Group Award Specification for:

National Progression Award (NPA)

Business Skills

Group Award Code: GR3P 46

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Version: 01

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 candidates 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.

Contents

1   Introduction

This document was previously known as the Arrangements document. 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

This group award has been designed to provide candidates with the fundamental knowledge and skills relating to the study of business and allows for progression to other business and/or IT related programmes in both the further and higher education sector, as well as providing progression within or to employment.

Rationale for the group award

One of the key recommendations from *The Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce*, first published in 2014, was that there be a ' focus on the importance of business and industry working with school and colleges as a key factor in ensuring young people are more prepared for employment and better informed in career choice'.

SDS, working with other partners and industry, is increasing the range of work based learning opportunities for pupils in the senior phase of secondary schools through the development of Foundation Apprenticeships.

The Foundation Apprenticeship in Business Skills has been designed to address identified skill gaps and allow pupils to gain vocational qualifications that combine sector specific skills alongside the knowledge that underpins these skills in a workplace setting while still at school.

The National Progression Award (NPA) was specifically developed to meet the knowledge component of the Foundation Apprenticeship in Business Skills.

The NPA incorporates four of the units included in the NPA in Business with Information Technology at SCQF level 6, available to centres since 2010.

2   Qualification structure

This group award has been designed in accordance with SQA's design principles for NPAs:

♦   An NPA and its component units will be allocated to a level appropriate to their position in the SCQF
♦   NPAs can be set at SCQF levels 2–6
♦   NPAs will have a minimum of 12 SCQF credit points
♦   More than half the SCQF credit points must be at the same level as the NPA

The NPA is designed to assess a defined set of skills and knowledge in a specialist vocational area, ie Business, and is linked to the National Occupational Standards. This group award comprises six SQA unit credits. It comprises 36 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6. A mapping of Core Skills development opportunities is available in Section 5.3.

2.1 Structure

To achieve the NPA the learner has to pass five mandatory units.

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J229	76	Understanding Business	1	6	6
J22A	76	Management of People and Finance	1	6	6
HE9E	46	Contemporary Business Issues	1	6	6
F1FE	12	PC Passport: Working with IT Software – Word Processing and Presenting Information and	1	6	6
F1FJ	12	PC Passport: Working with IT Software – Spreadsheet and Database **OR**	1	6	6
HA6L	46	Web Apps: Spreadsheets and	1	6	6
HA6M	46	Web Apps: Word Processing	1	6	6

3 Aims of the qualification

The principal aims of the NPA are to provide learners with the core knowledge and transferable skills that are valued by the Business sector and to provide the knowledge component of the Foundation Apprenticeship in Business Skills at SCQF level 6.

3.1 General aims of the qualification

The general aims of the NPA are to:

1 Provide learners with a knowledge-based qualification that may be used as a pathway to a Foundation/Modern Apprenticeship.
2 Provide learners with a nationally recognised qualification to provide opportunities for career progression.
3 Develop skills and competences within the context of a business environment, for those not currently in employment.
4 Provide opportunities for learners to develop their communication and interpersonal skills.
5 Develop learners' core and transferable skills.
6 Develop learners knowledge, application and usage of a variety of software packages and (at SCQF level 6) to develop these to an advanced level.

3.2 Specific aims of the qualification

1 Enhance learners' understanding of the operation of large organisations and the issues they face.
2 Enhance learners' understanding of the effective management of people and finance within large organisations.
3 Introduce learners to the complex functions of word processing, presentation, spreadsheet and database application software.
4 Develop learners' understanding of contemporary business issues and awareness of the decisions and challenges facing small and medium enterprises.
5 Provide learners with opportunities to develop employability skills.

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.

Learners would benefit from having attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by one or more of the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

♦ NPA in Business with Information Technology at SCQF level 5 or its component units
♦ NPA in Business and Marketing at SCQF level 5 or its component units
♦ National 5 Business Management or its component units
♦ Some ICT skills training at level 5. This may be through the achievement of relevant National Units or employment experience.

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.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	5	Good communication skills are required for learners undertaking this qualification as they will be required to read, understand and evaluate a range of documentation. During the delivery and assessment of the units, learners will prepare written work such as: ♦ producing and completing sample application forms ♦ research reports ♦ written responses to questions or prompts

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
		Learners will also be required to communicate orally during the delivery and assessment of the units, eg during group/individual role plays, presentation of research findings. They will: ♦ use vocabulary and a range of spoken language structures consistently and effectively at an appropriate level of formality ♦ convey all essential information with supporting detail accurately and coherently ♦ structure communication to take account of purpose and audience ♦ respond to others, taking account of their contributions
Numeracy	5	Good numerical skills are required for learners undertaking this qualification as they may be required to carry out a variety of work related number tasks, eg: ♦ analysing business performance while using a variety of numerical and graphical information
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	5	Learners will be required to use ICT skills to research a range of issues online, for example different types of organisations, internal and external factors impacting organisations, stakeholders, and different structures organisations can have, as well as for accessing real-life case studies. During the course of their study, learners may also undertake a variety of ICT related tasks such as: ♦ using appropriate technological and media resources to illustrate impact of internal and external factors, as well as contemporary technology on business activity ♦ using a wide range of IT and carrying out searches to extract and present relevant information ♦ using technological resources to assist in the preparation and interpretation of ratios ♦ using appropriate technological and

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
		media resources to keep up-to-date with contemporary examples of technology being used by business and its impact on business activity
Problem Solving	5	Critical analysis is an integral part of this qualification as learners will be required to investigate, analyse and evaluate a number of issues such as the impact of external and internal factors on organisations, contemporary business issues, and case study stimuli. Learners will be required to make selective use of IT and to evaluate their choice.
Working with Others	5	Although it is not necessary for learners to have prior qualifications/experience of working with others, they should be able to work co-operatively with other people and carry out their role adapting their actions/behaviour as appropriate and asking or providing information and support when required.

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	General aims						Specific aims				
		1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5
J229 76	Understanding Business	x	x	x	x	x		x				x
J22A 76	Management of People and Finance	x	x	x	x	x			x			x
F1FE 12	PC Passport: Working with IT Software — Word Processing and Presenting Information	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x
F1FJ 12	PC Passport: Working with IT Software — Spreadsheet and Database	x	x	x	x	x				x		x
HE9E 46	Contemporary Business Issues	x	x	x	x	x					x	x
HA6L 46	Web Apps: Spreadsheets	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x
HA6M 46	Web Apps: Word Processing	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x

5.2 Mapping of National Occupational Standards (NOS) and/or trade body standards

NOS are developed by the key employment sectors of the United Kingdom. These standards set the competences required for job roles within a particular employment sector.

The award provides the underpinning knowledge for the Business and Administration NOS. The mapping was completed against the 2013 National Occupational Standards.

NOS Code	SQA Code	NOS Title
CFABAA111	HE9E 46	Respond to change in a business environment
CFABAA1110	HE9E 46	Prepare, co-ordinate and monitor operational plans
CFABAA112	HE9E 46	Contribute to innovation in a business environment
CFABAA113	HE9E 46	Explore ideas for innovation in a business environment
CFABAA211	F1FE 12	Produce documents in a business environment
CFABAA212	F1FE 12	Design and produce documents in a business environment
CFABAA213	/F1FE 12	Prepare text from notes
CFABAA613	/F1FE 12	Understand how to communicate in a business environment
CFABAA614	F1FE 12	Prepare to communicate in a business environment
CFABAA617	F1FE 12	Develop a presentation
CFABAD321	F1FJ 12	Collate and organise data
CFABAD322	F1FJ 12	Analyse and report data
CFABAD332	F1FJ 12	Store and retrieve information using a filing system
CFABAF174	J22976/J22A 76	Manage work in a business environment
CFABAG121	J22A76/F1FJ 12/HE9E 46	Contribute to decision-making in a business environment
CFABAG122	HE9E 46	Make decisions in a business environment
CFABAG125	F1FJ 12	Contribute to solving business problems
CFABAG126	F1FJ 12	Plan how to solve business problems
CFABAG127	F1FJ 12	Solve business problems
CFABAG128	F1FJ 12	Evaluate and solve business problems
CFABAH111	HE9E 46	Support the monitoring and evaluation of trends and events that affect organisations
CFABAH122	J22A 76/HE9E 46	Assist in improving organisational performance
CFABAH123	J22A 76/HE9E 46	Assist in reviewing organisational performance
CFABAI131	J22A 76/F1FJ 12/HE9E 46	Support organisational decision-making
CFABAI132	J22A 76/F1FJ 12	Inform and facilitate organisational decision-making

| Code | Unit title | National Occupational Standard | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
		CFABAA111	CFABAA1110	CFABAA112	CFABAA113	CFABAA151	CFABAA211	CFABAA212	CFABAA213	CFABAA613	CFABAA614	CFABAA615	CFABAA617	CFABAA624	CFABAA625	CFABAA626	CFABAA627	CFABAD321	CFABAD322	CFABAD323	CFABAD332
J229 76	Understanding Business																				
J22A 76	Management of People and Finance																				
F1FE 12	PC Passport: Working with IT Software — Word Processing and Presenting Information						X K2 K7 K8 K9	X K8 K9 K10	X K4 K5	X K4 K7	X K5 K6 K9		X K1 K3								
F1FJ 12	PC Passport: Working with IT Software — Spreadsheet and Database																	X K2	X K6		X K6
HE9E 46	Contemporary Business Issues	X K1	X K2 K6 K15	X K1 K3	X K3																

Code	Unit title	CFABAF171	CFABAF172	CFABAF173	CFABAF174	CFABAG121	CFABAG1210	CFABAG122	CFABAG123	CFABAG124	CFABAG125	CFABAG126	CFABAG127	CFABAG128	CFABAH111	CFABAH122	CFABAH123	CFABAI131	CFABAI132		
National Occupational Standard																					
J229 76	Understanding Business				X K1																
J22A 76	Management of People and Finance				X K8	X K3										X K1	X K2	X K2	X K2		
F1FE 12	PC Passport: Working with IT Software — Word Processing and Presenting Information																				
F1FJ 12	PC Passport: Working with IT Software — Spreadsheet and Database					X K4					X K2	X K3	X K4	X K5				X K3	X K3		
HE9E 46	Contemporary Business Issues					X K5		X K4							X K1 K6	X K1	X K2	X K11			

5.3   Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the 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
J229 76	Understanding Business	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	
J22A 76	Management of People and Finance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	
F1FE 12	PC Passport: Working with IT Software — Word Processing and Presenting Information	X	X			E SCQF level 6	E SCQF level 6	X	X	X		
F1FJ 12	PC Passport: Working with IT Software — Spreadsheet and Database	X	X			X	X	X	X	X		
HE9E 46	Contemporary Business Issues	X	X					X			X	
HA6L 46	Web Apps: Spreadsheets	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	
HA6M 46	Web Apps: Word Processing	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	

X = Development opportunities

E = Embedded Core Skill component and SCQF level

5.4   Assessment strategy for the qualification

Unit	Assessment			
	Outcome 1	**Outcome 2**	**Outcome 3**	**Outcome 4**
Understanding Business (H20R 76)	Written/oral response to stimuli (open-book)	Written/oral response to stimuli (open-book)	N/A	N/A
Management of People and Finance (H20S 76)	Written/oral response to stimuli (open-book)	Written/oral response to stimuli (open-book)	N/A	N/A
PC Passport: Working with IT Software — Word Processing and Presenting Information (F1FE 12)	Objective test — multiple choice questions (closed-book, supervised conditions, timed — 45 minutes long assessment of Outcomes 1 and 2)	Objective test — multiple choice questions (closed-book, supervised conditions, timed — 45 minutes long assessment of Outcomes 1 and 2)	Practical tasks (open-book, supervised conditions, over extended period of time)	Practical tasks (open-book, supervised conditions)
PC Passport: Working with IT Software — Spreadsheet and Database (F1FJ 12)	Objective test — multiple choice questions (closed-book, supervised conditions, timed — 45 minutes long assessment of Outcomes 1 and 2)	Objective test — multiple choice questions (closed-book, supervised conditions, timed — 45 minutes long assessment of Outcomes 1 and 2)	Practical tasks (open-book, supervised conditions, over extended period of time)	Practical tasks (open-book, supervised conditions)
Contemporary Business Issues (HE9E 46)	Written/oral response to stimuli (open-book)	Written/oral response to stimuli (open-book)	N/A	N/A
Web Apps: Spreadsheets (HA6L 46)	Knowledge and understanding test.	Spreadsheet creation.	Editing of spreadsheets using collaboration software.	N/A
Web Apps: Word Processing (HA6M 46)	Practical evidence	Practical evidence	Production of document through collaboration.	N/A

6 Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment

Learners undertaking units in the NPA will normally be working towards the group award — the NPA in Business Skills at SCQF level 6. However, the units are also available as free-standing units and learners may take them as such for purposes of continuing professional development.

Centres that are delivering the NPA, such as schools and colleges, should ensure that they have sufficient teaching and learning material to meet the component outcomes of each unit. Each unit has detailed guidance on the content that underpins each outcome as well as particular contexts in which teaching and learning should be structured. Furthermore guidance is provided for particular approaches that may be followed when delivering units.

There are different approaches to assessment, and teachers/lecturers should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, as well as understanding of their learners and their varying needs, to determine the most appropriate ones and, where necessary, to consider workable alternatives.

Assessments must be fit for purpose and should allow for consistent judgements to be made by all assessors.

Assessments must ensure that the evidence generated demonstrates, at least, the minimum level of competence for each unit. Assessors preparing assessment methods should be clear about what that evidence will look like for their centre or learners.

Examples of appropriate tasks which allow learners to generate evidence for outcomes and assessment standards/performance criteria are detailed in the unit assessment support packs, found on the SQA secure server.

Evidence should include the use of appropriate business terminology as well as the use of real-life examples, where appropriate.

Teachers/lecturers should note that learners' day-to-day work may produce evidence which satisfies assessment requirements of a unit, or units, either in full or partially. Such naturally occurring evidence generated during lessons, may be used as a contribution towards unit assessment.

6.1   Sequencing/integration of units

The delivery of the award is at the individual centre's discretion. It would be beneficial if centres delivered the *Understanding Business* unit before delivering *Management of People and Finance* unit.

6.2   Recognition of prior learning

SQA recognises that learners gain knowledge and skills 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.

6.2.1   Articulation and/or progression

This NPA was specifically developed to meet the knowledge component of the Foundation Apprenticeship in Business Skills, and the award provides credits towards the FA. Furthermore, candidates who successfully achieve the FA may wish to go on to complete the full Modern Apprenticeship (MA) in Business and Administration.

Candidates who successfully complete this NPA could also progress to HN programmes or appropriate National Courses at Higher and/or Advanced Higher level.

Also, it would be possible for candidates to progress to appropriate Professional Development Awards (PDA), such as in Information Technology in Business (G8XL 47), Office Administration (GA11 47) or Office Management and Information technology (GA10 48).

6.2.2 Professional recognition

At present, there is no professional recognition or credit transfer relating to this award.

6.3 Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments of the units in this award. 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 e-checklists. Centres who wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standards are applied to all candidate 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.**

6.4 Support materials

A **list of existing ASPs** is available to view on SQA's website.

6.5 Resource requirements

Learners will require access to the ICT equipment and word processing, presentations, database and spreadsheet application software.

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 qualification 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:

♦ candidates 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 candidates 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 that arise in learning and teaching but are not automatically certificated.

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 National Progression Award is designed to provide you with the fundamental skills and knowledge required for success in current and future employment in the Business sector or for progression onto further academic qualifications.

This NPA was specifically developed to meet the knowledge component of the Foundation Apprenticeship in Business Skills.

To gain the award you will need to complete five units:

Understanding Business
Management of People and Finance
Contemporary Business Issues
and either
PC Passport: Working with IT Software — Word Processing and Presenting Information
and
PC Passport: Working with IT Software — Spreadsheet and Database
OR
Web Apps: Spreadsheets
and
Web Apps: Word Processing

You will be introduced to features and characteristics of large organisations and small and medium enterprises. You will develop an understanding of issues relation to the internal and external environment in which organisations operate and the effect this can have on decision making and profitability.

You will be introduced to the complex functions of word processing, presentation, spreadsheet and database application software.

You will develop an understanding of contemporary business issues and the decisions and challenges facing businesses.