



Higher  
Course  
Specification



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# Higher Business Management Course Specification (C710 76)

**Valid from August 2014**

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

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## Course outline

**Course title:** Higher Business Management

**SCQF:** level 6 (24 SCQF credit points)

**Course code:** C710 76

### Mandatory Units

The Course has three mandatory Units and a Course assessment:

H20R 76 Understanding Business (Higher) **6 SCQF credit points**

Or

H6N3 76 Understanding Business **6 SCQF credit points**

with a Scottish Context (Higher)\*

**6 SCQF credit points**

and

H20S 76 Management of People and Finance (Higher)

and

H20V 76 Management of Marketing and Operations (Higher)

**6 SCQF credit points**

and

### Course assessment

**6 SCQF credit points**

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. Further information on the Course assessment is provided in the Assessment section.

\*Scottish Studies Award contributing Unit: This Course Specification should be read in conjunction with the relevant Scottish Studies Unit Specification on the [Scottish Studies Award web page](#).

## Recommended entry

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by one or more of the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ National 5 Business Management Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ National 5 Economics Course

## Progression

This Course or its Units may provide progression to:

- ◆ other SQA qualifications in Business Management or related areas
- ◆ further study, employment and/or training

Further details are provided in the Rationale section.

## **Equality and inclusion**

This Course 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. For further information, please refer to the *Course Support Notes*.

## **Rationale**

All new and revised National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

In this Course, and its component Units, there will be an emphasis on skills development and the application of those skills. Assessment approaches will be proportionate, fit for purpose and will promote best practice, enabling learners to achieve the highest standards they can.

This Course provides learners with opportunities to continue to acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities as well as skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

All Courses provide opportunities for learners to develop breadth, challenge and application, but the focus and balance of the assessment will be appropriate for the subject area.

## **Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles**

The Higher Business Management Course provides learners with the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to understand contemporary business.

The Course gives learners an understanding of the dynamic, changing, competitive and economic environment of industry and commerce. It develops skills in communicating and presenting business-related information, in a variety of formats, to the various stakeholders of an organisation.

The development of skills explicit to the Course will enable learners to succeed in life with determination and the ability to think logically. These skills will support learners in becoming more confident, particularly regarding their own future education and place in the world of work.

Understanding the economic and financial environment in which business operates will help learners to contribute responsibly to society.

By encouraging working with others the Course will help learners to participate effectively in the ever-changing global business environment.

The Course covers a broad spectrum of learning that allows for further progression and depth of study at a later date. It provides opportunities that allow learning to develop in a challenging and enjoyable way. It relates the study of Business Management to real-life business contexts.

## **Purpose and aims of the Course**

Business plays an important role in society. We all rely on businesses to create wealth, prosperity, jobs and choices. Therefore, it is essential for society to have effective businesses and business managers if they are to sustain this role.

This Course will build on the skills, knowledge and understanding gained in National 5 Business Management or, for some learners, can act as an entry to the study of business.

The purpose of the Course is to highlight the ways in which large organisations operate and the steps they take to achieve their strategic goals. This purpose will be achieved by combining theoretical and practical aspects of learning through the use of real-life business contexts. The skills, knowledge and understanding will be embedded in current business theory and practice and reflect the integrated nature of large organisations, their functions and their decision-making processes.

A main feature of this Course is the development of enterprising and employability skills. Learners will be able to understand and make use of business information to interpret and report on overall business performance in a range of contexts. The Course therefore includes the study of large organisations in the private, public and third sectors.

The Course explores the important impact businesses have on everyday life, thereby giving learners experiences which are topical. It develops skills for learning, life and work that will be of instant use in the workplace. It supports personal financial awareness through developing learners' knowledge of financial management in a business context.

Learners will be given the opportunity to be involved in learning activities which are challenging, motivating and inspiring.

The Course aims to enable learners to develop and extend:

- ◆ knowledge and understanding of the ways in which society relies on businesses and other organisations to satisfy its needs
- ◆ an understanding of a range of methods businesses and other organisations use to ensure customers' needs are met
- ◆ understanding of enterprising skills and attributes by providing opportunities to study relatively complex business issues
- ◆ understanding of business-related financial matters
- ◆ an understanding of the ways businesses and other organisations can use resources to achieve maximum efficiency
- ◆ an understanding of the steps taken by businesses and other organisations to improve overall performance and effectiveness
- ◆ knowledge and understanding of the main effects that external influences, such as economic impact and sustainability, have on large organisations

## **Information about typical learners who might do the Course**

The study of business management is suitable for all learners interested in entering the world of business, whether that be as a manager, employee or self-employed person, as it gives learners knowledge of the business environment.

The Course develops an in-depth understanding of how people contribute to business success. As a consequence, learners will be better informed about business and able to make an effective contribution to society as consumers, employees, employers or self-employed people.

The combination of knowledge of current business theory with practical aspects of learning will enable learners to apply their skills and knowledge to real-life business situations.

By developing many transferable skills, the Course prepares learners for everyday life, the world of work or further study of business and other business-related disciplines. It extends and deepens their understanding of business and highlights a range of business-based career opportunities that are available within all business sectors.

The Course develops the necessary skills of numeracy, enterprise, employability, ICT and citizenship and supports literacy. It takes into account the needs of all learners by providing sufficient flexibility to enable them to achieve in different ways and at a different pace.

By studying this Course, learners will develop skills and attributes which include: an enterprising attitude and critical appreciation of taking calculated risks in a business context; an in-depth understanding of the importance to businesses of being customer-focused; and decision making, by interpreting, analysing and evaluating a range of complex business-related information to make critical, ethical, responsible and effective business decisions.

Other skills developed by learners will include: numeracy, which supports and further develops personal financial management through improving their knowledge of financial management in a business contexts; and the ability to use ICT to investigate, analyse, evaluate and communicate business information efficiently and effectively. Learners will also develop the ability to communicate effectively in a business context by working co-operatively with others to complete activities, and by being able to work independently or to lead activities, when appropriate.

Successful completion of this Course opens up a range of vertical and lateral progression routes for learners. These include National Qualifications, National Certificates, Higher National Certificates, Higher National Diplomas and degrees in business-related subjects. It may also lead to employment and/or training in various industries.

# Course structure and conditions of award

## Course structure

The Course is theoretical and experiential in its nature. Skills, knowledge and understanding are enhanced through a range of real life contexts within the broad discipline of business management.

The Course has three mandatory Units. Within each Unit there is a degree of flexibility in how study is undertaken. By its nature, the Course develops a wide range of skills for learning, life and work by providing opportunities for active learning in real-life contexts.

These skills include: employability skills and attitudes, including flexibility and adaptability, independence, reliability and working with others; numeracy, by being able to interpret data, tables, charts and other graphical displays to draw business conclusions; and effective use of ICT in a business context.

Units are statements of standards for assessment and not programmes of learning and teaching. They can be delivered in a number of ways.

However, there is scope in the design of the Units to allow the Course to be taught in an integrated, experiential way.

### **Understanding Business (Higher)**

In this Unit, learners will extend their understanding of the ways in which large organisations in the private, public and third sectors operate. Learners will carry out activities that highlight the opportunities and constraints on these organisations in the pursuit of their strategic goals. This Unit also allows learners to analyse the impact that the internal and the external environment has on an organisation's activity, and to consider the implications of these factors.

### **Management of People and Finance (Higher)**

In this Unit, learners will develop skills and knowledge that will deepen their understanding and awareness of the issues facing large organisations in the management of people and finance. This Unit will allow learners to carry out activities that will extend their grasp of relevant theories, concepts and procedures used in planning for an organisation's success, including leadership, motivation and finance. It also allows learners to explain and analyse relevant business information, in each of these contexts.

### **Management of Marketing and Operations (Higher)**

In this Unit, learners will extend their knowledge that will deepen their understanding of the importance to large organisations of having effective marketing and operations systems. The Unit will allow learners to carry out activities that will extend their knowledge of relevant theories, concepts and procedures used by organisations in order to improve and/or maintain quality and competitiveness. It will provide learners with a firm understanding of the importance of satisfying both internal and external customers' needs.

## Conditions of award

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all of the Units as well as the Course assessment. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

## Skills, knowledge and understanding

Further information on the assessment of the skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course is given in the *Course Assessment Specification*. A broad overview of the mandatory subject skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed in the Course is given in this section. These include:

- ◆ knowledge and understanding of the impact of business activities on society in contexts which have complex features
- ◆ decision making by applying the ideas of ethical and effective business decisions to solve strategic business-related problems
- ◆ communicating relatively complex business ideas and opinions from a range of information relating to the effects of opportunities and constraints on business activity — some of which may be unfamiliar
- ◆ understanding of how entrepreneurial attributes can assist in the management of risk and business development
- ◆ understanding of leadership styles and how they can be used to enhance the contribution of staff to business success
- ◆ analysing business financial data to draw conclusions and suggest solutions where appropriate
- ◆ analysing the effectiveness of a range of marketing activities and understanding how they can be used to enhance customer satisfaction
- ◆ analysing a range of activities which can be used during the production process to maximise the quality of goods/services
- ◆ analysing the use of existing and emerging technologies to improve business practice

Skills, knowledge and understanding to be included in the Course will be appropriate to the SCQF level of the Course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level ([www.sqa.org.uk/scqf](http://www.sqa.org.uk/scqf)).



# Assessment

Information about assessment for the Course is included in the *Course Assessment Specification*, which provides full details including advice on how a learner's overall attainment for the Course will be determined.

## Unit assessment

All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in the Unit Specification.

They can be assessed on a Unit-by-Unit basis or by combined assessment.

They will be assessed on a pass/fail basis within centres. SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgments are consistent and meet national standards.

The assessment of the Units in this Course will be as follows.

### **Business Management: Understanding Business (Higher)**

In this Unit, learners will be required to provide evidence of the ability to:

- ◆ analyse the impact of internal and external factors on a large organisation's activity and development
- ◆ apply knowledge and understanding of key business theories and concepts affecting a large organisation's activity and development.

### **Business Management: Management of People and Finance (Higher)**

In this Unit, learners will be required to provide evidence of the ability to:

- ◆ analyse factors influencing human resource management and financial management and to suggest strategies for improved performance in these functional areas
- ◆ apply knowledge and understanding of key business theories and concepts relating to human resource management and financial management in familiar and unfamiliar contexts

### **Business Management: Management of Marketing and Operations (Higher)**

In this Unit, learners will be required to provide evidence of the ability to:

- ◆ analyse factors influencing the management of marketing and operations and to suggest strategies for improved performance in these functional areas
- ◆ apply knowledge and understanding of key business theories and concepts relating to marketing and operations management in familiar and unfamiliar contexts

## Course assessment

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of [added value](#)<sup>1</sup>. At National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, the added value will be assessed in the Course assessment. The added value for the Course must 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 the Higher Business Management Course, added value will focus on:

- ◆ breadth
- ◆ challenge
- ◆ application

The learner will be assessed by a combination of a Business Management [question paper](#)<sup>2</sup> and a business-related [assignment](#)<sup>3</sup>.

The question paper will require demonstration of a breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills accumulated from across the Course.

The business-related assignment will extend the learners' business management knowledge and/or skills and will be sufficiently open and flexible to allow for personalisation and choice.

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<sup>1</sup> Definitions can be found here: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html)

<sup>2</sup> See link above for definition.

<sup>3</sup> See link above for definition.

# Development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

It is expected that learners will develop broad, generic skills through this Course. The skills that learners will be expected to improve on and develop through the Course are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These must be built into the Course where there are appropriate opportunities.

## **1 Literacy**

1.2 Writing

## **2 Numeracy**

2.3 Information handling

## **4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship**

4.1 Employability

4.4 Enterprise

## **5 Thinking skills**

5.3 Applying

5.4 Analysing and evaluating

Amplification of these skills is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Course. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work for the Course is given in the *Course Support Notes*.

## Administrative information

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Published: September 2014 (version 1.2)

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### History of changes to National Course Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
	1.1	Minor rewording of ' <i>Unit descriptions</i> ', ' <i>Skills, knowledge and understanding</i> ' and ' <i>Unit assessment</i> ' sections to ensure consistency with Unit Specifications — pages 4,6,7,and 8.	Qualifications Development Manager	April 2014
	1.2	Scottish Studies Award Unit contributing information added. No other changes made to document content.	Qualifications Manager	September 2014

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Note: You are advised to check SQA's website ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of the Course Specification.

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