



**Arrangements for:
Professional Development Award
in
Information Technology in Business
at SCQF level 7**

Group Award Code: G8XL 47

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Acknowledgement

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges have made to the development of Higher National qualifications.

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.

Version number	Description	Date
05	Updated information on credit transfer	20/09/17
04	Document updated in line with changes to units as a result of the review of HNC and HND Administration and Information Technology.	09/08/17
03	Revision of Units: F84V 34 IT in Business: Spreadsheets has been replaced by HH83 34. F84C 34 IT in Business: Word Processing and Presentation Applications has been replaced by HH84 34. Both will finish 31/07/2019	27/01/17
02	Revision of Units: DE1L 34 IT in Business: Word Processing and Presentation Applications has been replaced by F84C 34 IT in Business: Word Processing and Presentation Applications. DE1M 34 IT in Business: Spreadsheets has now been replaced by F84V 34 IT in Business: Spreadsheets. DE1N 34 IT in Business: Database has been replaced by F84X 34 and are now finished	31/07/14

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1 Introduction

This is the Arrangements Document for the new Professional Development Award in Information Technology in Business at SCQF level 7 which was validated in April 2008. This document includes: background information on the development of the Group Award, its aims, guidance on access, details of the Group Award structure, and guidance on delivery.

This Group Award is one of a suite of PDAs in Administration and Technology, at SCQF levels 7 and 8. This PDA will enable candidates to improve their professional practice and provides them with a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) vehicle.

2 Rationale for the development of the award

Market research was carried out into the part-time provision in Accounting and Business related areas within the further education sector. This concluded that shorter, bite-sized qualifications were required at SCQF level 7 to meet the needs of employers and delivering centres. This type of qualification will be more accessible to candidates in terms of time, cost and assessment. As result of the market research a PDA in Information Technology in Business consisting of three HN Units (4 HN credits) was developed. Candidates undertaking this PDA will also be able to build up their qualification towards a full HNC by undertaking further PDAs and/or HN Units.

The PDA is suited to candidates wishing to study on a part-time basis whilst in employment in the sector. It is also appropriate for adult returners to education who do not wish to commit to a full-time HNC programme of study but seek to gain skills in administration.

The award has been designed in accordance with the PDA Design Principles and is at SCQF level 7.

2.1 Market research and consultation

Consultation details are summarised in the following table:

Stakeholder	Method of Consultation
Employers	◆ Face to face interviews
	◆ On-line questionnaire
Approved centres	◆ Face to face interviews
	◆ On-line questionnaire
	◆ Practitioner Events (Subject Networks)
Candidates	◆ On-line questionnaire

Stakeholder	Method of Consultation
National Occupation Standards Setting Body/Sector Skills Council	◆ Telephone conversation/emails

In addition, extensive use was made of current research data compiled for Futureskills Scotland, particularly *Labour Market Projections 2007 to 2017*. The full report can be found at www.futureskillscotland.org.uk.

2.2 Summary of feedback

- ◆ Good range of delivery formats available — flexible, open and distance learning, and as part of HNC Administration and Information Technology
- ◆ Appropriate choice of Units had been included in PDA
- ◆ Employers stated their interest in using PDA as a training route
- ◆ Candidates would find PDA useful ‘stepping stone’ to gain further qualifications
- ◆ PDA builds on current provision

3 Aims of the award

3.1 General aims of the award

- 1 To provide candidates with personal and professional development opportunities.
- 2 To provide a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) vehicle for candidates employed in an administrative capacity.
- 3 To develop study and research skills.
- 4 To enable career progression and job mobility.
- 5 To enable progression within SCQF.

3.2 Specific aims of the award

- 6 To develop technical and administrative knowledge relevant to current administrative practice.
- 7 To develop skills and knowledge of word processing and presentation packages to aid business communication.
- 8 To develop an understanding of database management software and the application of databases to aid business decision making.
- 9 To develop an understanding of spreadsheets and their use in providing solutions to business problems.
- 10 To develop skills using technology in an administration role.
- 11 To prepare candidates for employment in an administration role.

3.3 Target groups

The PDA in Information Technology in Business at SCQF level 7 is suitable for a wide range of candidates including:

- ◆ candidates employed within an administration role who wish to enhance their career prospects
- ◆ candidates in employment seeking a vehicle for CPD
- ◆ adult returners to education
- ◆ candidates undertaking the HNC Administration and Information Technology

3.4 Employment opportunities

The PDA in Information Technology in Business will prepare candidates for employment in administrative roles within a wide range of public and private sector organisations. The type of positions which may be taken up by candidates include:

- ◆ Administration Assistants
- ◆ Information Assistants
- ◆ Clerks

This award will allow candidates to formalise and/or extend their skills which will allow development in their career.

4 Access to awards

Access to the award will be at the discretion of the centre. In general, entry should be open to any candidate who can demonstrate, by formal qualification or experience, a reasonable expectation of successfully completing the award. It would be beneficial for candidates to be competent in communication and IT skills to SCQF level 5.

The following are examples of formal qualifications which could be recommended as suitable entry criteria:

- ◆ Communication skills at SCQF level 5 or equivalent
- ◆ experience of working in an administration environment
- ◆ IT skills at SCQF level 5
- ◆ NQ/SVQ in Administration

For candidates where English is not their first language it is recommended that they possess English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) level 5 or a score of 5.5 in International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

5 Award structure

5.1 Framework

Unit title	Code	SCQF credit points	SCQF level	SQA credit value
IT in Business — Word Processing and Presentation Applications	HH84 34*	16	7	2
IT in Business — Databases	F84X 34*	8	7	1
IT in Business — Spreadsheets	HH83 34*	8	7	1

*Refer to History of Changes for information on changes to units

5.2 Mapping information

The following table identifies how the award aims are met by the individual Units:

Unit title	Unit code	Aims
IT in Business: Word Processing and Presentation Applications	HH84 34	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11
IT in Business: Databases	HH83 34	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11
IT in Business — Spreadsheets	F84V 34	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11

5.3 Core Skills

The importance of Core Skills is recognised and these are developed throughout this award. There is automatic certification of some Core Skill components in the Unit *IT in Business: Spreadsheets*. Further information on the embedded Core Skills and signposting of opportunities to develop Core Skills is given in Appendix 1.

5.4 Occupational Standards

The PDA has been mapped against the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for the industry as contained within the SVQ Business and Administration level 3 (see Appendix 2).

5.5 Articulation and professional recognition

Candidates who successfully complete this award may wish to undertake the PDA in Office Administration at SCQF level 7. Candidates may also complete further Units from the HNC Administration and Information Technology award and build their qualification into a full HNC.

The PDA in Administrative Management at SCQF level 8 may also provide further development opportunities.

Further information on credit transfer arrangements can be found in the HNC/D Administration and Information Technology Group Award specification

6 Approaches to delivery and assessment

The Units contained in the PDA may be delivered as standalone qualifications, as part of the HNC Administration and Information Technology framework or as part of the Professional Development Award. Where they are delivered as the PDA Group Award they constitute a coherent, attractive and relevant programme which will equip candidates with the knowledge and/or skills required for employment within an administration environment. The PDA award would also be attractive to those already in employment but who do not possess a relevant vocational qualification.

A wide range and combination of teaching, learning and assessment methods may be used by centres. The following are suggested delivery methods which could be adopted by centres:

- ◆ lectures
- ◆ tutorials
- ◆ study packs
- ◆ problem based scenarios
- ◆ case studies
- ◆ group work
- ◆ online materials
- ◆ IT based teaching materials
- ◆ role play/simulation
- ◆ projects
- ◆ Virtual Learning Environments
- ◆ Distance learning
- ◆ Blended learning

The award is flexible and can be delivered in many modes, to suit different candidates and different centres, including open learning. This PDA is ideally suited for distance learning. Under all circumstances, delivering centres will be responsible for ensuring the authenticity of candidates' work.

The Unit specifications detail what Evidence Requirements and assessment procedures are for each assessment event and assessment exemplars are available for the Units comprising the PDA. Assessment exemplars are accessible via the secure section on the SQA website; centre SQA co-ordinators have details of how to access these. An overview of an assessment strategy is given in Appendix 4.

Details of Learning and Teaching materials available to support this PDA can be found on the PDA webpage on SQA's website.

7 General information for centres

Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (www.sqa.org.uk).

Internal and external verification

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

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

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in *SQA's Guide to Assessment and Quality Assurance for Colleges of Further Education* (www.sqa.org.uk).

8 General information for candidates

The Professional Development Award in Information Technology in Business at SCQF level 7 offers you the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills for employment within an administration role. The award will provide you with the skills required to undertake a variety of administration functions using IT in an organisation.

You will develop your knowledge and skills in the use of office and information technology to carry out administrative tasks. You will use word processing, spreadsheet and database software applications to complete tasks.

You will produce a variety of documents using word processing and presentation software. The production of accurate, well-laid documents aids business communication. You will develop skills in the use and manipulation of databases in order to present information for use in decision making. You will use your skills in the use of spreadsheets to help solve business problems.

This PDA will provide you with a vehicle to formalise your skills or as a CPD tool.

On completion of the PDA you may continue study towards another PDA or the full HNC Administration and Information Technology.

9 Glossary of terms

SCQF: This stands for the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework, which is a new way of speaking about qualifications and how they inter-relate. We use SCQF terminology 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: One HN credit is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points. This applies to all HN Units, irrespective of their level.

SCQF levels: The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HN Units will normally be at levels 6–9. Graded Units will be at level 7 and 8.

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

Graded Unit: Graded Units assess candidates' ability to integrate what they have learned while working towards the Units of the Group Award. Their purpose is to add value to the Group Award, making it more than the sum of its parts, and to encourage candidates to retain and adapt their skills and knowledge.

Dedicated Core Skill Unit: This is a Unit that is written to cover one or more particular Core Skills, eg HN Units in Information Technology or Communications.

Embedded Core Skills: This is where the development of a Core Skill is incorporated into the Unit and where the Unit assessment also covers the requirements of Core Skill assessment at a particular level.

Signposted Core Skills: This refers to the opportunities to develop a particular Core Skill at a specified level that lie outwith automatic certification.

Qualification Design Team: The QDT works in conjunction with a Qualification Manager/Development Manager to steer the development of the HNC/D from its inception/revision through to validation. The group is made up of key stakeholders representing the interests of centres, employers, universities and other relevant organisations.

Consortium-devised HNCs and HNDs are those developments or revisions undertaken by a group of centres in partnership with SQA.

Specialist single centre and specialist collaborative devised HNCs and HNDs are those developments or revisions led by a single centre or small group of centres who provide knowledge and skills in a specialist area. Like consortium-devised HNCs and HNDs, these developments or revisions will also be supported by SQA.

10 Appendices

Appendix 1 — Core Skills mapping

Appendix 2 — Mapping to National Occupational Standards

Appendix 3 — Proposed Assessment Strategy

Appendix 1: Core Skills mapping

Embedded Core Skills

Unit title	Unit code	Core Skill Certification
IT in Business — Word Processing and Presentation Applications	F84C 34	
IT in Business — Databases	F84X 34	
IT in Business — Spreadsheets	F84V 34	Using Number at SCQF level 5 Using Graphical Information at SCQF level 4 Critical Thinking at SCQF level 5

Opportunities to develop Core Skills within the PDA

Unit Number	Unit Title	Comms – Reading	Comms – Writing	Comms – Oral	Using Graphical Info	Using numbers	Using IT	Problem Solving Critical thinking	Problem Solving Planning & organising	Problem Solving Reviewing & Evaluating	Working with Others
F84C 34	IT in Business — Word Processing and Presentation Applications	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	
F84X 34	IT in Business — Databases	X	X				X	X	X		
F84V 34	IT in Business — Spreadsheets	X	X		X		X	X	X		

Appendix 2: Mapping to National Occupational Standards

	IT in Business — Databases — DE1N 34																		
	Outcome 1				Outcome 2							Outcome 3							
	Design and create a database structure to aid business decision making and problem solving.				Input and store data using a relational database							Use the database to manipulate and present information to aid decision-making.							
	Analyse a business problem and identify key information needs	Design a database structure using established database terminology	Define key fields and establish appropriate relationships	Create a database showing tables and relationships	Operation of hardware devices is efficient (cs)	Operation of the system is responsible and considerate to other users (cs)	Problems with IT are identified and corrected effectively (cs)	Use of operating systems is effective (cs)	Create and use forms for inputting, finding and editing of data	Demonstrate ability to sort information stored on more than one criterion	Editing tables – adding/moving/deleting fields and adding/editing/deleting records	Print hard copies of tables	Security and management of data is effective and efficient (Analyse business problems	Selection of appropriate data sources is effective (cs)	Apply an efficient and effective search strategy (cs)	Use database query function to create simple queries to aid decision-making (cs)	Present information in a clear manner to assist decision making (cs)	Propose possible solution to business problem based on search results
Unit 216 — Use Database Software																			
Create fields for entering data with the required field characteristics, such as name, type, size and format		x	x	x															
Modify field characteristics within a simple (eg single table, non relational) database while maintaining the integrity of existing data, such as name, type and size		x	x	x							x								
Use appropriate tools and techniques to format data that is text and numbers		x	x																

		IT in Business — Databases — DE1N 34																		
		Outcome 1				Outcome 2						Outcome 3								
		Design and create a database structure to aid business decision making and problem solving.				Input and store data using a relational database						Use the database to manipulate and present information to aid decision-making.								
		Analyse a business problem and identify key information needs	Design a database structure using established database terminology	Define key fields and establish appropriate relationships	Create a database showing tables and relationships	Operation of hardware devices is efficient (cs)	Operation of the system is responsible and considerate to other users (cs)	Problems with IT are identified and corrected effectively (cs)	Use of operating systems is effective (cs)	Create and use forms for inputting, finding and editing of data	Demonstrate ability to sort information stored on more than one criterion	Editing tables – adding/moving/deleting fields and adding/editing/deleting records	Print hard copies of tables	Security and management of data is effective and efficient (Analyse business problems	Selection of appropriate data sources is effective (cs)	Apply an efficient and effective search strategy (cs)	Use database query function to create simple queries to aid decision-making (cs)	Present information in a clear manner to assist decision making (cs)	Propose possible solution to business problem based on search results
Format reports from simple (eg single table, non relational) databases using appropriate tools and techniques for page layout, such as page size, page orientation, page numbering, headers and footers and margins																			x	
Use automated facilities for checking data and reports, such as spell checking and sorting data										x										
Check reports are formatted and laid out appropriately																			x	
Create and use multiple criteria queries to extract data														x	x	x	x			