



## National Unit specification

### General information

**Unit title:** Sustainable Business Practice (SCQF level 6)

**Unit code:** H610 46

**Superclass:** AA

**Publication date:** December 2013

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 01

### Unit purpose

This Unit applies to everyone within an organisation who is required to support and develop sustainable business practices. This Unit is designed to develop sustainability awareness within an organisation in support of sustainable business practice. It describes the skills and knowledge required to understand the impact of learners own activities on the economic, social, ethical and environmental principles that underpin Sustainable Business Practice. The Unit will allow learners to put these principles into practice in the workplace by operating in a manner that supports Sustainable Business Practice and communicating this to others.

### Outcomes

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

- 1 Describe the key principles of Sustainable Business Practice.
- 2 Work in a manner that supports Sustainable Business Practice.

### Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 6 (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6)

### Recommended entry to the Unit

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, it would be beneficial if learners have current experience working within an organisation.

## **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

### **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](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements)

## **National Unit specification: Statement of standards**

**Unit title:** Sustainable Business Practice (SCQF level 6)

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**

Describe the key principles of Sustainable Business Practice.

#### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Define Sustainable Development in relation to Sustainable Business Practice.
- (b) Describe the principles of Sustainable Business Practice.
- (c) Describe the issues that impact on Sustainable Business Practice.

### **Outcome 2**

Work in a manner that supports Sustainable Business Practice.

#### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Identify organisational sustainability policies and practices.
- (b) Review your own activities to identify the positive and negative ways in which they impact on Sustainable Business Practice.
- (c) Identify the actions through which negative impacts can be reduced, within limits of authority.
- (d) Ensure actions comply with organisational and legal requirements.
- (e) Explain the positive impacts of Sustainable Business Practice to others.

## National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

**Unit title:** Sustainable Business Practice (SCQF level 6)

### Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Evidence is required to demonstrate that the learner has achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

Product evidence and written and/or recorded oral evidence (oral evidence could include recorded creative media formats) will be produced to demonstrate that the learner has achieved all of the Outcomes and Performance Criteria. Learners must produce evidence derived from a real work situation relating to an actual organisation and will produce an individual folio of work in a variety of formats.

**Outcome 1** — Learners are required to provide written or oral recorded evidence on a single assessment occasion.

The evidence must include:

- ◆ definitions
- ◆ principles, including:
  - economic considerations
  - social and Ethical considerations
  - environmental considerations
- ◆ key issues, including:
  - resource use
  - waste
  - the environment
  - social and ethical considerations

This assessment should take place in open-book conditions.

**Outcomes 2** — Learners are required to demonstrate that they are able to work in a manner that supports Sustainable Business Practice.

Evidence could comprise a portfolio of evidence, in a variety of formats, covering all of the Performance Criteria in the Outcome. Suggested evidence types include:

- ◆ assessor checklists
- ◆ diaries
- ◆ log-books
- ◆ personal statements
- ◆ organisational policies and procedures
- ◆ memoranda and other communications with management
- ◆ production specifications
- ◆ witness testimony
- ◆ photographs
- ◆ internal reports
- ◆ promotional media materials/documents, video, leaflets, posters
- ◆ e-communications

## **National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Sustainable Business Practice (SCQF level 6)

This evidence must include the positive and negative ways in which activities impact on sustainable business practice, actions to reduce these negative impacts, complying with organisational and legal requirements and communicating with decision makers, organisational colleagues, customers and suppliers.



## National Unit Support Notes

**Unit title:** Sustainable Business Practice (SCQF level 6)

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

Wherever possible the context of the Unit should be workplace based. The exploration of the principles of sustainable business practice should relate to a learner's own place of work. Alternatively the delivering centre must be used to provide a suitable workplace environment. It is desirable that the Unit be presented in such a way as to present real, live, opportunities to improve the sustainability of their workplace, namely that the recommendations of learners are considered and implemented by their organisation. This creates a sense of ownership on the part of the learner and confidence that their learning activities will have a lasting impact.

**Outcome 1** is about the key principles of Sustainable Business Practice and learners will need to define the concept of Sustainable Development using internationally recognised definitions and explain the principles of Sustainable Business Practice: Economic, Social and Ethical, Environmental. Learners will also have to describe key impacts on Sustainable Business Practice: Resource use, Waste, The Environment, Social and ethical considerations.

In 1987, the United Nations released the Brundtland Report, which included what is now one of the most widely recognised definitions: 'Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.' Learners might research this and more recent definitions of sustainable development on the internet or in the library.

There are three main interconnected strands to the concept of sustainable development. Each can be addressed in the learning process:

- ◆ **Social:** this strand is about quality of life. Think about educational impacts in terms of citizenship, the ability of groups of people to work together, the impacts of cultural integration, the need for global citizenship, increasing social cohesion or improving security through crime reduction.
- ◆ **Economic:** This strand is about infrastructure. The costs and benefits of sustainability are becoming more important for all professions, with many groups now considering the impact of current and future environmental legislation.
- ◆ **Environmental:** Animals and plants become endangered or extinct, pollution and emissions are changing the natural systems on which we all rely for clean air, water and food. In this strand, the genetic resources, and the systems for food and timber production are considered side by side with metal ore sources, fresh water and clean air. Sustainability recognises that people, and all living things, depend on these resources being maintained rather than depleted or destroyed.

## National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Sustainable Business Practice (SCQF level 6)

It is essential to recognise that these strands are not independent of one another, but that they should be seen as an integrated whole. What is critical to the concept of sustainability is the understanding that all aspects of our lives depend on everything else that exists on Earth: be they people, social systems, earth systems, living things or non-living things. What happens in one place at one time can affect what happens somewhere else immediately or in the future.

Sustainable Business Practice provides the means by which organisations might move to a more sustainable future, locally, nationally and globally. Implementation will allow organisations to embrace the principles of sustainable business practice, social, economic and environmental and operate in an ethical, economically and environmentally sustainable manner.

The practical element of the Unit, **Outcome 2**, requires learners to work in a manner that supports Sustainable Business Practice by:

- ◆ Identifying organisational sustainability policies and practices.
- ◆ Reviewing their own activities to identify the positive and negative ways in which they impact on sustainable business practice.
- ◆ Identifying how work practices impact on the principles of sustainable business practice.
- ◆ Identifying the actions through which negative impacts can be reduced, within limits of authority.
- ◆ Ensuring that their actions comply with organisational and legal requirements.
- ◆ Explaining the positive impacts of sustainable business practices to others, decision makers, organisational colleagues, customers and suppliers.

On completion of the Unit learners will be able to explain the concept of sustainable development and the principles of sustainable business practice and support their organisation in becoming more sustainable.

This Unit links to the Cogent National Occupational Standard (NOS) Develop an Awareness of Sustainable Business Practice (COGSBP16).

### Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

This Unit may be delivered as part of the Professional Development Award in Sustainable Business Practice.

It would be best if the Unit were to be delivered and assessed in the order of the Outcomes. Despite this sequencing a holistic approach to teaching and assessment is highly recommended.

It is important to contextualise the content to make it as relevant as possible to the learner's area of work. A range of delivery techniques can be employed, including self-study, research and group discussion, and learners should be encouraged to draw on any experience they have in the workplace as an operative involved in organisational activities. The use of case studies/scenarios will aid learners to put their learning into a practical context. It is essential that learners have access to a real work environment. Learners not currently in employment must use the delivering centre to provide a real organisational context.

## National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Sustainable Business Practice (SCQF level 6)

Learners should also be encouraged to investigate current industry standards and organisational policies through research carried out on the internet and other sources.

It would be helpful for learners to visit an external organisation with a good reputation for environmental and sustainability management as part of their studies. Good practice could be identified and used as discussion points within the group. It may be useful for a speaker from a relevant industry to talk to learners about how their organisation plans, implements and improves organisational sustainability.

### 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.

Holistic assessment, ie a portfolio of evidence covering all Outcomes and Performance Criteria is highly recommended. A student centred approach should be used throughout.

**Outcome 1** might be assessed using a series of extended response/structured questions. The questions should cover all Performance Criteria in the Outcome. The assessment should take place in open-book conditions. Learners should be encouraged to research the Outcome Performance Criteria in advance of the assessment event and transcribe their findings to notes — there is no limit to the volume of notes that may be taken into the assessment event, however, all notes must be submitted with the final assessment. Internet access during the assessment should not be permitted. The completed assessment may then be used as an introduction to the learner's portfolio of evidence for **Outcome 2**.

The practical assessment of this Unit could take place in any organisational context and effort should be made to make the situation real and relevant. It may be possible to link this assessment to work experience which the learner carries out as part of the programme of study.

### Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment is appropriate for the assessment of 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](http://www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment).



## **National Unit Support Notes (cont)**

**Unit title:** Sustainable Business Practice (SCQF level 6)

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

In this Unit, learners will carry out practical activities that involve interacting with management and colleagues within an organisation. There are good opportunities for developing *Communication* and *Problem Solving* skills. Learners will measure and record the efficiency of their workplace activities there will be good opportunities to enhance Numeracy skills.

In addition, given that the Unit embraces the principles of sustainable development, broader skills development in the areas of enterprise, employability, sustainable development and citizenship are integral to this curriculum area. Inevitably learners will improve these skills through completion of the Unit.

## History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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## General information for learners

### Unit title: Sustainable Business Practice (SCQF level 6)

This Unit is about developing sustainability awareness within an organisation in support of sustainable business practice. It describes the skills and knowledge requirements you need to understand the impact of your own activities on the economic, social, ethical and environmental principles that underpin sustainable business practice.

**Outcome 1** is about the key principles of Sustainable Business Practice and you will learn to define Sustainable Development using internationally recognised definitions. You will describe the principles of Sustainable Business Practice: Economic, Social and Ethical, Environmental and describe the issues that impact on Sustainable Business Practice: Resource use, Waste, The Environment, Social and ethical considerations.

The practical element of the Unit, **Outcome 2**, requires you to work in a way that supports Sustainable Business Practice by: Identifying organisational sustainability policies and practices, Reviewing your own activities to identify the positive and negative ways in which they impact on sustainable business practice, Identifying how your practices impact on the principles of sustainable business practice, Identifying the actions through which your negative impacts can be reduced, Ensuring that your actions that comply with organisational and legal requirements, and Explaining positive behaviours and practices to others: decision makers, organisational colleagues, customers and suppliers.

In this Unit, you will carry out practical activities that involve interacting with management and colleagues within your organisation. There are good opportunities for developing *Communication* and *Problem Solving* skills. You will measure and record the efficiency of your workplace activities there will be good opportunities to enhance your *Numeracy* skills. In addition, given that the Unit embraces the principles of sustainable development, broader skills development in the areas of enterprise, employability, sustainable development and citizenship are integral to this curriculum area. Inevitably you will improve these skills through completion of the Unit.