

NextGen HN: unit specification

Marketing: An Introduction (SCQF level 7)

Unit code: J9FF 47

SCQF level: 7 (8 SCQF credit points)

This unit specification provides detailed information about the unit to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year. It is for lecturers and assessors, and contains all the mandatory information you need to deliver and assess the unit.

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Unit purpose

This unit provides learners with a knowledge and understanding of marketing and its importance in organisations. It introduces learners to the dynamic world of marketing, providing a solid foundation in key concepts, tools, and strategies used across an array of industries.

Learners explore how organisations:

- identify and respond to customer needs
- apply the marketing mix
- adapt to evolving market environments for products and services

The content is ideal for learners studying business, marketing or wider related fields. It is primarily intended for learners who want to build a career or advance their studies in marketing, business management, startup development, or self-employment. It is also suitable for those looking to sharpen their innovation and leadership skills to excel in crafting effective marketing strategies and techniques.

Entry to the unit is at your centre's discretion. Before they start the unit, we recommend learners have good communication skills. They could show this by having one or more of the following:

- Core Skill Communication at SCQF level 5
- other equivalent qualification

You can deliver this unit as part of a Higher National Certificate (HNC) or Higher National Diploma (HND). Learners can study this unit as a stand-alone unit when it is contextualised to a specific discipline.

Unit outcomes

Learners who complete this unit can:

1. explain the nature of marketing and its importance in organisations
2. explain marketing decisions for a product-based organisation and a service organisation

Evidence requirements

Outcome 1

Learners must produce evidence to show they can:

- identify the key characteristics of the marketing concept
- explain an organisation's micro and macro environment
- explain why market research and information is important to organisations
- provide two examples of how market research information is collected and used, including:
 - one quantitative research technique
 - one qualitative research technique
- explain the importance and the process of segmentation and targeting in marketing

Outcome 2

Learners must produce evidence to show they can explain the role of the marketing mix in a product-based organisation and a service organisation.

For a given situation, learners explain marketing theory in relation to:

- product mix decisions
- channels of distribution

- pricing methods
- the promotional mix
- the importance of people, process and physical evidence in the marketing of services
- how the marketing mix responds to changing market conditions

Knowledge and skills

Knowledge	Skills
Outcome 1 Learners should understand: • the marketing concept • the marketing environment • market research and information • segmentation and targeting	Outcome 1 Learners can: • use analytical skills to describe the key factors of the marketing concept, including: ○ customer focused ○ a total company effort ○ long-term profitability • explain key macro and micro environmental factors that influence marketing decisions • use research skills to gather and interpret market data to support decision making • provide examples of quantitative and qualitative research techniques • use critical thinking and decision-making skills to: ○ segment the market ○ identify how best to target the most beneficial group of consumers

Knowledge	Skills
Outcome 2 Learners should understand: • the marketing mix for products • the marketing mix for services • the impact changing market conditions have on marketing decisions	Outcome 2 Learners can: • explain how to adapt the marketing mix for products and services in response to changing market conditions • explain key support systems and processes available to businesses, such as funding systems or networks • explain the importance of people and the physical environment of the organisation • use problem-solving skills to: ○ develop solutions to complex issues in changing market conditions ○ justify adapting an organisation's marketing mix

Meta-skills

You must give learners opportunities to develop their meta-skills throughout this unit. We have suggested how to incorporate the most relevant ones into the unit content, but you may find other opportunities.

Self-management

This includes focusing, integrity, adapting and initiative. The most relevant are:

- focusing:
 - analysing data, identifying and filtering out non-essential information
 - interpreting marketing data from a range of sources and evaluating case studies to address challenges and opportunities
 - linking theory to practice reinforcing analytic and strategic thinking in their assessments
 - managing time effectively and maintaining concentration
 - planning and managing workload to meet assessment deadlines and setting clear learning goals aligned to unit outcomes
 - applying marketing theory to real-life scenarios
 - sustaining focus and attention during extended periods of research and reflection
 - paying close attention to topics such as segmentation, targeting and positioning.
- integrity:
 - selecting appropriate research methods to gather valid marketing insights
 - authenticating data and facts while critically evaluating the credibility of sources
 - applying ethical standards when selecting and referencing data

- adapting:
 - analysing how to adapt the marketing mix in response to changing market conditions and exploring how the four Ps (product, price, place and promotion) evolve in response to shifts in consumer behaviour, technological advancement and competitive pressures
 - being resilient and open to change
 - developing the ability to embrace change (such as a shift in consumer trends or the emergence of new platforms) and adapting strategies accordingly
- initiative:
 - independently researching and analysing data and research sources
 - taking ownership of their learning by sourcing relevant marketing data from academic, industry and digital platforms
 - identifying credible sources, interpreting findings and applying insights to support marketing decisions and assessment
 - becoming self-directed learners while building problem-solving skills
 - keeping up to date with current marketing trends and innovations in a fast-changing and dynamic field

Social intelligence

This includes communicating, feeling, collaborating and leading. The most relevant are:

- communicating:
 - receiving and conveying a wide range of information
 - finding and using diverse sources of marketing information, including academic literature, industry reports, and real-world case studies
 - absorbing complex ideas, combining information from multiple perspectives and expressing findings clearly and coherently in writing and verbally
 - investigating complex marketing challenges by researching issues and filtering out the relevant information

- identifying and extracting the most relevant insights from large volumes of qualitative and quantitative data will enable learners to reach concise, clear and accurate data aligned with the research objectives.
 - conveying information to meet audience needs by adapting communication style, tone and level of detail to suit the knowledge, expectations and interests of different audiences (for example academic, professional or clients) ensuring the intended message is effectively received
 - using appropriate marketing terminology and theoretical concepts (such as segmentation, targeting, positioning and the marketing mix) to strengthen clarity, credibility and professionalism in academic and workplace communications
- feeling:
 - exploring segmentation and customer behaviour to help understand audience needs
 - examining how customer groups respond to products, service and promotional strategies
 - interpreting customer feedback and market signals with feeling and emotional intelligence and awareness.
 - assessing qualitative data and identifying customer responses that help to develop marketing designs and strategies that engage target audiences
 - appreciating cultural and social influences on consumer behaviour, and developing sensitivity to diverse perspectives through the study of demographics, lifestyle and cultural influences

Innovation

This includes curiosity, creativity, sense-making and critical thinking. The most relevant are:

- curiosity:
 - investigating current marketing campaigns and exploring how businesses apply marketing strategies

- examining real-world marketing strategies and learning how to put theory into practice
- exploring ideas and presenting solutions
- investigating innovations, such as AI driven analytics and sustainability-focused branding
- creativity:
 - exploring marketing strategies and campaign ideas and presenting solutions
 - generating original and creative ideas based on customer needs and marketing trends
 - presenting ideas clearly and confidently
- sense-making:
 - interpreting complex marketing information and linking it to key concepts
 - analysing data from market research, customer feedback and competitor analysis and connecting it to frameworks like segmentation, targeting and positioning
 - connecting multiple sources of information and integrating qualitative and quantitative data to make sense of consumer behaviour and market dynamics
- critical thinking:
 - analysing and evaluating complex information
 - critically assessing marketing strategies, questioning assumptions and identifying strengths, weaknesses and potential improvements
 - making logical connections and reasoned judgements through discussion, debate and drawing conclusions based on evidence
 - reviewing and evaluating written information

Literacies

This unit provides opportunities to develop the following literacies

Numeracy

Learners develop numeracy skills by:

- working with facts and statistics related to data collected for quantitative research. They:
 - interpret numerical data from market research
 - analyse trends, calculate percentages and draw conclusions from statistical evidence
- applying numerical reasoning to marketing decisions. They:
 - use data to help understand how numbers underpin strategic choices in real-life marketing contexts
- evaluating numerical data in context, such as a case study. They:
 - assess how numerical insights influence decisions about product development, promotional effectiveness and customer targeting

Communication

Learners develop communication skills by:

- receiving and conveying a wide range of information. They:
 - engage with marketing theory, customer insights and business case studies and communicate understanding through structured assessment and discussion

- researching complex issues and filtering out the relevant information. They:
 - investigate marketing problems, identify key facts and present findings clearly and concisely
- conveying information in different ways to meet the needs of the intended audience. They:
 - produce reports, create promotional content or present ideas with a style and register appropriate for professional audiences
- understanding and using marketing terminology accurately and effectively

Digital

Learners develop digital skills and computer literacy by:

- using software to:
 - produce assessments
 - structure, present and communicate ideas professionally
- using internet sources to research complex information
- using digital marketing concepts and platforms. They:
 - use digital channels for promotion and customer engagement to help develop understanding of how technologies shape current marketing strategies
- using digital content responsibly and ethically. They:
 - evaluate the credibility of online sources and citing digital materials
 - foster digital citizenship and academic integrity

Learning for Sustainability

Throughout this unit, you should encourage learners to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of sustainability.

This includes:

- a general understanding of social, economic and environmental sustainability
- a general understanding of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- a deeper understanding of subject-specific sustainability
- the confidence to apply the skills, knowledge, understanding and values they develop in the next stage of their life

Why sustainability matters in marketing

For the marketing industry, sustainability is more than a trend — it is an imperative. Ethical marketing builds trust, drives long-term brand loyalty and positions organisations as responsible leaders in their industries while influencing consumer behaviour.

Aligning marketing strategies to UN SDGs

Successful marketers help brands respond to global challenges. Learners explore how marketing strategies can contribute to the following UN SDGs.

Goal 5: gender equality

Learners explore inclusive marketing practices, including diverse representation, gender-neutral messaging, and community initiatives empowering all genders. These practices drive organisations to create inclusive products and service mixes, appealing to diverse audiences and boosting market competitiveness.

Goal 8: decent work and economic growth

Marketing can spotlight ethical employment practices and promote brands that support fair wages, safe working conditions and economic opportunity for organisations which they engage with.

Goal 12: responsible consumption and production

Learners explore campaigns promoting sustainable consumer behaviour and waste reduction, enhancing brand reputation. These efforts influence organisations to develop eco-friendly products and services, aligning their product and service mix with sustainable practices to meet consumer demand and strengthen market position.

Delivery of unit

This is an introductory unit that learners can use to progress to more specialised marketing units. You can deliver it:

- as part of business-orientated courses where marketing is relevant
- as a stand-alone unit when it is contextualised in other subject areas

The notional time for delivery and assessment is 40 hours. The amount of time you allocate to each outcome is at your discretion.

Additional guidance

The guidance in this section is not mandatory.

Content and context for this unit

This unit is designed to:

- provide learners with a basic understanding of the nature of marketing and its importance in organisations
- develop learners' understanding of the marketing mix and how it is used as a basis for making marketing decisions in the context of both products and services

You should:

- make learners aware of the rapid growth and ongoing development of digital marketing and the impact that this is having on, for example, marketing communication, and promotion
- emphasise that digital techniques need to be integrated with traditional marketing communication techniques

Approaches to delivery

Outcome 1

This is an introduction to the concept of marketing. Learners should be able to:

- understand and explain the marketing concept and why it is so important to the success and long-term survival of organisations
- explain the key factors that have an impact on markets and influence customers, and why these are important in marketing

We recommend you cover:

- the marketing environment:
 - the key factors influencing the macroenvironment and microenvironment
- market research and information:
 - the importance of market research and market information
 - the different types of data and research and their limitations, for example primary and secondary data, quantitative and qualitative research
 - the most common methods of gathering primary and secondary data
- segmentation and targeting:
 - the concept of market segmentation
 - the main methods used to segment markets, including demographic and behavioural aspects (these touch on buyer behaviour, which is useful for learners' overall understanding of marketing — you do not need to cover buyer behaviour in depth)
 - the importance of targeting and the role of segmentation

Outcome 2

This builds on outcome 1 by exploring the marketing mix and its role as a process in making marketing decisions for organisations.

We recommend you focus on identifying the difference between products and services and how these differences have led to the marketing mix being adapted, for example extending four Ps to seven Ps.

Learners should show they understand:

- how to apply the marketing mix to both products and services
- the importance of a well-blended marketing mix

Products

- Product — product range, branding, packaging, design and quality and features and benefits
- Price — premium, penetration, skimming and economy pricing
- Promotion — advertising, PR, sales promotion, direct marketing, personal selling
- Place — distribution channels, intermediaries, retailers, wholesalers, agents

Services

- Process — the transaction of service
- People — the human aspect
- Physical environment — the tangible evidence of service

Learners need to show how to adapt marketing mix decisions to meet changing market conditions.

You can encourage learners to collect examples of relevant marketing information from the media to use as a stimulus for class discussions.

Approaches to assessment

You can assess the outcomes separately using a variety of ways, for example by a set of structured questions based on a case study or other stimulus material.

Or you can assess outcome 1 and outcome 2 together, for example under open-book conditions, based on a case study, project or other stimulus material.

You can design the assessment to encourage learners to relate marketing theory to relevant real-world examples.

Equality and inclusion

This unit is designed to be as fair and as accessible as possible with no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment.

You must consider the needs of individual learners when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled learners and those with additional support needs is available on the [assessment arrangements web page](#).

Information for learners

Marketing: An Introduction (SCQF level 7)

This information explains:

- what the unit is about
- what you should know or be able to do before you start
- what you need to do during the unit
- opportunities for further learning and employment

Unit information

This unit provides you with knowledge and understanding of marketing and how it is used in organisations. It explains the influence of the external environment and the importance of market research when making marketing decisions.

The unit also introduces the concept of segmentation and target marketing and develops your understanding of the marketing mix in the context of both products and services.

Before you start the unit, we recommend you have good communication skills. You could show this by having one or more of the following:

- Core Skill Communication at SCQF level 5
- other equivalent qualification

Throughout the unit, you are encouraged to relate marketing theory to relevant real-world examples.

Once you complete the unit you can:

- explain the nature of marketing and its importance in organisations
- explain marketing decisions for a product-based organisation and a service organisation

You can be assessed in a variety of ways, for example by:

- a separate assessment for each outcome, such as a set of structured questions based on a case study or other stimulus material
- an open-book assessment that combines outcomes 1 and 2 together and is based on a case study, project or other stimulus material

It is an introductory unit that you can use to progress to more specialised marketing units. You can study the unit:

- as part of business-orientated courses where marketing is relevant
- as a stand-alone unit contextualised to other subject areas

The content is ideal if you are studying business, marketing or wider related fields.

Meta-skills

Throughout this unit, you develop meta-skills that are useful for the marketing sector.

Meta-skills are transferable behaviours and abilities that help you adapt and succeed in life, study and work. There are three categories of meta-skills: self-management, social intelligence and innovation.

Self-management

This meta-skill includes focusing, integrity, adapting, and initiative. You:

- analyse and filter marketing data
- apply strategic thinking to real-world scenarios like segmentation and targeting
- manage your time and goals to meet deadlines
- select reliable research methods, authenticate data and uphold ethical standards
- explore how to adapt the marketing mix (product, price, place, promotion) to shifting consumer behaviours and market trends
- develop resilience and the ability to embrace change (such as a shift in consumer trends or the emergence of new platforms) and adapt strategies accordingly

- independently research credible sources, interpret findings, and keep up to date with current marketing trends
- become self-directed learners while building problem-solving skills

Social intelligence

This meta-skill includes communicating, feeling, collaborating, and leading. You:

- find and use diverse sources of marketing information
- combine complex ideas, and communicate findings clearly in writing and verbally
- adapt tone and detail to suit academic, professional, or client audiences while using precise marketing terminology like segmentation and targeting
- explore customer behaviour and segmentation, interpreting feedback with emotional intelligence to design effective marketing strategies
- develop sensitivity to cultural and social influences on consumer behaviour, enhancing your ability to connect with diverse audiences

Innovation

This meta-skill includes curiosity, creativity, sense-making, and critical thinking. You:

- investigate real-world marketing sectors, exploring how strategies like AI-driven analytics and sustainability-focused branding translate theory into practice
- analyse complex data from market research and customer feedback, connect it to concepts like segmentation and targeting to understand consumer behaviour
- critically evaluate marketing strategies, question assumptions and identify areas for improvement

Learning for Sustainability

Throughout this unit, you develop skills, knowledge and understanding of sustainability.

You learn about social, economic and environmental sustainability principles and how they relate to the marketing sector. You also develop an understanding of the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#).

Administrative information

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Superclass: BA

History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date

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