



Higher  
Course Assessment  
Specification



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# Higher Business Management Course Assessment Specification (C710 76)

**Valid from August 2014**

This edition: August 2015, version 1.2

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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this Course Assessment Specification for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

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## Course outline

<b>Course title:</b>	Higher Business Management
<b>SCQF level:</b>	6 (24 SCQF credit points)
<b>Course code:</b>	C710 76
<b>Course assessment code:</b>	X710 76

The purpose of the Course Assessment Specification is to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year. It describes the structure of the Course assessment and the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed.

### Course assessment structure

Component 1 — question paper	70 marks
Component 2 — assignment	30 marks
<b>Total marks</b>	<b>100 marks</b>

This Course includes six SCQF credit points to allow additional time for preparation for Course assessment. The Course assessment covers the added value of the Course.

### Equality and inclusion

This Course Assessment Specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to assessment. Assessments have been designed to promote equal opportunities while maintaining the integrity of the qualification.

For guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs, please follow the link to the Assessment Arrangements web page: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html).

Guidance on inclusive approaches to delivery and assessment of this Course is provided in the *Course Support Notes*.

# Assessment

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all of the Units as well as the Course assessment. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

## Course assessment

SQA will produce and give instructions for the production and conduct of Course assessments based on the information provided in this document.

## Added value

The purpose of the Course assessment is to assess added value of the Course as well as confirming attainment in the Course and providing a grade. The added value for the Course will address the key purposes and aims of the Course, as defined in the Course Rationale. It will do this by addressing one or more of breadth, challenge, or application.

In this Course assessment, added value will focus on the following:

- ◆ breadth — drawing on knowledge and skills from across the Course
- ◆ challenge — requiring greater depth or extension of knowledge and/or skills
- ◆ application — requiring application of knowledge and/or skills in practical or theoretical contexts as appropriate

This added value consists of:

- ◆ assessing the impact of business activities on society in unfamiliar contexts
- ◆ making decisions by applying business concepts and ideas to resolve strategic and tactical business-related issues
- ◆ interpreting and evaluating relatively complex business information
- ◆ communicating relatively complex business ideas and opinions from a wide range of sources with clarity and logic
- ◆ researching, analysing and evaluating relatively complex business information to draw conclusions and to suggest solutions where appropriate

## Grading

Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

The Course assessment is graded A–D. The grade is determined on the basis of the total mark for all Course assessments together.

A learner's overall grade will be determined by their performance across the Course assessment.

### Grade description for C

For the award of Grade C, learners will have demonstrated successful performance in all of the Units of the Course. In the Course assessment, learners will typically have demonstrated successful performance in relation to the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course.

**Grade description for A**

For the award of Grade A, learners will have demonstrated successful performance in all of the Units of the Course. In the Course assessment, learners will typically have demonstrated a consistently high level of performance in relation to the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course.

**Credit**

To take account of the extended range of learning and teaching approaches, remediation, consolidation of learning and integration needed for preparation for external assessment, six SCQF credit points are available in Courses at National 5 and Higher, and eight SCQF credit points in Courses at Advanced Higher. These points will be awarded when a grade D or better is achieved.

## Structure and coverage of the Course assessment

The Course assessment will consist of two Components: a question paper and an assignment.

### Component 1 — question paper

The purpose of this question paper is to address breadth and application. Breadth will be assessed by drawing on, and sampling, the knowledge and understanding from across the Course. Alongside the relevant skills learners will also be required to apply their knowledge and understanding of business concepts and situations in contexts which are relatively complex.

The question paper will give learners an opportunity to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and understanding by:

- ◆ applying knowledge and understanding of business concepts from all aspects of the Course
- ◆ drawing conclusions and suggesting resolutions to business-related issues where appropriate
- ◆ using data handling techniques to interpret business information
- ◆ producing written responses with clarity

The question paper will have 70 marks (70% of the total mark).

This question paper has two sections.

**Section one**, titled 'Case study', will have 30 marks and will consist of a set of mandatory short-answer questions based on the case study. The questions will be drawn from any aspect of the Course and will require learners to demonstrate the application of skills, knowledge and understanding within the context of the case study.

**Section two** will have 40 marks and will consist of four topic based mandatory questions.

Questions from each section will be sampled from the Course coverage, ensuring there is no duplication of topics and that there is a balanced coverage across the Course.

### Component 2 — assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to address challenge and application. The assignment will provide learners with the opportunity to apply and extend their research, analytical, evaluative and decision-making skills. Learners should use a range of sources of business information relevant to the context of the assignment to produce a report of their findings.

The assignment will give learners an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to:

- ◆ make decisions by applying relevant business concepts and theories to the context of the assignment
- ◆ solve problems by applying relatively complex business ideas and concepts relevant to the context of the assignment
- ◆ draw conclusions from business data, concepts and evidence from a range of sources
- ◆ communicate business reasoning and conclusions with clarity

The Component will have 30 marks (30% of the total mark).

The assignment will require learners to undertake the following tasks:

- ◆ collect information/evidence relating to the context of the assignment
- ◆ analyse and evaluate the business data/information to reach conclusions
- ◆ produce a report relating to the context of the assignment

For further details of the Course requirements, please see the 'Further mandatory information on Course coverage' section.

## **Setting, conducting and marking of assessment**

### **Question paper**

This question paper will be set and marked by SQA, and conducted in centres under conditions specified for external examinations by SQA. Learners will complete this in 2 hours and 15 minutes.

### **Controlled assessment — assignment**

This assignment is:

- ◆ set within SQA guidelines
- ◆ conducted under a high degree of supervision and control

Evidence will be submitted to SQA for external marking.

All marking will be quality assured by SQA.

### **Setting the assessment**

Set within SQA guidelines

### **Conducting the assessment**

The assignment will be conducted under supervision and control to ensure that the work presented is the learner's own.

The assignment will be split into two parts — research and write up:

- ◆ The research should be conducted within the number of hours allocated to completing it.
- ◆ The research and data/collection may be completed individually or as a group, but the data from the research must be kept individually.
- ◆ Learners will write up the findings of their assignment on an individual basis, in supervised conditions within 1 hour and 30 minutes.
- ◆ Guidelines regarding the time frame for starting and completing the assignment will be provided by SQA.

## Further mandatory information on Course coverage

The following gives details of the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding for the Higher Business Management Course. Course assessment will involve sampling the skills, knowledge and understanding. This list of skills, knowledge and understanding also provides the basis for the assessment of the Units of the Course.

When preparing learners for the Course assessment, please refer first to the 'Structure and coverage of the Course assessment' section.

The Course assessment (question paper and assignment) will require learners to draw on and apply knowledge and understanding of any of the topics listed below. This table should be read in conjunction with the descriptions of the question paper and the assignment.

### Understanding Business

Role of business in society	<i>Sectors of industry; sectors of the economy</i>
Types of organisations	<i>Public sector organisations and agencies; private limited companies; public limited companies; franchising; multinationals; third sector organisations</i>
Objectives	<i>Corporate social responsibility; methods of growth; satisficing; managerial objectives</i>
External factors	<i>Impact of external factors; economic policy; competition policy</i>
Internal factors	<i>Corporate culture; availability of finance; staffing; technology</i>
Stakeholders	<i>Conflict of interest and interdependence</i>
Structures	<i>Features, characteristics, benefits and drawbacks of different organisational structures</i>
Decision making	<i>Types of decisions; quality decisions; SWOT analysis; Role of a Manager</i>

### Management of People and Finance

Recruitment and selection	<i>Workforce planning; internal vs. external; methods of testing</i>
Training and development	<i>Staff development; training schemes; work-based qualifications</i>
Motivation and leadership	<i>Theories of motivation and leadership styles</i>
Employee relations	<i>Institutions involved; processes; appraisal</i>
Legislation	<i>Impact of current employment legislation</i>
Sources of finance	<i>Appropriate for larger organisations</i>

Cash budgeting	<i>Analysis, cash flow issues and solutions</i>
Financial Statements	<i>Interpreting income statements, statements of financial position, (trading, profit and loss, balance sheet,) cash budget (not preparation)</i>
Ratios	<i>Profitability, liquidity and efficiency</i>
Technology	<i>Role of technology in human resources and finance</i>

### **Management of Marketing and Operations**

Customers	<i>Market-led vs. product-led, consumer behaviour</i>
Market research	<i>Market research methods, including justification for use, sampling</i>
Marketing mix	<i>Product; price; promotion; place; people; process; physical evidence</i>
Product	<i>Product life cycle, and profitability at each stage, extension strategies, product portfolio</i>
Price	<i>Pricing strategies</i>
Place	<i>Channels of distribution, the role of wholesaler and retailer, types of retailers</i>
Promotion	<i>Into and out of the pipeline; public relations</i>
People	<i>Customer satisfaction; level of after sales service</i>
Process	<i>Systems in place to ensure customer satisfaction</i>
Physical evidence	<i>Evidence that organisations use to verify that it keep its promises to customers</i>
Inventory (Stock) management	<i>Inventory (Stock) management systems; just in time; storage, warehousing and logistics</i>
Methods of production	<i>Production methods</i>
Quality	<i>Quality management; quality standards and symbols; benchmarking; quality circles; mystery shopping</i>
Ethical and environmental	<i>Fair trade; environmental problems and solutions; ethical issues</i>
Technology	<i>Role of technology in marketing and operations</i>

# Administrative information

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## History of changes to Course Assessment Specification

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
1.1	Some minor changes within the Structure and coverage of the Course assessment section regarding format of question paper and assignment.  Additional clarification provided in the Setting, conducting and marking of assessment section.  Changes to wording to clarify content in the further mandatory information on Course coverage section.	Qualifications Development Manager	April 2014
1.2	Some wording changed in the 'Further mandatory information on Course coverage' section to take account of updated financial terminology.	Qualifications Manager	August 2015

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