

Transcript Project Management; Managing Business Culture and Strategy; MPO

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Iain Walker

Hello my name is Iain Walker and I'm the Senior External Verifier for business units.

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Iain Walker

And in this presentation, we're going to look at Advanced Qualifications Business Awards and revisions and changes to some of the business units.

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Iain Walker

The aims for this presentation are to identify which awards are impacted.

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Iain Walker

To identify the business units that have been revised, updated or in fact are new.

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Iain Walker

To look briefly at the rationale for those provisions and changes, and finally outline some of the revisions that have actually been made.

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Iain Walker

OK, which awards are impacted? Well, it's the SQA Advanced Diplomas in business;

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Iain Walker

Business with accounting; with human resource management; with information technology; with marketing; global trade and business and any other awards within which the revised business units actually sit. In some parts of the world, there are also advanced certificates which also would be impacted by the changes.

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Iain Walker

OK.

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Iain Walker

Which business units are we looking at? Well, firstly, we're looking at the unit called project management strategy, decision making and risk, and this is a new unit.

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Iain Walker

That replaces information communication technology and business.

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Iain Walker

Secondly, managing business culture and strategy.

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Iain Walker

Which again is a new unit replacing behavioural skills for business, business culture and strategy.

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Iain Walker

And thirdly, managing people in organisations, which was introduced actually in 2020 and replaces a unit of the same name but with an older code.

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Iain Walker

OK, the rationale for the changes.

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Iain Walker

The present awards were actually last revalidated over 10 years ago, so quite some time ago now.

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Iain Walker

The assessment load was really quite heavy across these particular units and across the awards.

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Iain Walker

And at that time in 2010, there were a series of constraints and assessment rules that we wanted in this update, and these new awards, to look to see if we could actually come up with some innovative approaches to assessment.

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Iain Walker

In addition, some of the other SQA awards have already been reviewed and updated.

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Iain Walker

And since 2010, there have been significant changes in the business environment and even just within the last three years, there have been even more significant changes. The changes taking place rapidly.

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Iain Walker

And it was really a need to bring in new units for new subjects. And in adding new units it meant that some of the older units needed to be actually dropped, removed or merged with the new units.

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Iain Walker

We'll now have a look at the revisions made.

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Iain Walker

We'll have a look at project management strategy, decision making and risk.

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Iain Walker

And as I said, this is a new two credit unit at SCQF level 8, replacing ICT in business, but it also introduces the concepts of risk and making strategic decisions to negate those risks.

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Iain Walker

There are four outcomes in this unit: evaluating the role of business information decision making;

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Iain Walker

Assessing potential strategic risks posed to an organisation within a specific set within that specific context; and candidates have to develop a plan to manage identified risk; and plan a project using project management software.

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Iain Walker

The SQA ASP for this two credit unit contains three assessments, so there are four outcomes, but there are three assessments.

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Iain Walker

Assessment one the learners produce a briefing document that evaluates that the role of business information and decision making and assessing strategic risks.

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Iain Walker

Assessment two will allow us then to consider the briefing report.

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Iain Walker

And advise on a priority action that the firm might undertake and create a draft project plan to implement the recommendations.

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Iain Walker

Learners then use in assessment three, project management software to schedule a project plan.

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Iain Walker

Uh, so that's similar to that last part, the project management software and project plan.

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Iain Walker

Uh directly follows on from the old unit ICT in business and in this ASP we use Microsoft Project but other software.

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Iain Walker

Uh, like other planning software, could actually be used instead.

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Iain Walker

The second unit is managing business culture and strategy.

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Iain Walker

And this is a new two credit unit at SCQF level 8.

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Iain Walker

And it replaces the units behavioural skills for business and business culture and strategy. And as I say, it's two SQA credits, whereas the previous units actually added up to three credits.

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Iain Walker

The unit is at level 8 and there are four outcomes with two assessments.

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Iain Walker

In the first assessment, the expectation is that candidates will produce an investigative report and there is a format provided within the assessment support pack.

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Iain Walker

The second assessment is a presentation that covers Outcome 4, where learners are assessed on content rather than presentation skills. So, it's very much content driven, not necessarily marked on how good a presenter the actual candidate is.

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Iain Walker

The final unit I want to outline is managing people and organisations, and this is a unit that replaces one of the same name and it has actually been available in parallel with the old unit since 2020.

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Iain Walker

The unit accommodates fresh theory with three rather than four outcomes, and in the first outcome there's greater opportunity to research different contemporary theories, and there's also encouragement to explore.

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Iain Walker

Uh, more current organisational structure, design models and frameworks. So, the emphasis is on trying to make the unit much more future proof rather than specifying specific theories and models, etcetera. So, it can evolve over time.

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Iain Walker

Outcome 2. Knowledge management is added so that the candidates and learners are not only considering employee performance, but also how organisations can actually use company knowledge to improve their overall performance. And in outcome 3.

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Iain Walker

Candidates are encouraged to research, different historical and contemporary leadership theories, rather than being just given specified theories. So, again there can be an evolution over time.

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Iain Walker

And we've added ethical practice to try to get candidates to consider how managers could implement ethical practice within the organisation.

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Iain Walker

In terms of the assessment.

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Iain Walker

Uh.

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Iain Walker

The assessment that currently exists comprises an open book essay that covers all outcomes and has a marking grid and 50% pass mark.

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Iain Walker

So there's one assessment in this assessment support pack.

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Iain Walker

Evidence requirements are sampled, they're specified and candidates can achieve a pass mark even if they miss or poorly cover an evidence requirement.

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Iain Walker

As long as they get 50% of the marks across the essay.

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Iain Walker

Now if candidates don't achieve 50% on the first submission, then they should be reassessed using a new instrument of assessment, in other words.

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Iain Walker

They have to do a new essay.

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Iain Walker

The marking grid is not a secret and it should actually be provided to candidates when the assessment is issued. So that they should know exactly what the expected structure is of the essay and what content they've actually got to cover.

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Iain Walker

It's recommended that the candidate be given approximately 3 weeks for research and preparation and then a further week to allow them to actually write up their essay response.

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Iain Walker

Now, we know that.

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Iain Walker

Undertaking a 2-credit unit in a single assessment might be a challenge where English is perhaps second language and as a result what we've done is we've tried to make sure that centres actually have a choice in managing people and organisations and how that unit is assessed. So the current assessment support pack

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Iain Walker

has a single essay covering all four outcomes.

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Iain Walker

But a second assessment support pack is being created because the unit does allow for assessment to be conducted on an outcome-by-outcome approach, and that's currently being written. But there is a word of warning at this point.

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Iain Walker

That where centres adopt the second Assessment Support Pack and undertake assessment outcome by outcome across the delivery period of unit, there is a larger sample of evidence requirements that have to be tested in the single assessment approach. And it's really, really important, not just for this particular unit, but for all of the units that the centre staff.

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Iain Walker

Read the unit specifications for each of the units and carefully study the assessment support packs and undertake a thorough internal verification and standardisation

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Iain Walker

Uh, process, to ensure that all the standards are understood, what is required is understood, and to understand the best way for the centre on how those units might best be assessed.

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Iain Walker

And I hope this presentation has been of use to you and I wish you every success for these awards. So, thank you very much.

UPDATE March 2023 - After this presentation was recorded, there was an update to the unit Managing People and Organisation. Now, learners who achieve a mark of between 45% and 49% will be permitted to remediate their submission. Learners achieving below 45% will still require an entire re-assessment. This is the case for both the holistic ASP and the new Outcome by Outcome ASP.