The following level descriptors are particularly relevant to the evidence:

- ◆ An overall appreciation of the body of knowledge
- ◆ Knowledge that is embedded in the main theories, concepts and principles
- ◆ An awareness of the dynamic nature of knowledge and understanding
- ◆ Use some of the basic and routine professional skills, techniques, practices and materials
- ◆ Use a range of approaches to address defined and/or routine problems
- ◆ Exercise some initiative and independence in carrying out defined activities at a professional level

These level descriptors should be used (explicitly or implicitly) when making judgements about the evidence.

When evidence is produced in uncontrolled or loosely controlled conditions it must be authenticated. The *Guide to Assessment* provides further advice on methods of authentication.

The *Guidelines on Approaches to Assessment* (see the support notes section of this specification) provides specific examples of instruments of assessment.



Higher National Unit support notes

Unit title: Social Media (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

The aim of this unit is to provide learners with an historical appreciation of social media and its role in the contemporary workplace. It is appropriate for learners in a wide range of vocational programmes.

The unit has three outcomes. Two outcomes are theoretical and one is practical. The focus of the unit is breadth, not depth, so treatment of any one topic should be light.

Please note that the following guidance is not a teaching syllabus and does not seek to explain each outcome/knowledge/skills statement. This section seeks to clarify the statement of standards (within this unit specification) where it is potentially ambiguous. It also focuses on non-apparent teaching and learning issues that may be over-looked, or not emphasised, during unit delivery. As such, it is not representative of the actual time spent teaching or learning specific competences or the relative importance of each competence.

When product/service names are used, these are (normally) for illustration purposes only and alternative products and services may be used for teaching and learning.

Outcome 1 relates to the historical development of social media. The associated knowledge/skills statements are largely self-explanatory. Given the scope of this outcome (the history of social media), the treatment of each topic should be light. The focus should be the recent history of social media (say, from the 1990s). Social media should embrace a wide range of online products and services including forums, social networks, blogs, wikis, photo sharing, messaging services and virtual worlds. The less well known of these (such as virtual worlds) may require particular attention.

The milestones should be limited to a small number of vital events, such as the widespread use of e-mail in the mid-1990s and the launch of Facebook™ in 2007. The growth in the use (and reach) of social media should be emphasised. Learners may be unaware of enterprise social networks, such as Yammer™, and how these are deployed in organisations. In keeping with the light treatment of each topic, only the most significant current developments should be explored such as (at the time of writing) the use of bots in private messaging services.

Learners should be exposed to some of the technologies behind social media. While this will not require an in-depth knowledge of their workings, it is expected that learners gain an appreciation of some of the technologies (and technological challenges) involved in providing social media services including, for example, encryption.

Higher National Unit support notes (cont)

Unit title: Social Media (SCQF level 7)

The socio-economic impact of social media includes the political, economic and cultural influence of social media, and the concerns about this expressed by many countries and cultures. The market domination (at the time of writing) of a small number of social media enterprises and how this could be tackled (by, for example, opening their APIs) is relevant to this outcome.

Outcome 2 relates to the personal and vocational uses of social media. The sorts of personal uses envisaged include: personal communications, information sharing, photo sharing, music sharing and event organising. The sort of business uses envisaged include: decision making, group communications, information sharing and marketing. The sort of community uses envisaged include: activism, social communities and pressure groups.

Learners are likely to be aware of the benefits of social media but may be less aware of the criticisms of it. The importance of personal privacy may have to be emphasised to learners, particularly young learners. There is an opportunity (when discussing trustworthiness) to discuss critical thinking skills. More subtle criticisms should be discussed such as social media's impact on concentration and the link with depression.

This outcome also addresses the current laws and regulations that relate to social media enterprises. Of particular relevance is how these could be strengthened to address the criticisms of social media.

Outcome 3 relates to the use of social media for a vocational purpose. The knowledge and skills statements are self-explanatory. The sort of activities envisaged include: creating a Twitter™ account to promote a product or service; creating an online group to share information and co-ordinate activity; using Facebook™ for market intelligence; creating a blog to highlight the work of an organisation or team; co-creating a wiki to provide co-workers with information; using Instagram™ for photos of products; and improving team work using a virtual world. Although the assessment only requires one use of social media, it is recommended that learners have the opportunity to explore several social media products and services.

An important part of this outcome is that learners gain an appreciation of the different writing styles required for various social media platforms, ranging from the terse style of Twitter™ to the verbose style of wikis. Learners should realise that digital writing is different from traditional writing including, for example, the opportunity to provide hyperlinks to related resources — and that the digital writer has an obligation to use the improved affordances of this medium.

Higher National Unit support notes (cont)

Unit title: Social Media (SCQF level 7)

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit (cont)

It is recommended that Outcome 1 is taught first, followed by simultaneously delivering Outcome 2 and Outcome 3. The simultaneous delivery of Outcome 2 and Outcome 3 will permit learners to use social media while learning about how it is used vocationally.

A suggested distribution of time, across the outcomes, is:

Outcome 1	12 hours
Outcome 2	8 hours
Outcome 3	20 hours

The topics can be explained through the use of video, film and audio. There is a great deal of information (in text, audio and video formats) available on each of the outcomes including full length films on some of the topics and high quality podcasts.

A learner-centred approach to teaching is recommended. Most of the topics can be independently researched by learners. However, when this approach is used, it is vital that the teacher provides context and sets objectives and regularly reviews progress.

Group discussions/debates are also suggested. Some of the topics within this unit are contentious (such as the socio-economic effects of social media) and well suited to classroom debate.

It is recommended that social media is used to facilitate learning. For example, the teacher could create a Facebook™ group and Twitter™ hashtag specifically for learners.

Assessment should not occupy a great deal of time during the unit. The majority of time should be spent 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.

It is recommended that both summative and formative assessment are used during this unit.

A traditional approach to summative assessment could involve a multiple choice test for knowledge evidence, a practical assignment for product evidence, and an observation checklist for performance evidence.

The multiple choice test could assess all of the knowledge contained within Outcome 1 and Outcome 2. It could consist of four options (one key) with a pass mark of 60%. Given that Outcome 2 relates to explanations (rather than descriptions), there may need to be scenario type questions to assess the learner's competency. The test could consist of a relatively high number of questions (30 questions for example), which would span both outcomes and sample all of the knowledge statements (including at least one question for each statement).

Higher National Unit support notes (cont)

Unit title: Social Media (SCQF level 7)

The practical assignment could involve the learner using social media for a vocational purpose. For example, the learner might create a Twitter™ account to promote an organisation, product or service. The assessment would require the learner to describe his/her use of Twitter™ for this purpose. The activity may be real (for an actual product or service) or simulated (for a fictitious product or service).

The performance evidence could involve the learner being observed using social media. The assessment would involve the completion of an observation checklist. The observation checklist would include such things as: their online etiquette, their digital footprint, their digital writing skills, their online safety, and their online responsibility.

A more contemporary approach to assessment would involve the use of a web log (blog) to record learning (and the associated activities) throughout the life of the unit. The blog would provide knowledge evidence (in the descriptions and explanations contained within the posts) and product evidence (the blog posts relating to their use of social media for a vocational purpose). The blog could include a variety of media (text, audio and video) to improve its quality. Separate performance evidence would be required if a blog is used.

The blog should be assessed using defined criteria to permit a correct judgement about the quality of the digital evidence. In this scenario, every knowledge and skill must be evidenced; sampling would not be appropriate.

Formative assessment could be used to assess learners' knowledge at various stages throughout the life of the unit. An ideal time to gauge their knowledge would be at the end of each outcome. This assessment could be delivered through an item bank of selected response questions, providing diagnostic feedback to learners (when appropriate).

If a blog is used for summative assessment, it would also facilitate formative assessment since learning (including misconceptions) would be apparent from the blog, and intervention could take place to correct misunderstandings on an on-going basis.

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

Although this unit does not embed any Core Skills, there are opportunities to develop the Core Skills in *Information Communication and Technology* through their use of social media (Outcome 3).

History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for learners

Unit title: Social Media (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.

This unit is intended for learners who want to know how social media is used for vocational purposes such as its business uses. It is suitable for a wide range of learners who are undertaking a variety of vocational programmes. No previous knowledge of computer science is required for you to benefit from taking this unit.

The unit covers the following topics:

- ◆ the historical development of social media
- ◆ types of social media
- ◆ enterprise social networks
- ◆ popular social media services
- ◆ current trends in social media
- ◆ benefits of social media
- ◆ drawbacks of social media
- ◆ uses of social media
- ◆ how to use social media for a vocational purpose
- ◆ how to use social media safely and responsibly
- ◆ how to protect your digital identity

The treatment of each topic is light. This is not a computer science unit. It will be delivered in an accessible and interesting way, which may include the use of audio and video to enliven learning.

Although most of the unit is theoretical you will get the opportunity to use social media in a real or imagined job role. You will gain hands-on experience of using a range of social media tools and services such as Facebook™, Twitter™, Instagram™ and Yammer™.

Teaching methods will likely include self-learning, research and group discussion.

The unit can be assessed in a number of ways including, for example, a written test or writing a blog about your learning. Whatever approach is taken, most of your time will be spent learning — not being assessed.

At the end of the unit you will know how social media came about, current developments in social media, the benefits and drawbacks of social media, how businesses use social media, and how to use social media for a vocational purpose.