

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

General information

Unit title: IT in Business: Digital Design and Publishing

Unit code: JJBR 47

Superclass: KH

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Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to develop the skills and knowledge involved in planning and producing a well-designed publication suitable for a business or administrative purpose combining text and graphics. Publications may be intended for digital or print distribution. The Unit would be suitable for candidates wishing to develop greater competence in design, layout and production.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

1. Evaluate design features for digital publications.
2. Plan a well-designed publication suitable for a business or administrative purpose.
3. Produce a well-designed publication suitable for a business or administrative purpose.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, it would be beneficial if the candidate has knowledge of the text formatting, styles, tables and pictures features of a word processing package as covered in the Unit *IT in Business: Word Processing and Presentation Applications* (HP6G 47) or equivalent, or relevant work experience.

Credit points and level

1 Qualifications Scotland Credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

*SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from National 1 to Doctorates.

Core Skills

The achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following component of the Core Skill Problem Solving:

- Planning and Organising at SCQF Level 5
- Critical Thinking at SCQF Level 5
- There are also further opportunities to develop the Core Skills components *Accessing Information* at SCQF Level 5, *Providing/Creating Information* at SCQF

Level 5, *Using Digital Technology* at SCQF level 5 and *Written Communication (Writing)* at SCQF Level 5. These are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit specification.

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.

Assessment

Evidence for this Unit should be generated through assessment undertaken in open-book conditions. In Outcome 1 candidates could use examples from real workplace publications or be given publications produced by organisations for a specific purpose, i.e. tourist information leaflets; public service information. It is recommended that Outcomes 2 and 3 are assessed together. Candidates should be presented with a short case study and design specification. Planning documentation and production of the publication can be presented electronically or in hard copy format.

SQA Advanced Unit Specification: statement of standards

Unit title: IT in Business: Digital Design and Publishing

The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or Skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

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. Candidates 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

Evaluate a range of design features.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- layout
- graphics
- colour
- typestyle and size for readability
- balance with attention to white space
- contrast for clarity
- accessibility

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- identify and describe a range of design features used in professional publications
- evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of these design features

- explain improvements that could be made to the design features of two publications

Assessment Guidelines

Assessment should be undertaken in open-book conditions.

This Outcome could be assessed using two publications. These can be in digital or print format, produced for one or more organisations, to a related theme. The evidence must cover the identification, description, evaluation and explanation of improvements for all areas covered in the Knowledge and/or Skills section.

Evidence may be presented in an appropriate format, including a written report, presentation, podcast, vlog, blog or other digital media.

There may be opportunities to assess this Outcome using a VLE, collaborative digital tools or digital copies where appropriate.

Outcome 2

Plan a well-designed publication suitable for a business or administrative purpose

Knowledge and/or Skills

- create a draft layout
- organise work, resources and use time effectively to meet deadlines
- select and create text
- select and create graphical content such as logos, icons, infographics
- acknowledge data sources
- consider balanced content with appropriate use of white space
- show awareness of visual design and effective communication through:
 - typestyles
 - colour
 - readability

- accessibility
- consistency
- copyright

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- create a draft layout for the publication
- annotate the draft to show clearly the placement of content
- select and create text and graphical content acknowledging data sources
- apply consistent balanced layout and styles with consideration to readability
- consider copyright requirements
- consider accessibility features
- use time effectively to meet deadlines

Assessment Guidelines

Assessment should be undertaken in open-book conditions.

Outcomes 2 and 3 may be assessed together. The plan created in Outcome 2 would be used in Outcome 3 to produce the final publication. It is recommended that the plan is reviewed by the assessor before the candidate starts work on producing the publication in Outcome 3.

The candidate should be given a scenario with a design brief, including details of where files are stored and what files must be created. It is envisaged that the brief will be minimal and that the candidate is required to produce a draft layout for the publication that fully utilises the space and incorporates the appropriate complexity of construction and design. Evidence may be presented in any appropriate format,

including written documentation, planning templates, digital planning files, annotated layouts, or recorded explanations.

Candidates may use a range of digital tools, including AI-assisted technologies, to support the creation and adaptation of graphical and textual content.

There may be opportunities to assess this Outcome using a VLE, collaborative digital tools or digital copies where appropriate.

Outcome 3

Produce a well-designed publication suitable for a business or administrative purpose.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- use appropriate design and layout tools
- incorporate text and graphical content effectively
- apply column layout
- format text effectively for readability
- apply typestyles to ensure hierarchy and consistency
- apply design principals
- use colour appropriately
- considering accessibility
- comply with copyright legislation

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by creating a publication that is suitable for business or administrative purposes by showing that they can:

- use appropriate design and layout tools to produce a publication

- incorporate a range of text and graphical content, such as logos, icons, infographics
- apply layout techniques such as sections or columns to organise content effectively
- format and structure text appropriately, ensuring readability, clear hierarchy and accessibility
- apply design principles (colour, contrast, balance and white space) to communicate clearly and creatively
- demonstrate consistency across the publication
- comply with copyright legislation

Assessment Guidelines

Assessment should be undertaken in open-book conditions.

Outcomes 2 and 3 may be assessed together. The candidate would be given a further publication brief based on the scenario used in Outcome 2, including details of how the final publication is to be produced and on which output media.

There may be opportunities to assess this Outcome using a VLE, collaborative digital tools or digital copies where appropriate.

Qualifications Scotland Advanced Unit support notes

Unit title: IT in Business: Digital Design and Publishing

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit may form part of a group award or be completed as a free-standing Unit.

The Unit is designed to develop skills and knowledge involved in the design and production of a well-designed publication to the standard required in the workplace to produce such things as in-house newsletters, adverts, flyers, brochures or general promotional material.

The candidate can be introduced to the advantages of using publication design elements for ease of layout and design. The Unit is not intended to deliver skills and knowledge required for specialist design or publishing work but is aimed at candidates who wish to acquire a range of skills appropriate to general, multi-tasking office administration. Looking at job specifications for Administrators with publishing skills would allow candidates to see what is required in this vocational area.

It is assumed that tutors will emphasise current legal and regulatory requirements affecting publications. These requirements have already been covered in IT in Business: Word Processing and Presentation Applications and Office Administration Units. However, if this Unit is being delivered on a stand-alone basis, tutors should raise awareness of the legal and regulatory requirements — disability legislation (text sizes, readability, etc), data protection and copyright.

This Unit should encourage realistic workplace practices and work standards, using industry standard software.

Outcome 1

Candidates will evaluate two publications with a particular focus on the design features laid out in the Knowledge and/or Skills section in Outcome 1.

Outcome 2

Candidates will plan a well-designed publication suitable for a business or administrative purpose. Using a design brief based on a short scenario, eg administrative support to prepare in-house newsletters, adverts, flyers, brochures or general promotional material. The evidence for this Outcome may comprise a rough sketch showing placement of content and ideas for design features to be used. The final plan should include publication design elements, e.g. placements of text and graphics, such as logos, icons, infographics, layout guides and type styles.

Candidates should source text and graphical content. The logos, icons and infographics may be created using appropriate software tools and incorporated into the final publication in Outcome 3.

Outcome 3

Using the design brief and scenario in Outcome 2 the candidate will then produce the publication using design elements of appropriate software. They should proofread work carefully during the preparation stage, i.e. reviewing content and producing the final publication.

Candidates should be able to use appropriate design and layout tools to ensure consistency across the publication including the features mentioned in Outcome 3 Knowledge and/or Skills section.

Throughout the preparation of practical tasks, the candidate should take account of design features evaluated in Outcome 1 and apply these to the publication and should be encouraged to use colour appropriately, considering accessibility such as readable font choices and colour contrast.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

Where this Unit is delivered within an HN Group Award, opportunities may be taken to link with other Units within the Group Award and a holistic approach adopted for both delivery and assessment.

Outcome 1

Candidates could be provided with two publications, which offer a contrast of different design features, e.g. a comparison between a well-designed and poorly designed publication. The publications should provide sufficient basis for an evaluation of specified design features outlined in the Knowledge and/or Skills section for Outcome 1. The features to evaluate could be contained across both publications. Candidates should explain how effectively and appropriately features have been used and comment on their impact on the publications.

During the delivery of the Unit candidates could be encouraged to gather publications, e.g. promotional materials for specific services and used to support discussion, analysis of design features, and the provision of feedback.

Evidence may be presented in an appropriate format, including a written report, presentation, podcast, vlog, blog or other digital media.

Outcome 2

The publication should be based on a themed scenario, which will require candidates to produce work to a minimal design brief. The student can be provided with some content. Candidates are also required to research relevant content for inclusion and create a logo, icon, and/or infographic. Candidates should be expected to use their own judgement and ideas and apply their knowledge and understanding of the application features and good design techniques.

Likely scenarios may include:

- a charity fundraising campaign publication
- a college freshers guide

- a promotional booklet
- an in-house publication, e.g. staff newsletter or digital bulleting
- a programme for a cultural event or festival

During the planning and preparation stage, candidates should be expected to complete the task without undue assistance and be encouraged to use their own judgement and ideas, seek solutions and work out uncertainties for themselves.

The task should be realistic and appropriate to the work that candidates undertaking a course in Administration and Information Technology might be expected to carry out. The level of planning should be realistic and involve only a very basic outline of ideas of how the work will be tackled or organised. Plans for design should not be detailed but may be confined to a sketch of ideas for pages, text formatting and headings etc. Use of software to prepare grid for placement of content could be explored.

Candidates may use AI-assisted tools to support the creation of graphical and textual content where appropriate. Centres should encourage the responsible use of this, and candidates should ensure compliance with copyright, accessibility and ethical standards.

Throughout the Unit candidates should be given realistic deadlines for the completion of tasks.

Outcome 3

Candidates will be following a publication brief regarding the final output. They are using the content they prepared in Outcome 2 to produce the final publication. The end product does not need to be exactly the same as the draft plan.

Candidates should apply their knowledge of the publication design elements available within the software being used. The publication should communicate key messages using appropriate balance of visual and textual content.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

The achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following component of Problem Solving:

- *Planning and Organising* at SCQF level 5
- *Critical Thinking* at SCQF Level 5

During Outcome 2, candidates plan and develop a digital publication in response to a design brief. This involves developing a structured approach to tasks, identifying and sourcing appropriate content, and organising resources effectively. Candidates apply decision-making skills in selecting, adapting and creating textual and visual content and determining how best to communicate information for a specific purpose.

There are also opportunities to develop the following Core Skills components:

- *Accessing Information* at SCQF level 5
- *Providing/Creating Information* at SCQF level 5
- *Using Digital Technology* at SCQF level 5
- *Written Communication (Writing)* at SCQF level 5

Communication skills are developed during Outcome 1 as candidates evaluate the design features demonstrated in different publications. Candidates present their evaluation in an appropriate format, which may include written, oral or digital media such as presentations, blogs, podcasts or vlogs. Candidates demonstrate their ability to communicate information in a clear, structured and engaging way, using appropriate language, tone and format for the chosen medium. They organise and present ideas logically, supporting their evaluations with relevant examples.

Communication skills are also developed in Outcomes 2 and 3 through the creation of clear, well-structured and visually engaging content.

Candidates demonstrate skills in Outcome 2 in accessing information by sourcing, selecting and evaluating appropriate text and graphical content, including online materials, ensuring relevance and suitability for the design brief.

Using digital technology and providing/creating information is demonstrated throughout Outcomes 2 and 3 as candidates use digital tools to design, create and refine a publication. This includes integrating text and graphical content, applying layout and design techniques. Candidates work independently to produce a publication that meets specified requirements and reflects appropriate use of digital design tools.

Opportunities for developing Meta Skills

Outcome 1 – Evaluate design features for digital publications

- self-management
- analytical thinking
- audience awareness
- critical evaluation

Outcome 2 – Plan a well-designed publication suitable for a business or administrative purpose.

- self-management
- communication,
- attention to detail

Outcome 3 – Produce a well-designed publication suitable for a business or administrative purpose.

- problem solving
- adaptability
- digital fluency

Opportunities for developing Learning for Sustainability

Outcome 1 – Evaluate design features for digital publications

- consideration of environmental impact of print vs digital formats
- plan with sustainability, accessibility and resource efficiency in mind

Outcome 2 – Plan a well-designed publication suitable for a business or administrative purpose.

- application of inclusive design principles such as readability, contrast, plain language
- selection of appropriate images and messaging with social responsibility
- demonstration of awareness of ethical and accessible communication

Outcome 3 – Produce a well-designed publication suitable for a business or administrative purpose.

- use ethically sourced images and respect copyright
- reflect on digital carbon footprint and sustainable digital practices
- adapt designs responsibly in response to changing requirements

Open learning

If this Unit is delivered by open or distance learning methods, additional resources will be required for candidate support, assessment and quality assurance. It would require planning by the centre to ensure the sufficiency and authenticity of candidate evidence.

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website [Qualifications Scotland Assessment Arrangements](#)

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for learners

Unit title: IT in Business: Digital Design and Publishing

In a digital business environment, administrators are expected to demonstrate a broad range of skills in the use of information and communication technologies. Modern publishing tools enable organisations of all sizes to create high-quality digital and print communications in-house, using platforms such as collaborative design tools, cloud-based applications and content creation software. As a result, there is an increasing emphasis on visual communication, digital content creation and audience engagement.

This Unit focuses on developing the skills and knowledge required to plan, design and produce a professionally presented publication, with an emphasis on digital formats, effective visual design and appropriate use of multimedia content.

Outcome 1 looks at developing design skills to enable you to evaluate and apply design features in order to produce a well-designed publication.

Outcome 2 will equip you with the skills to plan a publication suitable for digital distribution and organise your work to meet deadlines.

Outcome 3 will enable you to create a digital publication for a business or administrative purpose, applying design and publishing skills to produce a well-designed publication for an intended audience.

Assessment is likely to take the form of a combination of case studies, practical tasks and digital evidence.