



Al-Maktoum College
of Higher Education



ADVANCED CERTIFICATE IN BUSINESS PROGRAMME HANDBOOK

Academic Year 2021/22

SCQF level 7

Programme code: GM8A 47

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1.1 WELCOME

Welcome to the Advanced Certificate in Business. The Advanced Certificate in Business has been designed to equip learners with the knowledge, understanding and skills across a range of disciplines to provide a sound basis for success in the business environment, both in employment, progression in employment or to higher level Business degree or professional qualifications. The Certificate introduces the key functions in a business organisation (eg management, economics, marketing, accounting, communication and the ability to manage change driven by emerging technologies and changes in the internal and external environments). The Certificate also develops human cognitive and transferable skills that are key for success in the business environment.

As a student of Al-Maktoum College of Higher Education you will benefit from an extensive programme taking place at our campus within Dundee, delivered by our dedicated team and other professional colleagues who are subject specialists. We aim to provide a cohort-based experience for all of our students through facilitating access to events which run throughout the academic to share insights and knowledge from across our academic subjects.

Please engage with our virtual and in-person events which we have coordinated to aid with your student journey, creating a sense of community and support. Please contact us if you have any questions, suggestions or concerns.

I welcome you all into our community and wish you the very best for your studies.

Warm wishes

Michelle Young

Academic Registrar and Programme Lead

1.2 STAFF

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1.3 AIMS AND outcomes

The Advanced Certificate in Business is particularly suitable for learners who wish to develop a broad understanding of business, are interested in starting their own business, seeking employment, seeking progression in existing employment, planning to progress their studies without committing to a specialist area and who wish to articulate to a degree or professional qualification.

The key aims of the Advanced Certificate in Business Award is to develop knowledge and skills for progression to higher level study in business disciplines or related employment in entry level business officer or management roles. The overall aims have been established in their current form and have been refreshed and updated moderately in line with consultation, evolving developments in technological change, a desire for more integrated learning about business organisations, the meta-skills/human skills agenda and greater emphasis on enterprise and self-employment.

The general aims for these awards are to:

1. Develop transferable core skills and opportunities to develop meta-skills to support personal development and the needs of employers
2. Enable articulation routes to higher level Business education programmes
3. Develop knowledge and skills in a range of specialist disciplines to support career and further study options in those areas, e.g. Marketing, Accounting or Economics
4. Develop knowledge, independent study and research skills for academic study

Specific aims of the qualifications

1. Develop knowledge and skills of core business functions to enable access to employment in entry level commercial, officer, supervisory or managerial positions in business organisations
2. Develop knowledge and skills to facilitate progression in commercial, officer or supervisory career paths
3. Foster innovation and creativity to enable learners to adapt to changes in the business environment
4. Provide a grounding in knowledge, skills and creative thinking required to start a business
5. Develop and apply knowledge and skills across a range of business disciplines in an integrated manner to the analysis of business situations

1.4 LEARNING HOURS

Classes are made up of lectures, seminars and tutorials. For units which have 2 SQA credits, there will be four hours teaching per week, and the 1 SQA Credit units will have 2 hours teaching per week. You will be expected to undertake equal hours per week for independent study including reading, homework or exercises which will be assigned by your lecturers. Therefore, for each semester there will be approximately 8 hours per week for teaching and 8 hours per week for independent study tasks.

1.5 UNIT INFORMATION

Unit code	Title	SCQF level	SQA Credits
HP6T 47	Economic Issues: An Introduction	7	1
HP6Y 47	Business Law: An Introduction	7	1
HP75 47	Communication: Business Communication	7	1
HP6X 47	Business Contractual Relationships	7	1
J4DK 47	Managing People and Organisations	7	2
HP7K 47	Business Accounting	7	2
HP6N 47	Marketing: An Introduction	7	1
HP78 47	IT in Business: Spreadsheets	7	1
HP6L 47	Information technology: Applications Software 1	7	1
HR2V 47	Business Graded Unit 1	7	1

Economic Issues: An Introduction

This unit introduces learners to fundamental issues in economics with a particular emphasis on the business environment. Learners will consider the basic economic problem, how consumers and other economic agents address this problem, and how markets can be used to allocate resources. Learners are introduced to the operation of markets and actions that can be taken to help avoid market failure. The unit introduces the theory of National Income and the circular flow of Income model.

Outcomes:

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

1. Explain the allocation of resources within the economy.
2. Explain the theory of National Income.
3. Explain and evaluate the role of government policy in correcting market failures.

Business Law: An Introduction

This Unit is designed to introduce the candidate to the framework of law as it applies within the business environment. The Unit will examine the sources of Scottish law, the contractual relationships between individuals, the contractual relationships between individuals and businesses, and the distinction between types of business relationships. It is primarily intended for candidates who require a knowledge of legal matters in a business context.

On completion of this Unit, the candidate will be able to:

1. Explain the main sources of Scots law.
2. Explain the law of contract.
3. Distinguish the legal characteristics of the various types of business organisations and relationships.

Communications: Business Communication

This Unit Communication: Business Communication sits at SCQF level 7 and is designed to develop skills in analysing, summarising, evaluating, and producing complex written business information. It also develops skills in presenting and responding to complex oral business information. The Unit enhances skills for learning, life and work and there is a particular emphasis on employability. The Unit can be taken as part of a Group Award or as a stand-alone Unit for the purposes of continued professional development. Work undertaken for the Unit will be in a context appropriate to the learner's Group Award or relevant to an individual's vocational area/discipline. The Unit embeds and provides automatic certification of the Core Skill of Communication at SCQF level 6.

Outcomes:

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

1. Analyse and evaluate complex written business information.
2. Produce complex written business documents.
3. Present and respond to complex oral information in a business context.

Business Contractual Relationships

This Unit is designed to develop candidates' knowledge of the law as it applies within the business environment. The Unit will examine consumer legislation, the law in employment and the Law of Obligations as it relates to the contractual relationships between the business, their customers and their employees.

Outcomes:

On completion of this Unit, the candidate will be able to:

1. Explain the protection provided to individuals when entering into a consumer credit agreement.
2. Explain the key elements of the law in employment.
3. Explain the key elements of the Law of Obligations.

Managing People and Organisations

This unit is designed to enable learners to gain an understanding of different approaches to managing an organisation in today's dynamic and complex business environment. It will introduce learners, whether intending to or working in an administrative, commercial or management role, to current management theories and practice to enable them to use these to evaluate organisational effectiveness.

Outcomes:

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

1. Explain the importance of organisation structure and design in relation to its environment.
2. Analyse factors that influence workplace performance.
3. Analyse factors that influence managerial performance.

Business Accounting

This Unit is designed to enable candidates to develop their knowledge and understanding in the preparation and use of accounting information within a business organisation. Candidates will develop the skills required to prepare basic financial and management accounting reports and, in addition, will also develop the skills, knowledge and understanding to enable them to interpret and use financial information for decision making.

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

1. Prepare financial statements, of a limited company, for internal users.
2. Prepare cash budgets and calculate break-even point.
3. Identify the users of financial information and the purposes for which they require the information.
4. Describe the various sources of finance available to an organisation.
5. Analyse the performance and financial position of a business.

Marketing: An Introduction

This Unit is designed to provide candidates with a knowledge and understanding of marketing and its importance in organisations. This Unit is also designed to develop candidates' understanding of the marketing mix in the context of both products and services. This is an introductory Unit which can be used by candidates who may wish to progress to more specialised marketing units.

Outcomes:

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

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

IT in Business: Spreadsheets

This unit is designed to allow learners to develop an understanding of spreadsheet design and how to use spreadsheet features and functions for practical and effective use in a business environment. Learners will develop knowledge and skills to allow them to create customised solutions to common business problems and scenarios. The unit is relevant to learners wishing to develop their competence in the use of spreadsheets in the workplace, or who wish to develop knowledge in skills in the application of spreadsheets more generally.

On completion of the unit the learner should be able to:

1. Design and create a spreadsheet to meet the needs of a business.
2. Apply statistical functions and present information in an appropriate format.
3. Present spreadsheet data in graphical format and evaluate information.

Information Technology: Applications Software 1

This unit is designed to enable students to use Information Technology (IT) systems and applications independently to support a range of information processing activities. The unit is designed to develop a broad knowledge of the theoretical concepts, principles, boundaries and scope of IT applications. These activities will be centred on using software applications packages to meet complex information requirements while paying attention to security and the needs of other users.

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

1. Operate a range of IT equipment independently, giving attention to security and to other users.
2. Use a range of software application packages to meet complex information requirements.

Business Graded Unit 1

This graded unit is designed to provide evidence that the learner has achieved the following principal aims of the SQA Advanced Certificate in Business:

- ◆ provide the competencies required by employers of those engaged in entry level administrative, managerial or commercial positions in organisations
- ◆ develop and apply a range of vocational knowledge and skills in an integrated manner to the analysis of business situations
- ◆ build on previously acquired transferable skills
- ◆ adopt an innovative and creative approach to their work and be able to respond quickly to the challenges posed by changes in the business environment

It is recommended that the learner should have completed or be in the process of completing the following units relating to the above principal aims prior to undertaking this graded unit:

- Business Accounting (HP7K 47)
- Economic Issues: An Introduction (HP6T 47)
- Managing People and Organisations (HP71 47)
- Marketing: An Introduction (HP6N 47)

Although the main focus of the unit is based on the five units listed above, learners may draw on content from other units relevant to the case study.

Business Graded Unit Assessment: This examination-based Graded Unit is a closed-book assessment. It will consist of a written examination of three hours.

The questions in the examination will be based on a case study of an organisation. The case study will be made available to candidates prior to the examination. The questions will be unseen until the time of the examination.

An exemplar instrument of assessment and marking guidelines have been produced to provide examples of the kind of evidence required to demonstrate achievement of the aims of the SQA Advanced Certificate Business Group Award (GM8A 47) which this Graded Unit is designed to cover, and to indicate the national standard of achievement required at SCQF level 7.

To achieve this Unit, candidates should attain 50% of the available marks with achievement being graded according to marks attained.

1.6 ASSESSMENT

Candidates will be awarded an SQA Advanced Certificate in Business on successful completion of all of the units and the Graded Unit in the mandatory section, and an appropriate combination of optional Units up to a total of 96 SCQF credit points.

The SQA Design Principles require an SQA Advanced Certificate Group Award to incorporate at least 48 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7. The SQA Advanced Certificate in Business mandatory section comprises 80 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7. Candidates must complete an additional 16 SCQF credit points from the optional section and there are no restrictions on the SCQF level from which to draw these credit points.

Assessments are both formative and summative, including essays, presentations and exams.

All assessments aim to enhance your communication and IT skills, develop your problem solving and critical analysis as well as working to deadline.

For example, the group presentation is a chance for you to develop your presentation and communication skills which are important for employability. Formative assessments are used to provide you with an opportunity to develop your subject knowledge and skills, prior to using them in summative assessments.

Business Graded Unit 1

Assessment:

The assessment is based on a closed book examination lasting three hours. The examination should be unseen and the assessment should be conducted in controlled and invigilated conditions.

At all times, the security, integrity and confidentiality of examinations must be ensured. The examination will consist of a case study of an organisation and questions relating to the case study. The case study should be given to candidates up to three weeks prior to the date of the examination.

The content of the case study must not be discussed with learners prior to the assessment.

Candidates may not bring their copy of the case study to the examination with them. A fresh copy of the case study must be given to candidates at the time of the examination.

Reasonable assistance is the term used by SQA to describe the difference between providing candidates with some direction to generate the required evidence for assessment and providing too much support, which would compromise the integrity of the assessment. Reasonable assistance is part of all learning and teaching processes.

In relation to the assessment of Advanced Certificate/Diploma examination-based graded units, assessors may provide advice and guidance on examination technique and clarification on the meaning of command words which may appear within an examination paper, prior to the formal examination.

Remediation is not allowed in Examination-based Graded Unit assessments.

Any candidate who has failed their Advanced Certificate/Diploma examination-based graded unit or wishes to upgrade their award must be given a re-assessment opportunity, or in exceptional circumstances, two re-assessment opportunities. This must be done by using a substantially different examination. The final grading given must reflect the quality of the candidate's evidence at the time of the completion of the graded unit. Candidates must be awarded the highest grade achieved, whether through first sitting or through any re-assessment.

Marks & Grading:

The examination will be marked out of 100. Assessors will aggregate the marks achieved by the candidate to arrive at an overall mark for the examination. Assessors will then assign a grade to the candidate for this Graded Unit based on the following grade boundaries:

- ◆ A = 70% — 100%
- ◆ B = 60% — 69%
- ◆ C = 50% — 59%

Final learner grade:

The final grading given will reflect the quality of the learner's evidence at the time of the completion of the graded unit. Learners must be awarded the highest grade achieved, whether through first sitting or through any re-assessment.

Candidates who meet the minimum Evidence Requirements will have their achievement graded as a C (competent), A (highly competent), or B (somewhere between A and C).

1.7 EXTENSIONS

Student Administration will be responsible for recording any extensions which have been approved. Students must complete the Extension Request form which is available within the Student Resources section of the website www.almcollege.ac.uk/assessment/

The College aims to ensure fair and equal treatment in the assessment of all students and that no student is unjustly denied or unfairly granted the benefits of continuous assessment. Please consult the Summative Assessment Policy for more details. <https://www.almcollege.ac.uk/policies-documents/>

The College is aware that its aim of securing fair and equal treatment in the assessment of all students is ultimately inextricable from disability-related issues and is, therefore, anxious to ensure that proper provision/reasonable adjustment is always made. You can help the College to achieve this aim by communicating any relevant information to Student Administration studentadmin@almcollege.ac.uk

1.8 GRADING CRITERIA

Each unit will be assessed individually. You must meet all of the minimum evidence requirements as defined in the learning outcomes. The successful achievements, approved by the Academic Standards Committee, will count in determining progression and contribute to the award.

Under no circumstances shall any candidate be permitted to submit themselves for assessment in any element more than twice. In the case of a candidate failing to complete a prescribed element of assessment on time, permission for a second assessment will only be granted if the failure is on account of illness or other good cause. The result of that assessment will contribute towards progression and award. The passing rate should be not less than 50% of each element of assessments.

Business Graded Unit 1 - Marks & Grading:

The marks achieved by the learner in the examination should be aggregated to arrive at an overall mark for the examination. Assessors will then assign an overall grade to the learner for this graded unit based on the following grade boundaries:

- A = 70%–100%
- B = 60%–69%
- C = 50%–59%

These grade boundaries are fixed.

1.9 READING LISTS

Lecturers will provide the reading lists for their specific units.