

Next Generation Higher National Unit Specification

Specialist Farming Management (SCQF level 8)

Unit code: J7B4 48
SCQF level: 8 (8 SCQF credit points)
Valid from: session 2023–24

Prototype unit specification for use in pilot delivery only (version 1.0) September 2023

This unit specification provides detailed information about the unit to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year.

This unit specification is for teachers and lecturers and contains all the mandatory information required to deliver and assess the unit.

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Unit purpose

This unit gives learners an overview of the knowledge and skills needed to manage specialist farming enterprises not covered in the Crop Management Systems and/or Livestock Management Systems units. Learners have the opportunity to investigate the management of specialist farming systems relevant to their geographical area.

This is an optional unit in the Higher National Diploma (HND) in Agriculture, and can also be taken on a stand-alone basis.

Before they start the unit, learners should have completed the Specialist Farming Systems unit at SCQF level 7, or have experience in a range of specialist systems at a similar level.

If learners study the unit as part of HND Agriculture, they may be able to progress to Bachelor of Science (BSc) qualifications in agriculture, rural business management, agricultural technology or related areas. Alternatively, they may want to go directly into employment in an agricultural business at a junior management or supervisory level.

Unit outcomes

Learners who complete this unit can examine the differences in management between two similar specialist farming systems

Evidence requirements

Learners must provide the following evidence.

Outcome 1

Compare two (or more) similar farming enterprises that are managed in different ways. For example, they could compare a soft fruit farm using polytunnels with one using glasshouses or growing outdoors, or a farm with milking cows with a farm with milking goats.

Their comparison should include:

- ◆ comparison of management
- ◆ Strengths — Weaknesses — Opportunities — Threats (SWOT) analysis
- ◆ recommendations of what best practices can be taken from each business

Knowledge and skills

The following table shows the knowledge and skills covered by the unit outcome:

Knowledge	Skills
Learners should understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ how similar enterprises can be managed differently to achieve a similar outcome	Learners can: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ identify best practice and use that to improve enterprise performance

Meta-skills

The structure of the unit encourages you to apply a holistic approach to content delivery and assessment, in line with the integrated nature of agriculture, and for learners to develop meta-skills intrinsically.

Self-management

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ focusing: collecting the correct information on the two farm management systems by filtering out non-essential material; concentrating on finding the right information to identify differences

Social intelligence

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ communicating: building communication skills — particularly an ability to listen — to give and receive accurate information

Innovation

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ curiosity: improving information sourcing and questioning to enhance understanding
- ◆ sense-making: demonstrating and developing synthesising and logical thinking skills when analysing information to problem solve
- ◆ critical thinking: approaching the farming system in all its complexity; considering the environment, livestock and/or crops, and associated mechanisation

Literacies

Numeracy

Learners develop numeracy skills by interpreting performance figures, both technical and financial.

Communication

Learners develop communication skills by gathering information for all learning outcomes and communicating their findings through assessments.

Digital

Learners develop digital skills and computer literacy by producing assessment evidence, and engaging with learning materials and course content.

Delivery of unit

This unit is part of the HND Agriculture.

As you deliver the unit, you should arrange visits to livestock and arable enterprises to support the delivery. There are opportunities to integrate delivery and/or assessment with the Professional Development and Principles of Agri Business Management units. You may be able to cover research for more than one outcome in more than one unit during one well-organised farm visit, if practicable.

The notional design length for the unit is 40 hours. However, the amount of time you allocate to each outcome is at your discretion.

Additional guidance

The guidance in this section is not mandatory.

Approaches to delivery

During the unit, learners should have the opportunity to visit four specialist farming enterprises, of which:

- ◆ two should be similar livestock enterprises with different management. These could involve, for example:
 - farmed deer versus wild deer
 - milking goats versus milking cows and/or sheep
- ◆ two should be similar arable enterprises with different management. These could involve, for example:
 - pick-your-own soft fruit versus harvested soft fruit
 - conventional carrots on a supermarket contract versus organic carrots to be sold through a farm shop

Farm visits should provide learners with enough information to:

- ◆ compare the management of the pairs of enterprises
- ◆ carry out a SWOT analysis
- ◆ advise on the best practices of each business

Approaches to assessment

Learners can produce evidence in a variety of ways, including a:

- ◆ small group presentation, ideally presented back to the farmers whose enterprises they visited
- ◆ short written report comparing the two systems
- ◆ poster exhibition
- ◆ technical note
- ◆ podcast
- ◆ Wiki
- ◆ short video

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 should take into account the needs of individual learners when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs is available on the assessment arrangements web page:

www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Information for learners

Managing Specialist Farming Enterprises (SCQF level 8)

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

The unit gives you the knowledge and skills you need to examine the differences in management between two similar specialist farming systems.

The unit complements learning from the Crop Production Management and Livestock Management Systems units in the Higher National Diploma (HND) in Agriculture course.

Before you start the unit, you should have completed Specialist Farming Systems at SCQF level 7, or have experience in a range of specialist systems at a similar level.

Farms can vary hugely due to many factors, including land type, climate, available resources and access to markets. You visit farming enterprises to compare how two (or more) farms can be producing the same (or very similar) end product, but using different management systems. In many cases, farmers can learn from one another, as practices on different farms may be transferable. You consider what those transferable benefits are and how they could be applied elsewhere.

Throughout the unit, you develop meta-skills covering self-management, social intelligence and innovation.

On completion of this unit, you may wish to progress to further study onto BSc qualifications in agriculture, rural business management, agricultural technology or related areas, or go straight into employment on a farm at a junior management or supervisory level.

Administrative information

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Superclass: SA

History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date

Note: please check [SQA's website](#) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this document.