



Guidance on the delivery and assessment of:

J00P 34 Financial Services: Graded Unit 1

and

J00S 35 Financial Services: Graded Unit 2

within

GP0A 16 HND Financial Services

History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to provide advice on the changes made to the graded units in the revised HND Financial Services. The revised HND Financial Services (GP0A 16) has been available from 1 August 2018. All learners entered for HND Financial Services (GE9V 16) must complete this qualification by 31 July 2020.

A summary of the changes is provided together with some advice to lecturers/ assessors/internal verifiers on how to deliver and assess the new graded units.

Summary of changes

1 Year 1 Graded Unit

Financial Services: Graded Unit 1 (H0Y2 34) will be withdrawn on 31 July 2020. It has been replaced by *Financial Services: Graded Unit 1* (J00P 34) — which is part of revised HND Financial Services (GP0A 16).

The key change that has been introduced is that the new unit *Financial Services: Graded Unit 1* (J00P 34) is an examination-based graded unit. The structure of the new unit specification reflects the approach used in *Business: Graded Unit 1* which centres will be familiar with.

The assessment is a closed-book examination based on a seen case study that centres distribute to their learners up to three weeks before the assessment. The case study will be based on a financial services customer scenario. Learners will normally have three hours to complete the assessment.

Three key topics will be assessed in the unit:

Topic	HN Unit	Marks
UK financial services sector concepts	HY92 34 Financial Sector: An Introduction	40%
UK personal financial services product concepts	H0BX 34 Personal Financial Services	40%
Customer care concepts	H1F0 34 Creating a Culture of Customer Care	20%

In the assessment of the three key topics, 5 of the marks assigned to each topic will be allocated to an assessment of the communication skills of the learners based on the requirements of *Communication: Business Communication* (H7TK 34).

2 Year 2 Graded Unit

HND Financial Services (GE9V 16) including the units *Financial Services: Graded Unit 2* (H0Y3 35) and *Financial Services: Graded Unit 3* (H7V7 35) will be withdrawn on 31 July 2020. From August 2018 onwards, centres can enter learners for either HND Financial Services (GE9V 16) ensuring they complete their studies by July 2020 or HND Financial Services (GP0A 16).

The key change to the qualification is the introduction of a 2-credit unit based on an investigative project, ie *Financial Services: Graded Unit 2* (H0Y3 35) and *Financial Services: Graded Unit 3* (H7V7 35) have been replaced by a 2-credit unit *Financial Services: Graded Unit 2* (J00S 35). The structure of the unit specification reflects the approach used in the *Business: Graded Unit 2* that centres will be familiar with.

The project requires the learner to undertake an investigation of a financial services issue and to assess its implications for a financial services organisation(s) or UK government agency and its customers. The issue being investigated must directly relate to topics, concepts or models studied as part of the Financial Services specific units in the HND Financial Services.

The project is divided into three stages:

Stage 1	Planning — the development of a brief relating to the investigation	24 marks
Stage 2	Developing — the preparation a report of the investigation	52 marks
Stage 3	Evaluating — an evaluation of the effectiveness of all parts of the investigation	24 marks

Learners are required to successfully complete each stage of the project before progressing to the next stage of the project.

SQA Assessment Instruments

J00P 34 Financial Services: Graded Unit 1

SQA has prepared an assessment support pack (ASP) for this unit. The pack has one case study and two sets of assessment questions based on the case study. Centres should select one set of questions for use as their assessment instrument, using the second set for reassessment. Centres are also strongly advised to vary which set of questions they use for their main assessment event each year. This can be achieved by following a pattern of using the reassessment questions from one year as the first assessment questions the next year.

J00S 35 Financial Services: Graded Unit 2

SQA has prepared an assessment support pack (ASP) for this unit. The pack includes detailed guidelines that can be issued to learners during the project. There is also detailed guidance for assessors and internal verifiers which gives a breakdown of how marks should be allocated for each of the criteria in the assessments and how the additional marks should be distributed.

Should a learner be required to complete a reassessment of this unit, they should be asked to complete a new project based on the same project brief. This will involve the learner selecting a new topic to research based on a different issue, organisation and/or customer type. There is no requirement for a centre to prepare a reassessment instrument for this unit.

J00P 34 Guidance on delivering and assessing Financial Services: Graded Unit 1

Financial Services: Graded Unit 1 should be assessed at the conclusion of Semester 2 in Year 1. It is important that the units which contribute to the graded unit examination, ie:

HY92 34	<i>Financial Sector: An Introduction</i>
H0BX 34	<i>Personal Financial Services</i>
H1F0 34	<i>Creating a Culture of Customer Care</i>
H7TK 34	<i>Communication: Business Communication</i>

are delivered in Year 1. This should be taken into account in a centre's planning for the academic year to ensure that the units are delivered in time to allow the learners to consolidate the knowledge ahead of being asked to sit the examination.

There is no need for centres to reteach any of the content of the contributing units in preparation for the assessment of this unit.

Centres are encouraged to concentrate any teaching activities for *Graded Unit 1* on developing the skills of their learners to complete closed-book assessments in a time controlled environment. This focus on exam technique preparation will provide the most appropriate kind of support to learners.

The exam preparation should be completed as learner centred learning rather than taught modules. One method is to indicate to the learners which topic will be covered for revision in the next class. This will allow the learners to prepare for the lesson and be able to contribute to discussions and complete any activities set during the lesson.

To help learners prepare for the exam they can be set practice questions, discussion topics and case studies. The discussions should enable learners to extract the main points from the topic. Case studies can be used to apply the practice in a context and the practice questions can provide learners with experience in breaking the question down and answering it methodically to gain marks.

Learners should also be given guidance on time management during the completion of the assessment. One simple tip is to help learners use the mark breakdown as guidance on how much time to allocate to answering each question. For example, if the assessment is 180 minutes long 30 minutes should be allocated for reading the paper/questions ahead of answering questions and checking the responses after writing. This leaves 150 minutes, so on average each mark should have 1.5 minutes allocated to it. Therefore, a 10 mark question should have approximately 15 minutes allocated to thinking about the response and writing that answer.

Learners should also be reminded they can respond to questions in whatever order they wish, so long as they clearly indicate in their paper which question they are answering. Good assessment technique would be for learners to answer the questions they are most confident in answering first — whilst keeping watch on their timing as they do so.

During preparation for the assessment, it is also helpful to devote some time to ensuring learners practise answering questions under time constraints without reference to their textbooks or other materials.

Ideally learners should submit some of their written responses to practice questions for formative assessment and feedback, as poor communication skills and assessment answering techniques can often be the cause of failure to meet the standards in an assessment rather than a lack of understanding of the underpinning subject matter being assessed.

When giving guidance and feedback, it will help learners if they are given explanations of what the command word means in the question — evaluate, explain, describe, etc. It is acceptable that centres explain to the learners what they need to do to meet the command words, eg evaluate means that they must give advantages and they must also give disadvantages to a theory or concept.

Centres should issue the assessment case study to learners three weeks before the assessment event. No guidance should be given to the learners on how to interpret the case study or how to spot the likely assessment questions based on the content of the case study.

J00S 35 Guidance on delivering and assessing Financial Services: Graded Unit 2

In addition to the guidance given below which is specific to the delivery and assessment of *Financial Services: Graded Unit 2* (J00S 35), centres should build on their experience of delivering the *Business: Graded Unit 2* and other related units. Financial Services course team members are strongly advised to discuss lessons learned with experienced assessors and internal verifiers of the *Business* graded units.

Centres should deliver and assess the *Financial Services: Graded Unit 2* in the same manner as they apply for the *Business: Graded Unit 2* in terms of the timing of the delivery of the units and the approaches to support they give to learners across Year 2.

There is detailed guidance on an appropriate approach to delivering *Financial Services: Graded Unit 2* in the assessment support pack which should be read in conjunction with the unit specification. The learner guidance (Handouts 2, 3 and 4) from the assessment support pack is reproduced in Appendix 1 to assist those who do not have immediate access to the secure assessment site to assist in preparing for the delivery and assessment of this unit.

1 Delivering Financial Services: Graded Unit 2

The key elements that will contribute to a successful delivery of *Financial Services: Graded Unit 2* are explained below. This section should be read in conjunction with the unit specification, assessment support pack and the *Research Skills* unit specification.

There are four key areas to consider, all of which are important when delivering and assessing *Financial Services: Graded Unit 2*:

- ◆ The selection of the research topic
- ◆ The definition of the project title
- ◆ The role of primary and secondary research in the project
- ◆ The potential integration with *Research Skills* unit

The selection of the research topic

Learners have to select an appropriate topic for research and centres should pay particular attention to the guidance that they give their learners at this stage. *Financial Services: Graded Unit 2* (J00S 35) has a very different specification to its predecessor (H7V7 35). **It is most important that it is understood by all involved with this unit that the selection of an investment analysis project along the lines of the previous unit will NOT meet the requirements of the unit specification.**

It is good practice to give learners feedback on the topic they are proposing to research before they embark on the full development of their plan which they submit for assessment at the conclusion of Stage 1. The use of a project proposal prepared by the learner can assist with this feedback and support activity. The development of a proposal will also help the learner define an appropriate title for their project.

A template for a project proposal is detailed in Appendix 2. This template is for guidance, centres can develop their own documentation. The completion of the template could be a formative assessment but cannot be part of a project requirement or any of the unit assessment process.

Learners should be advised to develop the proposal in the order shown — in other words, although the instinct is to write a title first, the title of the project should actually be the last activity learners should complete. Learners will develop an appropriate title by reflecting on the questions in the template and refining their ideas on what they could be researching as a result of their responses to the preceding questions.

Learners should be given feedback on the proposal/title of the project before they undertake a significant amount of work developing their Stage 1 plan. This will help the learners have the best start to their project and, as with all projects, the extent to which there is good preparation at the beginning can have a significant impact on the quality of the final project.

Below are the range of issues that should be considered when reviewing and giving a learner feedback on a template.

Factor	Guidance	Examples of content that would be appropriate¹	Examples of content that might not be appropriate¹
Issue being reviewed	Has to be financial services related.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Current or proposed financial services legislation ◆ Current or proposed financial services products and services (including those provided by the government) <p>Issues could relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the effectiveness of a current regulation, products or services, awareness of the product features, appropriateness of communication, etc. ◆ the potential impact of proposed or new regulation, products or services, awareness of proposed regulation, appropriateness of any change communications, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Projects researching aspects of accounting, human resources ◆ Investment analysis
Financial Services organisation	A UK financial services regulator or any organisation that is recognised by the UK financial services regulator as a provider of financial services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The Bank of England ◆ The Financial Conduct Authority ◆ Retail Banks including Credit Card providers ◆ Building Societies ◆ Credit Unions ◆ Investment Banks ◆ Insurance Companies ◆ Pension funds 	An organisation that a financial services customer could invest in but is not a direct provider of financial services products to customers.

¹ These examples are not exhaustive. The range of examples will change over time with the introduction of new regulations, products and services.

Factor	Guidance	Examples of content that would be appropriate¹	Examples of content that might not be appropriate¹
UK Government Agency	A government body or ombudsman that provides support or advisory services in financial services related matters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Financial Services Ombudsman ◆ Pensions Regulator ◆ Money Advice Services ◆ Citizens Advice ◆ Any government scheme that provides financial services products/services to importers or exporters 	A government body that is not providing financial services related support.
Customer	Any external customer of the organisation/agency or to a number of such customers. 'Customers' of a regulator can be either the organisations they regulate or the customers of these organisations or the users of UK financial services in general.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Customers in general ◆ Specific customer segments, eg first time buyers, learners, older customers, small businesses, exporters, importers, savers, borrowers. 	If the customer group being researched cannot be clearly defined, then it is not appropriate.

Factor	Guidance	Examples of content that would be appropriate²	Examples of content that might not be appropriate¹
Links to units	The research has to have a direct link to one or more of the financial services specific units in the framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Financial Sector: An Introduction ◆ Personal Financial Services ◆ Financial Services Regulatory Framework ◆ Investment ◆ Pension Provision ◆ Principles of Insurance <p>and if chosen as options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Financial Services: International Transactions ◆ Personal and Business Lending 	Whilst any other unit within the Financial Services framework can be included within a research project, the project must also include research into elements of the units in the framework listed opposite.
Specific concepts from core units that will be incorporated	The project should focus on named concepts from within the framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Products or services of financial services organisations ◆ The role of government agencies in the delivery of financial services related products and services and/or advice ◆ Financial Services regulations 	Generic projects that are not reviewing a specific issue relating to a core unit, eg a general overview of accounting practices, investment performance, marketing strategy, etc.

² These examples are not exhaustive. The range of examples will change over time with the introduction of new regulations, products and services.

The definition of the project title

Centres should encourage their learners to brainstorm possible project ideas based on the factors above before developing a proposed title for their project. This can be undertaken as a group activity as part of a lesson. The range of titles that could be researched is endless — the following are examples of possible research topics. They have been developed to stimulate other ideas for projects and should not be seen as a list of titles that should be used for a project.

Possible topics for research include:

- ◆ Evaluation of the extent to which a given product(s) or service(s) of a named financial services organisation meets the needs of a particular customer group
- ◆ An evaluation of the understanding of the impact of a change in regulation impacting on a given customer group by a financial services organisation
- ◆ An evaluation of the effectiveness/awareness of a financial services ombudsman scheme, regulator or government led financial services scheme
- ◆ An evaluation of the impact on small business exporters of the introduction of product X by government agency Y
- ◆ An evaluation of the effectiveness of current legislation in protecting the needs of a given financial services customer group
- ◆ An evaluation of the potential impact of a legislative change on the products/services and customers of a named financial services organisation
- ◆ Evaluation of the awareness of (or effectiveness of) named products or services for a particular customer group in a named financial services organisation

The role of primary and secondary research

The unit specification requires the learner to complete primary and secondary research when completing this project. Centres should give their learners guidance that the method of primary research in financial services organisations has to be carefully selected. Likewise assessors also have to be aware of the limitations of approaches and to be alert to projects that include primary research evidence based on surveys sent to organisations or customers.

UK financial services organisations are unlikely to respond to any surveys sent to them by non-accredited market research agencies. Because of customer confidentiality, organisations will never pass on surveys on behalf of learners to customers for completion. Therefore, the learners will have to identify other methods of obtaining primary research from customers. Options for achieving this include using family members, other learners or centre contacts who may be able to pass research surveys on to other parties. There are also options to join various internet forums and post surveys via that route.

The potential integration with Research Skills unit

Centres have an option to integrate the delivery and assessment of *Research Skills* (F60A 34) with *Financial Services: Graded Unit 2* (J00S 35). The semi-integrated model is detailed in Appendix 3 of this document.

Centres who previously determined they would not integrate the delivery and assessment of the *Research Skills* unit with the former *Financial Services: Graded Unit 3* (H7V7 35) may wish to review this decision as the barriers to generating evidence using a fully integrated delivery and assessment model have been removed with the development of the new *Financial Services: Graded Unit 2* (J00S 35).

Centres are strongly advised to start the delivery of *Financial Services: Graded Unit 2* as early in the semester as possible to allow for any delays in obtaining any research evidence.

2 Assessing Financial Services: Graded Unit 2

Although there are a number of areas of overlap with the structure of the *Business: Graded Unit 2*, centres must ensure that all their assessors and internal verifiers for *Financial Services: Graded Unit 2* have sufficient current knowledge of financial services subjects to be able to effectively assess or internally verify the reliability of the research evidence and validity of the outputs and project conclusions.

There is a wide range of subject specialisms that could be researched by learners. Centres could consider using a team of assessors with projects allocated to assessors based on the project link to the subjects they have delivered and/or assessed. For example, projects researching pensions related issues could be allocated to the *Pensions Provision* (H9NC 35) assessor, whilst projects that have selected importers and exporters as their customer group could be allocated to the *Financial Services: International Transactions* (HY93 35) assessor. Where teams of assessors are involved, centres must ensure appropriate standardisation arrangements are in place.

Detailed guidance on making assessment decisions is contained in the assessment support pack. Assessors should pay particular attention to how they allocate minimum and any additional marks for each of the evidence requirements. It will assist both the internal and external verifiers if the assessment checklists clearly show where awarded additional marks and the rationale why is given. An example of one method for completing the assessment checklist, to include this information, is shown on the next page.

Appendix 1: Candidate guidance notes reproduced from the Financial Services Graded Unit 2 Assessment Support Pack

Handout 2

Planning stage

Choosing your topic and planning your investigation

This handout covers the Planning stage of your investigation. This has two aspects:

- ◆ developing a brief

and

- ◆ preparing a plan to carry out the brief

Both of these take place before the investigation begins. You will not be allowed to proceed with your investigation unless you have successfully completed this stage.

You must maintain your activity log throughout the Planning stage.

The following gives you advice on how to tackle both of these aspects. There is a lot of information here and it is important that you read it carefully. Your lecturer(s) will also give you advice and help.

During this stage of your investigation, you have to decide on a number of key points. In order to prepare a brief you must:

- ◆ undertake an initial personal assessment of your skills.
- ◆ pick an issue for your investigation, linking this to a financial services organisation or organisations or government agency providing support/advisory services.
- ◆ set objectives for your investigation.
- ◆ decide on what sources of information you will need to make use of in your investigation.
- ◆ determine the methods that you will use to carry out your investigation.

Once you have completed your brief, you must then work out a plan for your investigation. The various aspects of preparing a brief and a plan overlap so your choice in one area may well have implications for what you can do in another. Overall, this is a crucial stage of your investigation. If you make good decisions at this stage, the rest of your investigation should proceed smoothly. It is well worth spending time and effort to complete this stage properly and to get it right.

Personal skills assessment

It is important that you identify your personal skills at the start of the investigation. Your assessment should be realistic and reflective and is likely to focus not just on your strengths, but also areas in which you could make improvements. You will be asked in the Evaluating stage of the project to make an assessment of the new skills and knowledge gained during the process of the investigation. Your initial assessment will provide a benchmark against which you can realistically judge your progress at the end of the investigation.

Picking a topic for your investigation

It is up to you to decide on the topic that you will investigate. Before making a final choice, you must discuss it with your project lecturer/lecturer. Your lecturer can give you help and advice and may also give you suggestions for possible topics, if you find it difficult to make a choice.

You can choose a topic which relates to one financial services organisation/ government agency or one that can be linked to a number of organisations/agencies.

However, your topic must meet the following criteria.

- ◆ It must be related to the Financial Services specific units on the HND Financial Services. These units are:
 - HY92 34 *Financial Sector: An Introduction*
 - HY94 35 *Financial Services Regulatory Framework*
 - H9AM 35 *Investment*
 - H9NC 35 *Pension Provision*
 - H0BX 34 *Personal Financial Services*
 - H9ND 35 *Principles of Insurance*

and, if chosen as options:

- HY93 35 *Financial Services: International Transactions*
- HF2H 35 *Personal and Business Lending*
- ◆ It may be a topic that links together a number of units. You must be able to identify the topics and units involved precisely.
- ◆ It must be a financial services issue. This means that it must be something which has implications for the way in which financial services are delivered to customers. In other words, the topic must be something that could affect, or has affected, the way financial services customers interact with providers and/or government agencies taking account of the products or regulations that exist in the sector. The reason for this is that you have to assess the implications of the issue you select in a financial services context.
- ◆ It must involve considering the implication of activities on customers. This can be one group of customers or on customers in general.

Possible investigation topics could be:

- ◆ the impact of a change in financial services regulations.
- ◆ the opportunities/threats presented by new financial services products.
- ◆ the impact of particular methods of service delivery on financial services customers.
- ◆ the effectiveness of the role played by service/advice providers in assisting customers achieve their financial objectives.
- ◆ the impact of technology changes on the delivery of products or services by financial services providers/government agencies.
- ◆ an evaluation of the challenges faced by business customers and the support given to them by financial services providers/government agencies in a given set of circumstances.
- ◆ the effectiveness of complaints handling processes in a financial services organisation.

When choosing your topic, try to be as realistic as you can. Think carefully about what you can achieve in the time you have. Investigations often fail because people are too ambitious and try to do more than is possible in the time available.

Remember that you have to allow time to gather information and to write up the stages of the investigation. Finally remember that whatever topic you choose it must be linked to one or more *Financial Services* units in the mandatory section, or relevant *Financial Services* optional units, of the HN Group Award.

Setting objectives for your investigation

Your objectives should cover what you intend to achieve from your investigation. As a general rule, they should be as specific as possible and, if appropriate, include a time scale. You may find it helpful to begin with one main objective which relates to your investigation as a whole. It could be something like:

- ◆ evaluate the likely advantages and disadvantages to customer type X of the change in regulation Y.
- ◆ analyse the impact on small business exporters of the introduction of product X by government agency Y.
- ◆ assess the potential benefits to customer type X of the introduction of technology change Y.

You could then supplement this with a number of other objectives, some of which could cover the process of your investigation. Some examples may be:

- ◆ identify the factors that led to the decision to introduce the regulation.
- ◆ collect data on the level of complaints registered with X.
- ◆ the extent to which the issue under investigation is consistent with the requirements of the regulations.
- ◆ assess by how much benefits to customers outweigh any costs to them.
- ◆ appraise the extent to which the issue under investigation will help the organisation to address a specified problem.
- ◆ evaluate how, and in what ways, the issue will enable an organisation to become more profitable.

Some of these objectives cover decisions about the methods you will use, your sources of information and so on. This means that you are likely to begin with an outline set of objectives and refine them as you go through the various aspects of the planning stage of your investigation.

Choosing your sources of information

You need to think carefully about what sources of information are available to you. Some will be secondary information such as textbooks, magazine and journal articles and the internet. Others will be primary information such as data you collect from interviews or surveys. There are a number of principles that can guide your choice of sources:

- ◆ be selective — remember that you have to complete your investigation in a relatively short period of time so only choose those sources which you are confident that you will be able to access in the time you have.
- ◆ choose those sources which you can access easily.
- ◆ choose those sources which look likely to yield the most useful information as far as your investigation is concerned. Most financial services organisations will not respond to surveys sent to them.
- ◆ be creative and think who might be able to give me useful information on this topic. Do not limit your thinking to financial services providers and government agencies.
- ◆ think about both current and future customers when deciding how you will gather information.
- ◆ you have to explain why you have chosen the sources that you did, so make sure that you can do this.
- ◆ remember that your choice of sources may well influence the conclusions that you can draw from your investigation.

Deciding on the methods you will use in your investigation

You also have to decide on the methods that you will use to gather data and those, which you will use to analyse and make sense of the data you collect. The methods you use to gather data will depend on the sources of information you choose. For example, a desk search is a suitable method of gathering data from textbooks or the internet. In many respects, the principles you should use here are the same as for deciding on sources of information:

- ◆ be selective — only choose those methods which you are sure you will be able to use in the time you have (remember, for example, that it takes time to make up and distribute a survey and get the results).
- ◆ choose those methods which fit in with the resources you have.
- ◆ choose those methods which will help you meet the objectives of your investigation as closely as possible.
- ◆ you have to be able to give reasons why you have chosen the methods that you have so, again, make sure that you can do this.
- ◆ remember that your methodology will influence the conclusions that you can draw from your investigation, so try to work out what effects it will have so that you can refer to them in your report on your investigation.

It is important to make sure that your sources of information and the methods you have chosen for your investigation fit closely together.

Planning your investigation

All the above relate to the brief for your investigation. However, you must also devise a plan for it. In particular, you have to devise suitable time scales and identify the resources you will need. Your plan should be consistent with your objectives and the methods you have chosen for your investigation.

Some of the timescales will be determined for you by your lecturer. You will be set dates when you must submit your work for each of the three stages of the project. You will, however, have to set other dates yourself. For instance, you will need to decide when you will complete the data collection stage of your investigation. It is important that your plan covers all three stages of the project, and contains sufficient detail regarding the activities you will undertake. Give the timescales some thought, as they should be a realistic estimate for the planned activities.

Remember that this is a plan and that, sometimes, plans do not work out as intended. So, if things do not work out as you intended, you may have to review your plan. Having a plan, though, can help you to keep on track. It is important that you record deviations from your planned times in your activity log.

It is vital that you identify the resources that you will require to complete the three stages of the investigative project. Again you should record in your log any resources that you subsequently identify that you require.

Writing up your brief and your plan

In order to complete the Planning stage of your investigation, you must write up your brief and your plan. You will be told when your work is to be submitted.

Your brief must include the following information:

- ◆ An initial personal assessment of your skills.
- ◆ An appropriate title of the project.
- ◆ A statement of the issue to be investigated. This should cover how it involves meeting the needs of customers and who the relevant customers are.
- ◆ The aims and objectives of the project.
- ◆ Reasons for the choice of issue which must be directly related to a topic or topics covered as part of the group award.
- ◆ Justification for the choice of organisations, agencies and/or customers involved.
- ◆ Explanation of the range of primary and secondary sources of information which will be used for the investigation and justification for the choice of each source.
- ◆ Explanation of how the investigation will be conducted with justification for the choice of methods used.

Your action plan to carry out the investigation must include:

- ◆ negotiated dates for the planning, development and evaluation of the project
- ◆ interim and final timescales for conducting the investigation, which should be related to the objectives of the investigation
- ◆ identification of the resources (including time) required to carry out the investigation
- ◆ Remember that maintaining your activity log is one of the evidence requirements, and must include a record of the activities undertaken, resources used and time allocated.

Marking your brief and plan

There are a maximum of 18 marks for the brief and 6 marks for the plan. You must gain at least 9/18 and 3/6 marks respectively in order to go on to actually carry out your investigation.

You will be awarded marks on the basis of the following factors:

- ◆ The extent to which your brief and plan cover all the points required (see above).
- ◆ The degree of consideration and reflection in your initial personal assessment of your skills.
- ◆ How well your sources of information and your methods fit together.
- ◆ The extent to which your suggested methods are appropriate to your investigation.
- ◆ How far your sources of information will provide suitable information to support your investigation.
- ◆ How realistic the objectives for your investigation are.
- ◆ The detail and suitability of your plan in relation to your proposed investigation.

Handout 3

NOTE: In this handout the term organisation refers to any financial services provider or government agency.

Developing stage

Carrying out your investigation

This handout covers the Developing stage of your investigation. This involves meeting the brief you have developed by carrying out your plan.

Like the Planning stage, you have to write up your findings from the Developing stage of your investigation. Your report should be 2,500–3,500 words and should contain four main sections:

- 1 A detailed explanation of how the issue affects the organisation or organisations/customers chosen. The explanation should be justified by explicit reference to the data collected and to concepts covered as in the mandatory units, or relevant optional units, of the group award. The explanation should be consistent with objectives set at the Planning stage.
- 2 Analysis of the primary and secondary sources of information and data collected.
- 3 An assessment of the implications of these effects for the chosen organisation or organisations/customers should be analysed in relation to the organisation(s), the financial services environment and the impact upon customers and should make reference to concepts and topics studied within the mandatory section of the group award.
- 4 A statement of the conclusions drawn from the investigation and any appropriate recommendations to be made to the organisation(s). These should be explicitly related to the issues being investigated and the needs of customers.

Your report should consist of 2,500–3,500 words, and must be presented in a format suitable for a business report. You must include a contents page, a summary of findings, acknowledgements and references. Your evidence may be supplemented by evidence provided orally by yourself in a discussion with the lecturer. If this is done, a record of the main points of the discussion should be recorded.

You must continue to maintain your log, which must record any activities undertaken, resources used and time allocated. You should also record deviations from your plan and keep a reflective record of what things worked, what did not and what problems you encounter. You should retain evidence of your progress and experience of the Development stage of the investigation and your own personal development. This will support you in the Evaluating stage by matching your experiences against the plan.

This handout looks at each of these sections. It concludes with some comments on writing up your report.

You will see, as you read through, that there is no requirement to describe in detail how you actually carried out the investigation.

Section 1 — How the issue affects your chosen organisation or organisations/ customers

and

Section 2 — Analysis of the primary and secondary sources of information and data collected

In this part, you should explain how the issue you have investigated affects the organisation or organisations/customers you have studied. You are required to make reference to the data that you have collected and it is therefore likely that you will incorporate the data analysis within this section.

You must justify your explanation by making explicit reference to:

- ◆ both primary and secondary data that you have collected and analysed.

and

- ◆ concepts you have covered in the mandatory, or financial services related optional, units of the group award.

For example, if your investigation sets out to identify advantages and disadvantages of something, then this section of your report will summarise the advantages and disadvantages that you have found during your investigation. For each one, you should explain why it is an advantage or disadvantage. You should support your explanation in three ways:

- ◆ with data (for example, positive responses to a survey).
- ◆ by reference to relevant concepts that you have studied in the mandatory units as part of the group award (for example, something may be an advantage because it is consistent with the predictions of a theory or with research evidence).
- ◆ your explanation should be consistent with the objectives created in the Planning stage.

You may find it helpful to present some of your data in appendices and refer to them in the main body of your report. Appendices do not count towards the overall word limit.

Section 3 — An assessment of the implications

In this part, you should assess the implications for your organisation(s) of the effects you have discussed in the first part (Stage 1 and 2) of your report. You must focus on the impact upon customers. The possible implications will vary from project to project, and may involve some speculation, but where possible should be grounded in specific evidence.

Section 4 — Conclusions from your investigation

In this final section of your report, you should summarise the conclusions you have drawn from your assessment in Section 3 on the previous page. You must make sure of two things:

- ◆ your conclusions and recommendations follow directly from your investigation.
- ◆ your conclusions and recommendations are directly related to the needs of customers.

One way to present this section is to list your conclusions and recommendations and show how each follows from your investigation and, where appropriate, how it relates to the needs of customers.

Presenting your report

Your report must be presented in a format suitable for a business report. You can choose any suitable format but it must contain:

- ◆ a contents page
- ◆ a summary of findings
- ◆ acknowledgements
- ◆ references

Your report is worth a maximum of 52 marks. You can gain a maximum of 6 marks for the presentation of your report, a maximum of 10 marks for each of Sections 1 and 2, 12 marks for Section 3, and up to 8 marks for Section 4. You must gain at least 26/52 marks in order to pass the investigation. A further 6 marks may be awarded for the production of your log of activities covering both the Planning and Developing stages of the investigation.

Marks are awarded on the basis of:

- ◆ the strength and validity of the reasons that you gave to support the points you make — for example, you will get more marks if you make explicit reference to topics from units contained in the mandatory section (or related optional units) of the award and explain carefully how your references are relevant.
- ◆ the way in which you analyse and make use of the data collected during your investigation — the more carefully you can use this to provide support for the points you make, the more marks you are likely to get.
- ◆ how carefully you select the information to include in your report — you will not be able to include everything about your investigation in your report and so you will have to choose which points to include and which to leave out. You will get more marks if you choose those points which help you provide the strongest justification for what you say and which relate most closely to the objectives of your investigation.
- ◆ the extent to which you have focused on your objectives during your investigation.
- ◆ the nature of the explanations you give — the more logical and well thought out they are the more marks you will be given.
- ◆ the accuracy and relevance of the references you make to topics from the course — the better you do this, the more marks you will gain.

Handout 4

Evaluating stage

Evaluating the effectiveness of your investigation

This handout covers the third and final stage of your investigation. It covers your own evaluation of how effective your investigation has been.

Your evaluation will cover seven sections and evidence may be submitted using more than one format providing the format(s) used are appropriate and all evidence requirements are met. Possible opportunities for presenting the evaluation could include a submission of work in a format suitable for a business report, though evidence for the specific elements could be presented using options which could include an oral presentation, a poster type presentation (eg a blog), a meeting or a question and answer session.

The format of the Evaluating stage of your project must be negotiated and agreed with your lecturer. The evaluation section of the practical assignment will be assessed by the submission which, if in written format, will likely be around 1,500 words. You may present this evidence in a manner which you consider appropriate but you must discuss and agreed this with your lecturer. Evidence may be submitted using more than one type of assessment instrument.

The evaluation is worth a maximum of 24 marks and you must gain at least 12/24 marks in order to pass this stage of the investigation.

Your evaluation should contain seven sections:

- 1 A brief outline of the investigation.
- 2 Assessment of the extent to which each of the original objectives of the investigation have been met. This should include reference to any modifications made during the course of the investigation and their importance and to any alternative courses of action considered but rejected. Throughout, the assessment should be supported with credible reasons.
- 3 Commentary on aspects of the Planning and Developing stages which worked effectively and why and/or aspects of the Planning and Developing stages which did not work as effectively as expected. Three separate aspects should be covered — one for the planning brief, one for the plan and one for the development report.
- 4 Assessment of the reliability and validity of the primary and secondary sources of information.
- 5 Assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the report of the investigation. This should be supported by credible reasons and cover at least one strength and at least one weakness.

- 6 Recommendations for future investigations. These should be based on the items above and must relate to your personal development (eg in terms of the further development of skills used in this investigation), and aspects of the process or product of the investigation, (eg with respect to setting timescales, gathering information or possible future investigations). It should be clear from the recommendations that you have reflected on what happened and have drawn conclusions from this reflection.
- 7 Assessment of new skills and knowledge gained during the process of the investigation.

In completing the evaluation stage you will make reference to information that you have recorded in your activity log during the Planning and Developing stages of the investigative project.

Section 1 — Investigation outline

You should provide a brief and concise outline of the investigation, stating the purpose of the investigation. You should avoid extensive repetition from the other two sections of the investigation.

Section 2 — Meeting your objectives

In this section, you should consider how far each of your original objectives has been met. One way to tackle this is to take each of your original objectives in turn and give reasons to show why each was met or not met as the case may be. You must mention any modifications to your objectives that you made during the course of the investigation and explain why you did this and discuss how far the changes helped or hindered your investigation. You should also comment on any alternative courses of action that you considered but rejected.

You will get marks for the quality of your discussion and not for whether you actually succeeded in meeting your objectives. Marks will be awarded for valid and credible reasons and for well thought out and logical justification, which illustrates that you have reflected carefully on what has happened. It is better to be as honest as you can, even if things did not work out as well as you had hoped.

Section 3 — Effectiveness of the Planning and Developing stages

In this section, you have to comment on those aspects of the Planning and Developing stages which worked well, and those aspects which did not work so well. You have to cover your brief, your plan and your report separately. You must cover three separate aspects, one for the planning brief, one for the plan and one for the developing report.

Once again, your commentary must include reasons to explain why things went well or not so well. As with Section 1, marks will be awarded for valid and credible reasons and for well thought out and logical justification. You must demonstrate, again, that both are the result of considered reflection on your experience of the investigation. So, be as honest and open as you can. You will not lose marks if you acknowledge that things could have been better — in fact, if you give sound reasons to support what you say, you may gain a very good mark.

Section 4 — Assessment of the primary and secondary sources

You must make an assessment of the reliability and validity of the primary and secondary sources of information. You should consider such issues as the impartiality (or not) of the sources, the age, relevance and suitability of the information obtained from the sources. Marks will be awarded for a credible, reflective, evaluative assessment that recognises the strengths and limitations of the information used.

Section 5 — Assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of your report

You must assess at least one strength and at least one weakness in this section. There is no upper limit on the number of strengths and weaknesses that you discuss. However, you must support each strength or weakness with credible reasons so you are unlikely to have space to cover a large number of strengths and weaknesses. Once again, marks will be awarded for valid and credible reasons and for well thought out and logical justification based on careful reflection of what happened.

Section 6 — Recommendations for future investigations

In this final section, you must set out recommendations for future investigations based on your experience in carrying out this investigation. Your recommendations should be based on the five sections above. They must refer to:

- ◆ your own personal development (eg in terms of the further development of skills you have used in this investigation).

and

- ◆ aspects of the process or product of the investigation (eg with respect to setting timescales, gathering information or possible future investigations).

The marks for this section will be based on:

- ◆ how closely your recommendations fit with your discussion in Sections 1–5 above.
- ◆ how well your recommendations illustrate that you have reflected on what has happened in your investigation.
- ◆ the extent to which your recommendations follow from your reflection on your experience.
- ◆ the coherence and credibility of your recommendations.
- ◆ the extent to which your recommendations are well thought out and realistic.

Section 7 — Assessment of new skills and knowledge gained

You must assess new skills and knowledge that you have gained during the process of the investigation. You should make specific reference back to your initial personal assessment of your skills, and give an honest appraisal of the skills and knowledge that have been gained since that initial appraisal. It may be appropriate that you make reference to where in your investigation you feel that the new skills and knowledge were gained.

In order to pass your investigation, you must gain at least 12/24 marks for the Evaluating stage.

Appendix 2: Financial Services: Graded Unit 2 Project Proposal

Name:	
The issue I would like to review is:	
The reasons I have selected this issue are:	
The Financial Services organisation(s)/Regulator and/or government agency involved:	
The customer group involved is:	
My project links to these Financial Services units I have studied.	
The specific concepts from these units that will be incorporated in my project are:	
My project title is:	
My draft project objectives are:	
My primary and secondary research methods will be:	

Appendix 3: Full integration with a 2-credit Investigation Based-Project Graded Unit

Financial Services: Graded Unit 2 (J00S 35) is a 2-credit unit in the form of an investigation based project. The following Assessment checklists integrate all evidence requirements for both units. A copy of the checklists can also be found at the end of this appendix. The final assessment evidence produced by learners for the investigation based project graded unit will also allow learners to evidence the requirements for the *Research Skills* unit.

Research Skills (F60A 34) unit (contains three outcomes):

- Outcome 1** Plan a research investigation.
- Outcome 2** Access and analyse complex data from a range of primary and secondary sources.
- Outcome 3** Present findings of a research investigation.

To achieve the *Research Skills* unit each learner must provide sufficient valid evidence at SCQF level 7 to meet the seven evidence requirements and the requirements relating to length and authenticity. Bullet points have been added to provide detail about evidence that would be expected to help meet the associated requirements.

- 1 Define research objectives appropriate to purpose.
 - ◆ Clear identification of topic for research.
 - ◆ Learners must 'define research objectives appropriate to purpose', by breaking down their topic of research into clear objectives.
- 2 Plan a research investigation.
 - ◆ Learners must identify primary and secondary sources to be used in their Investigation.
 - ◆ Learners must identify methods and techniques to be used in their Investigation.
 - ◆ Learners must produce a suitably detailed plan in order to show that they have 'Planned a research Investigation'.
- 3 Implement a research plan.
 - ◆ Learners must show that the Investigation has sought to meet objectives set out in Investigation plan.
- 4 Analyse information from a range of primary and secondary sources.
 - ◆ Learners must show that they have collected and 'analysed information from a range of primary and secondary sources'. A variety of primary research methods may be used.

- 5 Produce a referenced record of research activity and materials.
- 6 Present findings based on accurate analysis and interpretation of data.
- 7 Use a format appropriate to the chosen medium.

Findings should be a minimum of 1,000 words or oral equivalent.

Assessment must be conducted in conditions where arrangements are in place to ensure the authenticity of the learner's work.

Having completed investigation based project *Financial Services: Graded Unit 2* Stage 1 — Planning, learners should have completed the following for the *Research Skills* unit:

- ◆ identified research topic
- ◆ defined objectives
- ◆ identified primary and secondary sources
- ◆ planned research investigation

Upon completion of *Financial Services: Graded Unit 2* Stage 2 — Developing, learners should have completed the following for the *Research Skills* unit:

- ◆ implemented their research plan
- ◆ analysed information from a range of primary and secondary sources
- ◆ presented findings based on accurate analysis and interpretation of data
- ◆ produced a referenced record of research materials and activities
- ◆ produced a report in a format appropriate to chosen medium

Financial Services: Graded Unit 2 Stage 3 — Evaluating, provides further opportunities to collect evidence for the *Research Skills* unit. However, learners should have provided this in Stages 1 and 2, ie the Planning and Developing stages of the investigation based project graded unit.

Details of the assessment task are contained within the investigation based project graded unit HN Assessment Support Pack. The assessment task instructions are presented in two parts. The first gives guidance for lecturers on how to administer the Investigation. The second contains material that can be given to learners to explain to them what is required, and how they could set about meeting the requirements of the graded unit. Both parts rely heavily on the graded unit specification.

The investigation based project graded unit specifications contains guidance on how to grade learners. This takes the form of a table. Any assessment decisions should be consistent with the criteria set out in the table. Lecturers should, therefore, refer closely to it when allocating marks for the Investigation. The specification also contains the minimum standards of performance expected of learners. The assessment support pack provides further guidance on the allocation of marks. The *Research Skills* unit is not graded, and learners are assessed as having achieved all of the evidence requirements, or not having achieved them.

The *Research Skills* unit specification identifies three outcomes which must be met in order that the learner's ability to access and evaluate information from a variety of primary and secondary sources by planning and reporting on a research investigation are developed.

Learners must meet all of the requirements of this specification.

The following checklists show where evidence requirements may be identified in the investigation based project graded unit.

The final two columns on the right hand side of each checklist must be completed to record evidence of satisfactory or unsatisfactory performance in the *Research Skills* unit.

The assessment checklists map the *Research Skills* unit evidence requirements/ bullet points against the requirements of the investigation based project graded unit. All of the *Research Skills* unit evidence requirements are mapped against the requirements in the graded unit without the need for supplementary tasks. The assessor needs to judge whether the evidence provided meets the evidence requirement for both units. Where the evidence meets a requirement in one unit but not the other then additional work would need to be undertaken.

Evidence requirements

Developing a brief		Minimum mark required *	Maximum mark available**	Marks awarded	Criteria met for additional mark(s)**
Minimum evidence requirements					
1	Initial personal assessment of the learner's skills.	1	3	2	(a) +1 (Page 3)
2	An appropriate title of the project.	1	1	1	
3	Statement of the issue to be investigated. This should cover identification of the issue and the organisation/agency and customer group being investigated.	1	2	1	(b) +1 (Page 6)
4	Aims and objectives of the project.	1	2	1	
5	Reasons for the choice of issue which must be directly related to a topic or topics covered as part of the group award.	1	3	1	
6	Justification for the choice of organisations(s) and/or agencies and customers involved.	1	2	2	(b) + 1 (Page 4)
7	Explanation of the range of primary and secondary sources of information which will be used for the investigation and justification for the choice of each source.	1	2	1	
8	Explanation of how the investigation will be conducted with justification for the choice of methods used.	1	3	3	(f) + 1 (g) + 1 (pages 3-4)
Total marks awarded				12	

*Learners must secure at least 1 mark for each of the minimum evidence requirements, plus 1 additional mark.

**Additional marks up to the maximum mark available may be awarded on the basis of the following criteria.

- ◆ A detailed and realistic assessment of the learner's skills. (a)
- ◆ The strength of reasoning for the choice of the issue and its links with the Course. (b)
- ◆ Clear objectives which are specific, realistic, measurable, achievable and time bound. (c)
- ◆ The range and variety of sources of information chosen. (d)
- ◆ The extent to which sources of information selected have been justified. (e)
- ◆ The extent to which the methodology is apposite and well-chosen. (f)
- ◆ The clarity and logical strength of justifications given for the choice of methods. (g)
- ◆ The coherence with which the assessment criteria are linked to the topic(s) in the HND Financial Services. (h)

Integrated assessment checklist — Financial Services: Graded Unit 2 (J00S 35)/Research Skills (F60A 34) — Learner’s assessment record

Learner name _____ Learner ID _____ Class _____ Group _____

Stage 1: Planning (Brief 18 marks and Plan 6 marks)

Record of Performance

Evidence requirements

Developing a brief	Minimum mark required*	Maximum mark available**	Marks awarded	Criteria met for additional mark(s)**	Cross assessment with Research Skills unit (F60A 34)	Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory
Minimum evidence requirements					Evidence requirements	
1 Initial personal assessment of the learner’s skills.	1	3				
2 An appropriate title of the project.	1	1			Clear identification of topic for research.	
3 Statement of the issue to be investigated. This should cover identification of the issue and the organisation/agency and customer group being investigated.	1	2				
4 Aims and objectives of the project.	1	2			Learners must ‘define research objectives appropriate to purpose’, by breaking down their topic of research into clear objectives.	

Developing a brief	Minimum mark required*	Maximum mark available**	Marks awarded	Criteria met for additional mark(s)**	Cross assessment with Research Skills unit (F60A 34)	Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory
Minimum evidence requirements					Evidence requirements	
5 Reasons for choice of issue which must be directly related to a topic or topics covered as part of the group award.	1	3				
6 Justification for the choice of organisations(s) and/or agencies involved.	1	2				
7 Explanation of the range of primary and secondary sources of information which will be used for the Investigation and justification for the choice of methods used.	1	2			Learners must identify primary and secondary sources to be used in their Investigation.	
8 Explanation of how the Investigation will be conducted with justification for the choice of methods used.	1	3			Learners must identify methods and techniques to be used in their Investigation.	
Total marks available/awarded	8	18				

***Learners must secure at least 1 mark for each of the minimum evidence requirements, plus 1 additional mark.**

** Additional marks up to the maximum mark available may be awarded on the basis of the following criteria:

- 1 A detailed and realistic assessment of the learners' skills.
- 2 The strength of reasoning for the choice of the issue and its links with the course.
- 3 Clear objectives which are specific, realistic, measurable, achievable and time bound.
- 4 The range and variety of sources of information chosen.
- 5 The extent to which sources of information selected have been justified.
- 6 The extent to which the methodology is apposite and well-chosen.
- 7 The clarity and logical strength of justifications given for the choice of methods.
- 8 The coherence with which the assessment criteria are linked to the topic(s) in the HND Financial Services.

Devising a plan	Minimum mark required*	Maximum mark available**	Marks awarded	Criteria met for additional mark(s)**	Cross assessment with Research Skills unit (F60A 34)	Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory
Minimum evidence requirements					Evidence requirements	
1 Negotiated dates for the planning, development and evaluation of the project.	1	1				
2 Interim and final timescales and the dates for conducting the Investigation, which should be related to the objectives of the Investigation.	1	4				
3 Identification of the resources (including time) required to carry out the Investigation.	1	1				
					Learners must produce a suitably detailed plan in order to show that they have 'Planned a research <i>Investigation</i> '.	
Total marks available/awarded	3	6				

*Learners must secure at least one mark for each of the minimum evidence requirements.

**Additional marks up to the maximum mark available may be awarded on the basis of the following criteria:

- 1 The coherence with which the timescales are related to the objectives of the *Investigation*.
- 2 The extent to which the plan demonstrates the links between the three parts of the *Investigation*.
- 3 The extent to which the timescales are realistic and achievable.
- 4 The way in which the plan takes account of the methodology proposed in the brief.

Activity log	Minimum mark required*	Acceptable Log submitted	Cross assessment with Research Skills unit (F60A 34)	Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory
Minimum evidence requirements			Evidence requirements	
Produce a log of activities carried out by the learner. The log must include activities undertaken, resources used and time allocated.	No marks are allocated in the Planning stage, but a log including activities undertaken, resources used and time must be submitted.			

Planning stage	Marks	Cross assessment with Research Skills unit (F60A 34)	Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory
		Evidence requirements	
Developing a brief.			
Acceptable activity log submitted (must be yes to proceed).	Yes/No		
Devising a plan.			
Total mark for the Planning stage		Learner has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ identified research topic ◆ defined objectives ◆ identified primary and secondary sources ◆ planned research <i>Investigation</i> 	

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory

Comments

Overall comments:

Integrated assessment checklist — Financial Services: Graded Unit 2 (J00S 35)/Research Skills unit (F60A 34) — Learner’s assessment record

Learner name _____ Learner ID _____ Class _____ Group _____

Stage 2: Developing (52 marks)

Record of Performance

Evidence requirements

Developing stage report Minimum evidence requirements	Minimum mark required*	Maximum mark available**	Marks awarded	Criteria met for additional mark(s)**	Cross assessment with Research Skills unit (F60A 34) Evidence requirements	Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory
1 Detailed explanation of how the issue affects the organisation and/or agency and the customer group selected. The explanation should be justified by explicit reference to the data collected and to concepts covered as in the mandatory units of the group award. The explanation should be consistent with objectives at the Planning stage.	5	10			Learners must show that the <i>Investigation</i> has sought to meet objectives set out in <i>Investigation</i> plan.	
2 Analysis of the primary and secondary sources of information and data collected.	5	10			Learners must show that they have collected and ‘analysed information from a range of primary and secondary sources’. A variety of primary research methods may be used.	

Developing stage report Minimum evidence requirements	Minimum mark required*	Maximum mark available**	Marks awarded	Criteria met for additional mark(s)**	Cross assessment with Research Skills unit (F60A 34) Evidence requirements	Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory
3 Assessment of the implications of these effects for the chosen organisation or organisations should be analysed in relation to the organisation(s), the business environment and the impact upon customers and should make reference to concepts and topics studied within the mandatory section of the group award.	6	12			Learners must 'present findings based on accurate analysis and interpretation of data' from their primary and secondary sources. Learners must show that they have analysed both quantitative and qualitative data.	
4 Statement of the conclusions drawn from the Investigation and any appropriate recommendations to be made to the organisation/agency. These should be explicitly related to the issues being investigated and the needs of the customer.	4	8				
Total marks available/awarded	20	40				

*Learners must secure at least the minimum mark for each of the minimum evidence requirements.

** Additional marks up to the maximum mark available may be awarded on the basis of the following criteria:

- 1 The extent to which the report makes explicit links to the brief and the plan of the *Investigation*.
- 2 The extent to which it is highly focused on the objectives of the *Investigation*.
- 3 The extent to which points made are justified with reference to concepts studied in the HND Group Award.
- 4 The extent to which the justification of points is logical and well thought out.
- 5 The careful and apposite selection of information to justify points made.
- 6 The strength and validity of points made to justify statements in the report.
- 7 How well the conclusions follow from the assessment.
- 8 How closely the conclusions are explicitly linked to the assessments.
- 9 The extent to which the conclusions are realistic and well thought through.
- 10 The coherence with which the report is linked to the topic(s) in the HND Group Award.

Activity log Minimum evidence requirements	Minimum mark required*	Maximum mark available**	Marks awarded	Criteria met for additional mark(s)**	Cross assessment with Research Skills unit (F60A 34) Evidence requirements	Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory
Planning stage Producing a log of activities carried out by the learner. The log must include activities undertaken, resources used and time allocated.	1 or 2	3				
Development stage Producing a log of activities carried out by the learner. The log must include activities undertaken, resources used and time allocated.	1 or 2	3				
Total marks available/awarded	2	6				

*Learners must secure at least one mark in each of the two stages, and a minimum of three marks in total.

**Additional marks up to the maximum mark available may be awarded on the basis of detail regarding activities undertaken, resources used and time allocated, and where reflection has been recorded.

Presentation of development stage report Minimum evidence requirements	Minimum mark required*	Maximum mark available**	Marks awarded	Criteria met for additional mark(s)**	Cross assessment with Research Skills unit (F60A 34)	Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory
					Evidence requirements	
Learners must present their <i>Investigation</i> in a format suitable for a business report and which must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A contents page ◆ A summary of findings ◆ Acknowledgements ◆ References and a bibliography 	3	6			Learners must show that they have used 'a format appropriate to chosen medium'.	
					Learners must produce a 'referenced record of research materials and activities'.	
Total marks available/awarded	3	6				

*Learners must secure at least the minimum mark for each of the minimum evidence requirements.

**Additional marks up to the maximum mark available may be awarded on the basis of the following criteria:

- 1 The extent to which it is well structured and uses language of a high standard.
- 2 Its accuracy and its technical content.
- 3 The way in which it makes use of appendices, diagrams, charts, etc to present information.

Developing stage	Marks	Cross assessment with Research Skills unit (F60A 34) Evidence requirements	Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory
Developing stage report		Learner has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ implemented their research plan ◆ analysed information from a range of primary and secondary sources ◆ presented findings based on accurate analysis and interpretation of data ◆ produced a referenced record of research materials and activities ◆ produced a report in a format appropriate to chosen medium 	
Activity log		See above	
Presentation of developing stage report		See above	
Total mark for the Developing stage			

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory

Comments

Overall comments:

Integrated assessment checklist — Financial Services: Graded Unit 2 (J00S 35)/Research Skills unit (F60A 34) — Learner's assessment record

Learner name _____ Learner ID _____ Class _____ Group _____

Stage 3: Evaluating (24 marks)

Record of Performance

Evidence requirements

Evaluation stage Minimum evidence requirements	Minimum mark required*	Marks awarded	Criteria met for additional mark(s)**	Cross assessment with Research Skills unit (F60A 34) Evidence requirements	Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory
1 A brief outline of the Investigation.	1			Additional evidence may be gathered at this stage, however all evidence requirements should be provided in stages one and two of the <i>Investigation</i> .	
2 Assessment of the extent to which each of the original objectives of the Investigation have been met. This should include reference to any modifications made during the course of the Investigation and their importance and to any alternative courses of action considered but rejected. Throughout, the assessment should be supported with credible reasons.	2				

Evaluation stage Minimum evidence requirements	Minimum mark required*	Marks awarded	Criteria met for additional mark(s)**	Cross assessment with Research Skills unit (F60A 34) Evidence requirements	Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory
3 Commentary on aspects of the Planning and Developing stages which worked effectively and why and/or aspects of the Planning and Development stages which did not work as effectively as expected. Three separate aspects should be covered — one for planning brief, one for the plan and one for the development report.	2				
4 Assessment of the reliability and validity of the primary and secondary sources of information.	1				
5 Assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the report of the <i>Investigation</i> . This should be suggested by credible reasons and cover at least one strength and at least one weakness.	2				

Evaluation stage	Minimum mark required*	Marks awarded	Criteria met for additional mark(s)**	Cross assessment with Research Skills unit (F60A 34)	Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory
Minimum evidence requirements				Evidence requirements	
6 Recommendations for future investigations. These should be based on items above and must relate to the personal development of the learner (eg in terms of the further development of skills used in this Investigation) and aspects of the process or product of the Investigation (eg with respect to setting timescales, gathering information or possible future investigations). It should be clear from the recommendations that the learner has reflected on what happened and has drawn conclusions from this reflection.	2				
7 Assessment of new skills and knowledge gained during the process of the Investigation.	2				
Total marks available/awarded	12				

*Learners must secure at least the minimum mark for each of the minimum evidence requirements.

**Up to the maximum of 12 additional marks may be awarded on the basis of the following criteria:

- 1 The extent to which the evaluation demonstrates clear and explicit links between the three stages of the *Investigation*.