Higher National Unit Specification

General information

Unit title: Business Fundamentals with Emerging Technologies (SCQF level 7)

Unit code: J56C 34

Superclass:	AK
Publication date:	January 2021
Source:	Scottish Qualifications Authority
Version:	03, April 2024

Unit purpose

This unit is designed to emphasise the vital impact that change in internal and external business environments have on the success or failure of business organisations and the overwhelming driving force that current and emerging technologies are playing in driving this. Business organisations that fail to evolve and adapt their models to the changing environment, be it technology, or other internal and external factors will not succeed. This unit is designed therefore to endow learners with the knowledge, skills, and critical and entrepreneurial thinking to be able to visualise and appraise changes and opportunities in the business environment to allow theirs and other business organisations to survive and thrive.

Outcomes

On successful completion of the unit the learner will be able to:

1   Explain contemporary factors influencing the external business environment.
2   Explain contemporary factors affecting the internal business environment.
3   Discuss the impact of current technology on business operations.

Credit points and level

2 Higher National Unit credits at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 7: (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7)

Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

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Recommended entry to the unit

Access to this unit is at the discretion of the centre but it would be beneficial if the learner had competence in communications, which could be demonstrated by the possession of *Communication* Core Skill at SCQF level 5

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the support notes for this unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this unit.

Context for delivery

If this unit is delivered as part of a group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard. A list of existing ASPs is available to download from SQA's website **(http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46233.2769.html)**.

Equality and inclusion

This unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should 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**.

Higher National Unit Specification: Statement of standards

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Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

Where evidence for outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Learners should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Explain contemporary factors influencing the external business environment.

Knowledge and/or skills

- Sectors of the economy
- Legal entities of organisations
- Stakeholders
- Globalisation
- Import and export markets
- Emerging technology-based business models

Outcome 2

Explain contemporary factors affecting the internal business environment.

Knowledge and/or skills

- Demographic cohorts
- Workforce diversity
- Artificial intelligence
- Currently emerging technology

Outcome 3

Discuss the impact of current technology on business operations.

Knowledge and/or skills

- Big data
- Ethics
- Legislation
- Cyber security
- Business resilience

Higher National Unit Specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Evidence requirements for this unit

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills across all outcomes by showing that they can:

Outcome 1

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

♦ Identify and describe the different sectors of the UK Economy.
♦ Outline the legal requirements of different types of business structures
♦ Define the term stakeholders, explain the different stakeholders that a business may have and discuss the impact these stakeholders may have on business operations.
♦ Explain the concept of globalism and identify the potential opportunities and threats that this operating environment yields.
♦ Demonstrate a broad understanding of UK's import and export markets, and discuss the considerations that businesses must make to successfully trade outwith the UK.
♦ Identify and describe emerging technology-based business models.

Assessment should take place under open-book conditions. See *Guidance on approaches to assessment for this unit* for further guidance.

Outcome 2

♦ Identify the different demographic cohorts and explain their characteristics in the context of managing the internal organisation.
♦ Explain the term workforce diversity and discuss the benefits and challenges it brings to the contemporary organisation — including competitive advantage.
♦ Define artificial intelligence and explain how AI is currently impacting on the internal operating environment.
♦ Compare the characteristics of three recent or emerging technology-based business models.

Assessment should take place under open-book conditions. See *Guidance on approaches to assessment for this unit* for further guidance.

Higher National Unit Specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 3

♦ Define the term big data and explain the benefits of using big data for an organisation.
♦ Identify and explain a range of ethical issues that can arise from the use of digital technology.
♦ Identify the legislation that applies to the data that an organisation will gather through digital technology and explain the steps an organisation needs to process data in accordance with this.
♦ Define cyber security and explain three key aspects that an organisation should consider in order to maintain business systems and protect data.
♦ Explain why it is important to have a proactive approach to business resilience including business continuity planning.

Assessment should take place under open-book conditions. See *Guidance on approaches to assessment for this unit* for further guidance.

Higher National Unit Support Notes

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Unit support notes are offered as guidance and are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 80 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this unit

This unit is designed to provide learners with a basic understanding of the nature of the contemporary business environment and its impact on the organisation. It is also developed to introduce learners to emerging trends in technology and their impact on the internal and external business environment.

This unit is also designed to develop an understanding of a rapidly changing operating environment and introduces learners to internal and external factors such as demographic cohorts, workplace diversity and emerging technological business models. There is a significant emphasis placed on the implications of these factors on operational management.

Learners must be made aware of the rapidly changing environment and it is imperative that delivery materials are maintained to ensure that they remain current and relevant to the contemporary issues this unit seeks to address. This is an introductory unit which can be used by learners who may wish to progress to more specialised business units. It is designed for delivery into business orientated courses where strategic and operational management has particular significance. However, it could be delivered as an introductory unit for other unrelated subject areas.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

The delivery of this unit should provide the learner with an overview and broad understanding of: the internal organisation; the immediate and wider UK operating environment; global trade opportunities and barriers; and of new and emergent technological business models and applications. It is vital that delivery materials are maintained to ensure they capture the rapidly evolving nature of the contemporary business environment.

Outcome 1

This outcome should help learners develop a broad overview of the trading environment that UK business must work within. Learners should get a sense of the fundamental factors of the UK marketplace and be able to contextualise this in relation to the global marketplace. The use of recent and current industry and news articles will assist in keeping this outcome current and will also encourage learners to become familiar with finding good sources of business data.

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Outcome 2

Delivery of this outcome should capture the dynamic nature of the internal working
environment and provide a contrast to the external focus of Outcome 1. Learners should be
able to identify their own demographic cohort and identify the types of people who fall into
the other categories. Diversification should be an exciting area and the use of current internet
resources will help bring this to life. This outcome provides valuable opportunities for group
discussion and the sharing of experiences.

Outcome 3

This outcome will develop understanding of the need and reliance by organisations on data
to inform business activity. There will discussion around management of data and its use
leading to exploring the ethical and security aspects of this. The use of case studies will be
really helpful here to bring this to life. Business resilience has become extremely important
and again case studies will be useful here too. Delivery of the third outcome must cover all
aspects of the evidence requirements although learners will focus mainly on one of the five
evidence requirements within their final submission.

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are
suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to
ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of
assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to
work or further and higher education.

It is suggested that **Outcome 1** is assessed by means of an open-book essay-style
submission. Learners will be expected to discuss all of the areas identified within the
evidence requirements, although assessors should adopt approach which accepts an
adequate response level, rather than one that covers the entire outcome in great detail.
Assessment could be undertaken under open or controlled conditions. If the latter approach
is adopted this should remain open-book and allow for four hours of classroom time.

Outcome 2 and **Outcome 3** lend themselves to a project-based approach. Learners could
demonstrate their knowledge of all evidence requirements within Outcome 2 and briefly
introduce all elements of Outcome 3. The remainder of the submission could be of the
learner's choice and focus on one of the five evidence requirements within Outcome 3.

This final submission's format should be one that is appropriate to the business environment
but ideally chosen by the learner. Submissions could take the form of a presentation, pre=-
recorded video, e-portfolio, business report, website, blog or webinar. It is expected and
acceptable for learners to seek guidance and reassurance throughout the duration of the
task.

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Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the evidence requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at **www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment**.

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Communication* and *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6 in this unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components. Although these Core Skills are not formally assessed, learners will be expected to express opinions during class discussion and formulate responses to questions. They may also be required to complete a written assessment.

History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date
03	New Assessment Support Pack now available on the secure site	08/04/24
02	Further clarity around the Guidance to Outcome 3.	23/05/22

General information for learners

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

Business Fundamentals is designed to introduce you to the contemporary business environment that organisations must embrace to be successful. It explains the immediate and wider dynamics of the marketplace and looks at the influence technology is having on the way business is conducted.

Throughout this unit you will be introduced to the established and emerging aspects of the business environment. You will learn about the different sectors of our UK economy, and the individuals and groups who influence and shape the marketplace (stakeholders). You will learn about how the business world is becoming increasingly connected (globalisation) and discuss the role technology is playing in this rapidly changing environment.

You will also learn about how we as employees, consumers and partners are changing over the decades (demographic cohorts) and how this affects the way we manage our business. Finally, you will have the chance to gain an overview of how technology is impacting the way we do business and consider the legal, ethical and security implications of using new technology.

You will submit two assessments for this unit, both of which will give you the opportunity to show your understanding of the topics mentioned above. It is likely your first submission will be in an essay format. The second submission will allow you to choose a business appropriate presentation style. You will be given guidance on your choices to help you be successful. You will not be asked to complete either submission under closed-book assessment conditions, although your academic conduct must reflect your centre's guidelines at all times.