

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

General information

Unit title: Behavioural Skills for Business (SCQF level 8)

Unit code: J1E5 48

Superclass: AA

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Version: 02

Unit purpose

The aim of this unit is to develop an understanding of the role of a manager as a leader and some of the key management behavioural skills required to meet an organisation's goals and objectives. It enables learners to explain what managerial behaviour in organisations involves and to analyse the behavioural skills which managers need to manage their own behaviour and also to deal with differences and challenges in the workplace. It enables learners to recognise the skills which managers need in order to behave effectively in situations which arise within a dynamic business environment.

Whilst the unit is aimed at learners who have current experience of working in a position with management responsibilities or those who are returning to management after a break, it is also suitable for those who do not presently have current management experience but have aspirations of taking up a management role in the future. Successful completion of this unit will provide a foundation for further management units at more advanced SCQF levels.

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

Outcomes

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

- 1 Explain the managerial activities that contribute to managerial effectiveness.
- 2 Apply a selection of techniques used by managers to manage themselves and others in given situations.
- 3 Select and justify appropriate behavioural strategies for given situations.

Credit points and level

1 SQA unit credit at SCQF level 8: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8).

Recommended entry to the unit

Access to this unit is at the discretion of the centre. It is recommended that learners undertaking this unit possess communication skills to SCQF level 6 or equivalent. It would also be beneficial if learners are able to work with numerical data and have some knowledge of management and business principles — particularly of how organisations are controlled. Additionally, it would be beneficial if learners had achieved or were working towards SQA Advanced units in self-management skills and/or managing and working with people or equivalent.

Core Skills

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following Core Skills component:

Core Skill component Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6

There are also opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills which 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.

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.

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Statement of standards

Unit title: Behavioural Skills for Business (SCQF level 8)

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.

Outcome 1

Explain the managerial activities that contribute to managerial effectiveness.

Knowledge and/or skills

- Roles of a manager
- Differences between managers and leaders
- Approaches to leadership
- Managerial effectiveness

Outcome 2

Apply a selection of techniques used by managers to manage themselves and others in given situations.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Problem solving
- ◆ Decision making
- ◆ Time management
- ◆ Stress management and well-being
- ◆ Positive relationships

Outcome 3

Select and justify appropriate behavioural strategies for given situations.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Management of differences and challenges
- ◆ Conflict management strategies
- ◆ Effective communication
- ◆ Assertiveness strategies
- ◆ Influencing and negotiation strategies

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

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:

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that, with reference to a given organisational setting(s), they can:

- ◆ Explain the role of the manager, how it differs from a leader and how managerial effectiveness contributes to organisational success. This should also outline different leadership styles
- ◆ Apply an appropriate decision making model to a workplace problem
- ◆ Apply appropriate time and stress management techniques, including well-being
- ◆ Select and justify appropriate strategies for the building and maintenance of positive relationships with individuals and teams
- ◆ Select and justify appropriate strategies for the management of differences and challenges
- ◆ Identify causes of conflict and propose with justification strategies to overcome conflict situations. This must include:
 - assertiveness strategies
 - influencing and negotiation strategies
 - and one other strategy

Learners must make reference to appropriate theories and background reading throughout their responses. Justifications provided must include consideration of other approaches and clearly state why the chosen approach best fits the organisational setting provided.

Evidence for this unit should be generated in open-book conditions.

Support notes

Unit title: Behavioural Skills for Business (SCQF level 8)

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 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this unit

This stand-alone unit at SCQF level 8 is designed to raise awareness of managerial and professional behaviour within a working environment.

It is primarily designed to raise awareness of managerial and professional behaviour within a working environment. It is intended to enable learners to recognise the types of behaviour which effective managers undertake to achieve positive relationships in the workplace and the skills which they use to manage differences and challenges. Learners should understand that differences and challenges are a natural part of working life and can have a positive contribution to make to organisational success. When looking at particular behavioural skills, learners should be encouraged to think about situations in which particular skills are likely to be effective and what the possible consequences of using (or not using) suitable skills may be. They should also look at how managers develop expertise in these behavioural skills and the relationship between the skills and effective managerial behaviour.

The following gives some additional guidance on the content of each outcome.

Outcome 1

Role of the manager — coverage of Mintzberg's ten managerial roles; Stewart's demands, choices and constraints model; Fayol's five elements of management. The discussion can be directed to not only what managers do, but also include the competing demands and the tensions that arise — and how the skills outlined in the unit can help manage these competing demands.

Managers and leaders — the basis on which the two can be distinguished (eg, Kotter's view that managers deal with a steady state while leaders manage change); the extent to which a distinction is valid in theory and practice; the effects of the distinction on attitudes and behaviour within organisations.

Approaches to leadership — the historical development and relative merits of the various approaches; types of management/leadership style (autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire, Blake and Mouton's managerial grid); contingency theory (eg Fiedler and Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership); transformational leadership (eg Bennis and Nanus); Adair's action centred leadership.

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

The concept of managerial effectiveness — ie, the achievement of organisational aims and objectives is key to the understanding of the unit. This effectiveness is dependent upon a number of critical factors - one of which is the importance of people for the achievement of a managers' work. It is essential that managers build the skills necessary to build positive working relationships, to identify where differences and challenges may arise and select and deploy appropriate intervention strategies.

Outcome 2

The discussion of effectiveness in Outcome 1 can lead to consideration of the traits and behaviours of effective managers and the skills that accompany these. These discussion areas may also highlight the conflicting demands, paving the way for consideration of the key skills, such as those considered in this outcome.

Problem solving and decision making — problem solving as one of a manager's technical skills; classification of problems (eg recurring/new, programmed/non-programmed); rational decision making/problem solving model (identify problem, decide on criteria for a solution, gather information, identify alternative solutions, evaluate alternative solutions, choose best solution against criteria, implement and review); problem solving techniques (eg modify, minimise, substitute, rearrange, reverse, combine, brainstorming); managerial actions to solve problems (recognising the existence of a problem, acknowledging the problem, involving other party, understanding each other's position, enlisting their co-operation, discussing possible solutions, planning action, resolving the problem in a mutually acceptable way).

Time management — what is time management and how it can help managers? For example, Gerald M Blair's 'eff' words: effective — having a definite or desired effect; efficient — productive with minimum waste or effort; effortless — seemingly without effort, natural, easy may be a useful base for discussion.

Time management techniques — such as work shedding, time saving and time planning techniques.

Stress management and well-being — difference between stress and pressure; causes of stress (eg role conflict, role ambiguity, role overload and role underload); measures of stress (eg questionnaires and tests to identify stressors); effects of stress (eg on managerial behaviour, health); dealing with own stress (eg gaining control of time, effective communication, practical ways to relax, being healthy and fit, eating for health, exercise for stamina, suppleness and strength, hobbies, work-life balance, personal interests).

Dealing with stress in others — recognising signs of stress in others; identifying causes of stress in others and suitable ways to deal with it (eg joint problem solving, counselling, use of outside agencies).

Building Positive Relationships — much of the day-to-day responsibility for managing employees' health and well-being falls on line managers. This includes spotting early warning signs of stress, making reasonable adjustments at work, and nurturing positive relationships. Lewis et al (2012) identified five management competencies key for protecting and promoting the engagement and well-being of employees. These include:

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

- ◆ Open, fair and consistent: managing with integrity and consistency, managing emotions/personal issues and taking a positive approach in interpersonal conflicts.
- ◆ Handling conflicts and problems: dealing with employee conflicts (including bullying and abuse) and using appropriate organisational resources.
- ◆ Knowledge, clarity and guidance: clear communication, advice and guidance, demonstrates understanding of roles and responsible decision-making.
- ◆ Building and sustaining relationships: personal interaction with employees involving empathy and consideration.
- ◆ Supporting development: supporting and arranging employee career progression and development.

Outcome 3

Discussions in Outcome 2 as outlined above, lead through to the management of differences and challenges and the adoption of strategies to manage these differences. It is important that learners recognise that differences and challenges can be a major part of a manager's work and also recognise that they can be a positive aspect in the workplace, eg creative conflict models.

Effective supportive (problem-focused) communication including meetings, briefings, 1:1 discussions, coaching, counselling, employee engagement models, effective feedback and listening skills can all help in managing differences and challenges.

Conflict management strategies — causes of conflict could include formation of cliques, group pressure and stereotypes, patterns of communication, breaking relationship rules, personality clashes, gender and age differences, assumptions about others, misuse of authority, power tactics and manipulation, general expectations and beliefs, misunderstandings, unreasonable beliefs and assumptions.

Effects of conflict may be positive (eg strengthening a relationship, greater trust, increased self-esteem, enhancing creativity and productivity, job satisfaction) or negative (eg reduce personal and organisation performance, damage to physical and emotional well-being, loss of confidence, lowered self-esteem, high stress levels, absenteeism, addictions and poor attitudes to work).

The five conflict management styles of avoiding, accommodating, collaborating, forcing and compromising provide a basis for discussion and can lead to consideration of the following:

- ◆ Assertiveness strategies: distinction between assertiveness, aggression and passiveness and idea of a bill of rights; assertive techniques such as 'broken record', 'fogging'; assertive behaviours such as challenging (seeking, asking, checking), standing up for oneself; coping with put-downs, receiving constructive criticism, recognising barriers to action, thinking realistically, communicating what you want.
- ◆ Influencing strategies: what influencing is and the managerial situations in which it can be used; sources of power and the balance of power; influencing strategies (eg general approaches like 'push' and 'pull', and more specific strategies such as reason, assertion, exchange of benefits, coercion, courting favour, partnership); the 3Rs (retribution, reason and reciprocity).
- ◆ Negotiating strategies: what negotiation is and the managerial situations where it can be used; approaches to negotiation, eg win-win, positive behaviours in negotiation (asking

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

questions, motives commentary, testing understanding, summarising, flagging behaviour); negative behaviours in negotiation (defend/attack spirals, irritators, counter-proposals).

Guidance on approaches to the delivery of this unit

This unit can be delivered through lecturer-mediated discussion. This may be in a traditional face-to-face environment or using a virtual learning environment or by various combinations of the two such as classroom interaction augmented by an on-line forum.

The choice of delivery methods is particularly important as this unit lends itself to learning and teaching approaches which make it possible for learners to produce suitable assessment evidence as they work through the unit. Learners could, for example, be encouraged to write a blog or maintain a learning diary. They could, as an integral part of the learning and teaching process, be given guidance on how to structure and organise their material so that it is in a form which can easily be presented for assessment purposes.

Hence, in devising suitable delivery methods, it may be helpful to bear in mind that evidence for assessment can be generated in many different ways, including:

- ◆ Presentations and other non-written assessments, eg group presentation; individual presentation; production of artefact, eg poster, video, audio; role play; debate and discussion; residential periods.
- ◆ Assignments, eg e-portfolios; learning journals; project documentation; diaries; reading logs; blogs and reflexive notebooks.
- ◆ Collaborative work, eg projects; posters; events; work experiences; residential exercises and field events.
- ◆ Making use of technology, eg blogs; wikis; social media tools; VLE, e-portfolios.

Methods such as those above link learning and teaching methods directly with the generation of assessment evidence so that they become part and parcel of the same thing. The categories are not mutually exclusive, eg a VLE may be used as a vehicle for debate and discussion.

Delivery should enable learners to become familiar with the work of key writers on management skills and behaviours and can make use of examples and case studies from UK and international organisations. Learner input can help to develop analytical skills and should be encouraged. Discussion can be based on learners' own workplace, for example learners can draw on their own experiences of how issues or conflicts in the workplace managed. Learners should be encouraged to consider a wide range of organisations including 'on line' or 'virtual organisations'. Learners may also develop insights by sharing information perhaps by responding to a stimulus posted on an on-line forum or making short presentations to their class group.

Throughout delivery can aim to merge theory and practice with the focus being on the practical aspects of management within a modern organisation to achieve sustained competitive advantage. This should be backed up throughout with a broad understanding of the management theory in these areas.

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

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 possible to combine the three outcomes in this unit into a single, holistic assessment — eg by using a single case study. They could also be combined by using a common instrument of assessment such as a portfolio in which learners can present evidence for all outcomes. However, although they are closely connected, the three outcomes are sufficiently different so that, if desired, separate assessments could be devised for each.

Whatever assessment approach is adopted, there are a number of different ways by which learners may generate evidence. If at all possible, learners should be encouraged to provide evidence in a format which suits their particular situation.

Learners could generate evidence during the delivery of the unit and gather it together in a portfolio which, providing they have access to suitable systems, they could manage electronically. Sources of suitable evidence for portfolios could include:

- ◆ Personal statements by learners in response to learning and teaching exercises.
- ◆ Contributions by learners to discussion forums and/or to social networking sites.
- ◆ Wikis developed by learners.
- ◆ Extracts from a blog or blogs produced by learners.

Evidence may also be available from a learner's place of work or from other sources.

Alternatively learners could work with case study material. This could refer to one or more organisations which may be real or hypothetical. It might be possible also to generate evidence through residential periods or 'away days'. A viva or mini-viva could be used to supplement and/or augment portfolio evidence which could also incorporate peer assessment and evidence generated through collaborative work, eg a poster display for the management of stress and well-being in an organisation. A portfolio based approach can make it easier for learners to make use of the same item of evidence in different contexts.

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, such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres wishing 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

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

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

Depending on the learning and teaching/assessment approaches adopted, there are opportunities to develop the three components of the Core Skill of *Communication* at SCQF level 6 and one component of *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6.

Communication: Oral Communication at SCQF level 6

Learners could be asked to give a range of presentations, eg on the role of a manager as a leader; outlining key management skills and behaviours required by a manager to meet an organisation's goals/objectives; an analysis of behavioural skills required to deal with differences and challenges in the workplace; responses to relevant management case study scenarios etc. These presentations could be to their peers and/or tutors — and include having to respond to questions or queries from others. Learners may also contribute to debates and discussions or participate in a viva, all of which will require them to use relevant management vocabulary, etc.

Communication: Written Communication (Reading) at SCQF level 6

Learners will have to become familiar with current managerial thinking on management behaviours and skills. This will require them to read written text which explores complex aspects and theories of management in a range of organisational contexts.

Communication: Written Communication (Writing) at SCQF level 6

Learners could provide evidence in the form of a management report or the development of a portfolio. There are alternative ways to present written evidence such as by personal reports, an article for a business magazine or by contributions to an online forum. Whatever approach is adopted, learners will be required to organise a substantial body of material and make use of complex language and specialist management vocabulary.

Problem Solving: Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6

Learners will have to analyse the key aspects of management behaviours which includes consideration of problem solving and decision making concepts in an organisational setting. This will include analysing and selecting techniques to manage themselves and manage others in a range of situations, including problem solving, decision making, stress management and building positive relationships. They also have to select and justify appropriate behavioural strategies for situations such as managing differences and challenges; conflict management; influencing and negotiation; and assertiveness.

The Critical Thinking component of Problem Solving at SCQF level 6 is embedded in this unit. When a learner achieves the unit, their Core Skills profile will also be updated to include this component.

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Core Skills Component Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6 embedded.	17/12/18

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SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges have made to the development of SQA Advanced Qualifications.

Further information

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General information for learners

Unit title: Behavioural Skills for Business (SCQF level 8)

This section will help you to 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.

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This unit has been designed to allow you to develop an understanding of the role of a manager as a leader and the behavioural skills required by managers to meet an organisation's goals and objectives.

Entry to this unit is at the discretion of your centre — however it would be helpful if you already have or are working towards developing self-management skills and/or managing and working with people at SCQF level 7 or equivalent.

This unit has three outcomes:

- ◆ First of all, you will look at the role of the manager where you will consider the differences between managers and leaders, different approaches to management and leadership including management/leadership style and what makes an effective manager.
- ◆ Secondly, building on the idea of an effective manager, you explore the skills of an effective manager, such as building positive relationships, time management, managing stress and well-being, decision making and problem solving.
- ◆ Finally, armed with a knowledge of the skills that an effective manager should hold, you consider the management of differences and challenges that managers face every day and explore the strategies required to manage these. Differences and challenges are a major part of any manager's work - and while it is necessary to review strategies to manage these, it is also important to note that these challenges and differences can be a positive aspect in the workplace.

You will be encouraged to use facilities such as the internet, journals, or library resources as well as the teaching material given to you as you progress through this unit.

Assessment is likely to take place towards the end of the teaching input. Your tutor will outline the assessment arrangement which could be along the lines of producing a report which analyse managerial behaviour in a particular situation. You may be given a case study and questions, which will test your understanding of the various aspects of managerial behaviour and behavioural skills across the unit. Alternatively, you may select an organisation with which you are familiar — however this must be agreed in advance with your tutor.

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

You will have opportunities to acquire behavioural skills and knowledge necessary for managers and leaders which can be used to enhance your employability prospects. And depending how this unit is delivered, you may have opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills of *Problem Solving* and *Communication*.

The Critical Thinking component of Problem Solving at SCQF level 6 is embedded in this unit. When a learner achieves the unit, their Core Skills profile will also be updated to include this component.