Contents

1 Introduction

This is the Group Award Specification for the Professional Development Award (PDA) in Sustainable Business Practice at SCQF level 6.

The purpose of this document is to:

♦ assist centres to implement, deliver and manage the qualification
♦ provide a guide for new staff involved in offering the qualification
♦ inform course managers teaching staff, assessors, learners, employers and HEIs of the aims and purpose of the qualification
♦ provide details of the range of learners the qualification is suitable for and progression opportunities

Rationale

The Professional Development Award in Sustainable Business Practice has been developed as a direct consequence of the Scottish Government's current legislative drive towards a more sustainable economy. Many Public Bodies are required to make reductions in carbon emissions in line with government targets and draw up 5 year Carbon Management Plans to demonstrate how they will meet these targets. Likewise large private companies are required to make a Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) to reduce emissions in line with government targets. Scotland's Zero Waste plan places similar duties on organisations with regard to waste. Staff training and awareness forms an integral part of these initiatives.

Organisations registered to, or aspiring to registration to an environmental management system (eg ISO14001, EMAS) take on a voluntary obligation to ensure that their employees are aware of, and suitably qualified to carry out their responsibilities and operate in a manner that contributes to sustainable development. There is potentially great reputational gain with clients, customers and the general public to be derived from running operations in an ethical manner and in a way that contributes to sustainable development.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Sustainable Business Practice makes excellent business sense. The rising cost of raw materials and utilities places an urgent imperative on organisations to reduce waste in all its forms. This will drive down organisational costs, save money and jobs and ultimately will save organisations from financial ruin. Companies that invest in staff training now will insure themselves against an uncertain future.

The Professional Development Award in Sustainable Business Practice has been devised to meet the contingencies above. Based on Cogent National Occupational Standards (NOS) the Units of this award have already been subjected to thorough consultation with business, industry, colleges, training providers and government. The Units have been found to be relevant, necessary and applicable to a broad range of organisations within the UK and Europe. The award has been pitched at a level to be relevant and accessible to all associated with any organisation operating in the second decade of the 21st century.

The award is extremely flexible with regard to developing learners' transferable/future skills. Many learners completing the award will simply use the knowledge and skills gained to carry out their employment in a more resource efficient, environmentally sensitive manner, while others might use the learning as the basis for a move to new areas within their current employment role, examples might include: environmental management; sustainable procurement; community liaison; etc. Finally it may be that learners are inspired to review their careers and take the opportunity to undertake further education within the rapidly expanding field of sustainable development.

2 Qualification structure

This Group Award is made up of three mandatory SQA Unit credits. It comprises 18 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6. This is in line with the SQA principles for the design of Professional Development Awards.

A mapping of Core Skills development opportunities is available in Section 5.3.

2.1 Structure

To achieve the PDA in Sustainable Business Practice, learners must complete all three mandatory Units.

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
H610	46	Sustainable Business Practice	1	6	6
H611	46	Resource Efficiency in the Workplace	1	6	6
H612	46	Environmental Good Practice	1	6	6

The Unit *Sustainable Business Practice* introduces the learner to the basic principles of the award. The remaining Units allow the learner to consolidate and put these principles into practice within an organisation.

3 Aims of the qualification

The Professional Development Award in Sustainable Business Practice aims to provide general awareness raising for all working within an organisation. It will enable learners to understand and apply the principles of sustainable development and communicate these principles to others.

3.1 General aims of the qualification

1   Enhance learners' employment prospects.

2   Support learners' Continuing Professional Development and career development.

3   Enable progression within the SCQF (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework).

4   Develop learners' Core Skills.

5   Develop learners' transferable skills.

3.2 Specific aims of the qualification

The qualification aims to provide learners with the knowledge and understanding to:

6   Develop sustainability awareness within an organisation in support of sustainable business practice.

7   Describe the impact of their activities on the economic, social, ethical and environmental principles that underpin sustainable business practice.

8   Apply resource efficient working practices and be able to work effectively to ensure the efficient use of resources and to minimise waste.

9   Develop an awareness of the impact of their activities on the environment and the importance of improving environmental performance within their work area or other activities.

4   Recommended entry to the qualification

Entry to this qualification is at the discretion of the centre. The following information on prior knowledge, skills, experience or qualifications that provide suitable preparation for this qualification has been provided by the Qualification Design Team as guidance only.

While there are no formal entry requirements to the award it would be beneficial if learners have current experience working within an organisation. In the absence of current experience, the delivering centre must provide a suitable workplace environment.

4.1   Core Skills entry profile

The Core Skill entry profile provides a summary of the associated assessment activities that exemplify why a particular level has been recommended for this qualification. The information should be used to identify if additional learning support needs to be put in place for learners whose Core Skills profile is below the recommended entry level or whether learners should be encouraged to do an alternative level or learning programme.

In this Professional Development Award, 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 and there will be good opportunities to enhance numeracy skills. A Core Skills entry profile at SCQF level 4 for communication, problem solving, working with others and numeracy is recommended. Prospective learners that have not yet achieved this profile should receive additional support eg through the provision of a Personal Learning Support Plan.

Self-study and internet research are highly recommended throughout the delivery of the award. Therefore, it would be convenient, though not essential, for learners to have achieved, formally or otherwise, a Core Skills profile in *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* at SCQF level 4 on entry.

It is anticipated that learners will have achieved a Core Skills exit profile of SCQF level 5 across the full range of competences.

In addition, given that the award embraces the concept of sustainable development, broader essential skills development in the areas of enterprise, employability, sustainable development and citizenship are integral. It would be beneficial, though not essential, that learners have an understanding of these areas on entry.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	4	Communicating/encouraging/ promoting
Numeracy	4	Measuring workplace activities
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	4	Portfolio compilation/self-study
Problem Solving	4	Evaluate and review own performance
Working with Others	4	This is integral to all practical Outcomes

5 Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs

This qualification was designed to meet a specific purpose and what follows are details on how that purpose has been met through mapping of the Units to the aims of the qualification. Through meeting the aims, additional value has been achieved by linking the Unit standards with those defined in National Occupational Standards and/or trade/professional body requirements. In addition, significant opportunities exist for learners to develop the more generic skill, known as Core Skills through doing this qualification.

5.1 Mapping of qualification aims to Units

Code	Unit title	Aims								
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**
H610 46	Sustainable Business Practice	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
H611 46	Resource Efficiency in the Workplace	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
H612 46	Environmental Good Practice	X	X	X	X	X	X			X

5.2 Mapping of National Occupational Standards (NOS)

Cogent, the sector skills council (SSC) for chemical, pharmaceutical, nuclear, oil and gas, petroleum and polymer industries, have developed generic national occupational standards for Sustainable Business Practice. These are appropriate and applicable to all businesses/ organisations regardless of sector or size. The standards have been developed in partnership with industry, employers and the education sector and will provide your workforce with the knowledge and skills to manage your business more sustainably.

The Units within the Professional Development Award correspond directly to the Cogent National Occupational Standards (NOS):

SQA Code	SQA Unit Title	NOS Reference	NOS Title
H610 46	Sustainable Business Practice	COGSBP16	Develop an awareness of Sustainable Business Practice
H611 46	Resource Efficiency in the Workplace	COGSBP26	Contribute to Resource Efficiency in Support of Sustainable Business Practice
H612 46	Environmental Good Practice	COGSBP35	Develop an Awareness of Environmental Good Practice in Support of Sustainable Business Practice

5.3 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualification

Opportunities within each Outcome, to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted below. There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Qualification.

Unit code	Unit title	Communication		Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
		Written	Oral	Using Number	Using Graphical Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively with Others	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
H610 46	Sustainable Business Practice	S5		S5		S5	S5	S5	S5	S5	S5	S5
H611 46	Resource Efficiency in the Workplace	S5	S5	S5	S5	S5	S5			S5	S5	S5
H612 46	Environmental Good Practice	S5	S5			S5	S5	S5		S5	S5	S5

S = Signposted within Unit specifications

5.4 Assessment Strategy for the qualification

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 could 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 centered approach should be used throughout.

Unit	Assessment	
	Outcome 1	**Outcome 2**
Sustainable Business Practice	Open-book Written/oral evidence	Open-book Assessment could comprise a portfolio of evidence, in a variety of formats, covering all of the Performance Criteria. Simulation should not be used for assessment purposes.
Resource Efficiency in the Workplace	Open-book Written/oral evidence	Open-book Assessment could comprise a portfolio of evidence, in a variety of formats, covering all of the Performance Criteria. Simulation should not be used for assessment purposes.

Unit	Assessment	
	Outcome 1	**Outcome 2**
Environmental Good Practice	Open-book Written/oral evidence	Open-book Assessment could comprise a portfolio of evidence, in a variety of formats, covering all of the Performance Criteria. Simulation should not be used for assessment purposes.

6 Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment

Wherever possible the context of the qualification should be workplace based. The exploration of the principles of sustainable business practice, resource efficiency and environmental good practice should relate to a learner's own place of work. Where a learner is not currently in employment, the delivering centre must be used to provide a suitable workplace environment. It is desirable that that the qualification be presented in such a way as to present learners with real, live, opportunities to improve the sustainability and efficiency of their workplace, and 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.

For each of the Units comprising the award self-study and internet research are recommended — this will ensure that content is both current and relevant.

The practical elements of the Units require learners to operate in a manner that supports sustainable business practice.

6.1 Sequencing/integration of Units

It is recommended that centres deliver the knowledge and understanding contained within the Unit *Sustainable Business Practice* (Outcome 1), as an overall introduction to the award. Otherwise the three Units may be delivered holistically making sure that naturally occurring, assessment opportunities can be exploited to the full. The use of simulation should be avoided. Full integration of assessment for the component Units of the award is not only practical but entirely desirable.

6.2 Recognition of Prior Learning

SQA recognises that learners gain knowledge and skills acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts.

In some instances, a full Group Award may be achieved through the recognition of prior learning. However, it is unlikely that a learner would have the appropriate prior learning and experience to meet all the requirements of a full Group Award.

The recognition of prior learning may **not** be used as a method of assessing in the following types of Units and assessments:

♦ HN Graded Units
♦ Course and/or external assessments
♦ Other integrative assessment Units (which may or not be graded)
♦ Certain types of assessment instruments where the standard may be compromised by not using the same assessment method outlined in the Unit
♦ Where there is an existing requirement for a licence to practice
♦ Where there are specific health and safety requirements
♦ Where there are regulatory, professional or other statutory requirements
♦ Where otherwise specified in an Assessment Strategy

More information and guidance on the *Recognition of Prior Learning* (RPL) may be found on our website **www.sqa.org.uk**.

The following sub-sections outline how existing SQA Unit(s) may contribute to this Group Award. Additionally, they also outline how this Group Award may be recognised for professional and articulation purposes.

6.3 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**.

6.5 Resource requirements

It is essential that the delivering centre has access to a real working environment based within an actual organisation. Where a learner is not currently in employment, the delivering centre must be used to provide a suitable workplace environment to complete all practical elements.

7 General information for centres

Equality and inclusion

The Unit specifications making up this Group Award have been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners will 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**.

Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used within this/these qualification(s) should be internally verified, using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

External verification will be carried out by SQA to ensure that internal assessment is within the national guidelines for these qualifications.

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in *SQA's Guide to Assessment* **(www.sqa.org.uk/GuideToAssessment)**.

8 Glossary of terms

Embedded Core Skills: is where the assessment evidence for the Unit also includes full evidence for complete Core Skill or Core Skill components. A learner successfully completing the Unit will be automatically certificated for the Core Skill. (This depends on the Unit having been successfully audited and validated for Core Skills certification.)

Finish date: The end of a Group Award's lapsing period is known as the finish date. After the finish date, the Group Award will no longer be live and the following applies:

♦ learners may not be entered for the Group Award
♦ the Group Award will continue to exist only as an archive record on the Awards Processing System (APS)

Lapsing date: When a Group Award is entered into its lapsing period, the following will apply:

♦ the Group Award will be deleted from the relevant catalogue
♦ the Group Award specification will remain until the qualification reaches its finish date at which point it will be removed from SQA's website and archived
♦ no new centres may be approved to offer the Group Award
♦ centres should only enter learners whom they expect to complete the Group Award during the defined lapsing period

SQA credit value: The credit value allocated to a Unit gives an indication of the contribution the Unit makes to an SQA Group Award. An SQA credit value of 1 given to an SQA Unit represents approximately 40 hours of programmed learning, teaching and assessment.

SCQF: The Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) provides the national common framework for describing all relevant programmes of learning and qualifications in Scotland. SCQF terminology is used throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF visit the SCQF website at **www.scqf.org.uk**.

SCQF credit points: SCQF credit points provide a means of describing and comparing the amount of learning that is required to complete a qualification at a given level of the Framework. One National Unit credit is equivalent to 6 SCQF credit points. One National Unit credit at Advanced Higher and one Higher National Unit credit (irrespective of level) is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points.

SCQF levels: The level a qualification is assigned within the framework is an indication of how hard it is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HNCs and HNDs are available at SCQF levels 7 and 8 respectively. Higher National Units will normally be at levels 6–9 and Graded Units will be at level 7 and 8. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2–6 and will normally be made up of National Units which are available from SCQF levels 2–7.

Subject Unit: Subject Units contain vocational/subject content and are designed to test a specific set of knowledge and skills.

Signposted Core Skills: refers to opportunities to develop Core Skills arise in learning and teaching but are not automatically certificated.

History of changes

It is anticipated that changes will take place during the life of the qualification and this section will record these changes. This document is the latest version and incorporates the changes summarised below. Centres are advised to check SQA's APS Navigator to confirm they are using the up to date qualification structure.

NOTE: Where a Unit is revised by another Unit:

♦ No new centres may be approved to offer the Unit which has been revised.
♦ Centres should only enter learners for the Unit which has been revised where they are expected to complete the Unit before its finish date.

Version Number	Description	Date

Acknowledgement

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges have made to the development of this qualification.

9 General information for learners

This section will help you decide whether this is the qualification for you by explaining what the qualification is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the qualification and opportunities for further learning and employment.

This PDA is about developing sustainability awareness within an organisation in support of sustainable business practice. Organisations registered to, or aspiring to registration to an environmental management system (eg ISO14001, EMAS) take on a voluntary obligation to ensure that their employees are aware of, and suitable qualified to carry out their responsibilities and operate in a manner that contributes to sustainable development. There is potentially great reputational gain with clients, customers and the general public to be derived from running operations in an ethical manner and in a way that contributes to sustainable development.

The PDA consists of three mandatory Units and 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. There is a strong emphasis on the application of resource efficiency working practices and this includes being able to work effectively to ensure the efficient use of resources and to minimise waste. Finally you will develop an awareness of the impact of your own activities on the environment and the importance of improving environmental performance within your work area or other activities.

In completing the award, 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 award 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 award.