



Unit 22: Market Research

Delivery guidance

Approaching the unit

This is a practical unit that enables your learners to investigate the different aspects of market research used by businesses. The focus should be on learners developing a sound understanding of the research skills required and of the role that marketing information plays in satisfying consumer needs and wants.

Learners will need to examine the purpose and different types of market research and the purposes for which the data collected can be used. Learners will also develop an understanding of basic sampling methods, statistical analysis and produce a market research plan.

You can use a range of delivery methods in this unit, for example:

- discussions – class and small group discussions on market research
- individual or group presentations – examples of market research in local businesses
- case studies – illustrating market research in well-known stores
- appropriate video extracts.

Group work is an acceptable form of delivery but you must ensure that learners individually produce work for assessment that meets the assessment criteria.

You can involve local employers in the delivery of this unit by inviting them as:

- guest speakers
- mentors for learners
- audience members who can give feedback on learner presentations
- providers of business materials as basis for case studies and exemplars
- providing opportunities for work experience for learners.

Delivering the learning aims

You could begin learning aim A by having a group discussion on why learners think market research would be useful to a business. You could research failed product or service launches and ask learners how more effective market research could have prevented the failure. Learners will require initial tutor input so that they have a basic understanding of the purpose of market research. They could work in small groups to research different examples of market research data and try to match this research to the five purposes listed in the unit content. Learners could investigate different types of research and present their findings to the rest of the group, with emphasis on the opportunities for obtaining data that have resulted from social media and digital marketing. Learners must be able to select the most appropriate form of research for a given situation. This could be done through a presentation of evidence to their peers based on some scenario that you have created, or via a quiz designed to simply check knowledge and understanding.

Learning aim B requires your learners to undertake a range of practical research tasks, which will culminate in the development of a market research activity to meet a specific marketing objective. Initial tutor input will be required to outline the stages in the market research process. The success of the final research plan will depend on the way in which data is collected. Bias must be avoided, and the pilot research should aim to identify sources of bias in the market research plan. Learners should investigate sampling techniques and sample size selection, and should understand the relationship between sample size, probability and confidence levels. Having developed the pilot research activity, learners will need to undertake the specific research activity and collect data specific to the marketing objective they have set. This pilot data should then be reviewed and used to establish the final market research activity, which they will analyse in learning aim C.

The task to address in learning aim C builds on the research activity undertaken in learning aim B. It is essential that learners have a significant amount of both secondary and primary data, which they will need to analyse in this task. Learners may need to be reminded of the statistical techniques used to analyse data, such as how to establish confidence levels of the findings. The data collected should be presented in a number of different formats. It would be useful for learners to practice on some data that you have supplied so that they can obtain feedback on the content and quality of their statistical analysis and report prior to undertaking the assessment activity. The final report will need to present findings in a number of different ways, analyse the data and then justify improvements to the market research process.

Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
A Examine the types of market research used in business	A1 Purpose of market research A2 Types of research A3 Appropriateness of choice of research	Report explaining the different types of research used in a chosen business. The report will judge the appropriateness of each type of research for a stated purpose.
B Plan and implement a market research activity to meet a specific marketing objective	B1 Planning stage B2 Implementation stage	Market research plan detailing methods and sample size to be used together with a copy of the pilot questionnaire and some pilot research. Final questionnaire with sampling plan accompanied by evidence of the research data collected.
C Analyse and present market research findings and recommend process improvements	C1 Statistical analysis and interpretation of primary and secondary research C2 Presentation of research results C3 Value of the information	Analysis and interpretation of market research activity using a range of statistical methods to meet a specific marketing objective. Recommendations to improve the quality of the process/data.



Assessment guidance

This unit is internally assessed through three assignments, each one covering one learning aim.

All learners must independently generate evidence that can be authenticated. BTEC assessors should complete observation records, while people such as work colleagues can complete witness statements. Observation records alone are not sufficient sources of learner evidence; the original learner-generated evidence must support them.

It is essential for learning aim A that you allow learners to individually select their own examples of businesses to investigate, and generate research evidence to include in their work, if they are to demonstrate independent learning and meet the distinction criteria. To achieve the higher grades, learners will need to arrive at a judgement about the usefulness of using specialist external agencies when carrying out original, new market research. The work will need to be supported throughout by appropriate examples.

To encourage higher achievement in the second assignment (learning aim B), learners will need to plan a small-scale market research activity for a stated purpose. They should have carried out a pilot survey and will need to evaluate the effectiveness of their pilot research and recommend improvements prior to undertaking the final market research activity. Both pilot and final research findings must be included as an appendix to the learners' work.

To encourage higher achievement in the third assignment (learning aim C), learners will need to produce a short report that assesses the limitations of the data collected in terms of its accuracy, subjectivity, bias and reliability. The report must go on to judge the effectiveness of the process undertaken in terms of meeting the research/marketing objectives, and to make recommendations for improvements based on the experience gained and the data generated.

Getting started

This gives you a starting place for one way of delivering the unit, based around the recommended assessment approach in the specification.

Unit 22: Market Research

Introduction

Market research can enable a business to target its consumers in the most efficient way. Gathering this insight into consumer needs and wants will allow the business to match its offering to those needs and wants and so help the business compete. Market research should always be a part of business strategy. Using the data from the research to set future targets and strategies will ensure that the right tactics are being used to enable these goals to be met.

Learning aim A – Examine the types of market research used in business

- Learners will require initial tutor input so that they have a basic understanding of the purpose of undertaking market research. They could work in small groups to research different examples of real market research data and try to match this research to the five purposes listed in the unit content.
- Learners will need to understand fully the different types of research that a business can use and the advantages and disadvantages of each type. They should investigate the different types of research, and be able to identify the differences between qualitative and quantitative research. Findings could be presented as a group or individual activity. Methods of obtaining the data should be discussed, with emphasis on the opportunities to obtain data that has resulted from the growth of social media and digital marketing. However, traditional means of gathering data, including the use of specialist market research businesses, should also be understood.
- The final choice of research method will depend on a number of factors, not least of which is the budget and the time available. Small, start-up businesses will not have a large budget but can still obtain useful data. Learners must be able to select the most appropriate form of research for a given situation. This could be done through a presentation of evidence to peers based on some scenario that you have created, or via a quiz designed to simply check knowledge and understanding. When deciding on appropriateness, learners should consider the cost of obtaining and analysing the data, the timeliness of the data and the actual response rates for the survey or research activity.

Learning aim B – Plan and implement a market research activity to meet a specific marketing objective

- Initial tutor input will be required to outline the stages in the market research process. A recap of the types of, and appropriateness of, different research methods should be carried out before learners embark on planning their own activity.
- The success of the final research plan will depend on the way in which data is collected. Improved response rates are achieved if the questionnaires are designed in an appropriate manner. Busy people have little time or interest in spending more than a few minutes giving their opinions. Learners need to avoid bias and the pilot research should aim to identify potential sources of bias in the market research plan.
- Learners will need tutor input on sampling techniques and sample size selection, and should understand the relationship between sample size, probability and confidence levels.



- Having developed the pilot research activity, learners will need to undertake the activity and collect data specific to the marketing objective they have set. This pilot data should then be reviewed and used to establish the final market research activity which must be carried out prior to them starting learning aim C.

Learning aim C – Analyse and present market research findings and recommend process improvements

- Learners may need to recap the statistical techniques used to analyse data including confidence levels of the findings. The data collected should be presented in a number of different formats. For example, a scatter diagram might be used to present findings and from this a trend established by extrapolation. Alternatively, time series analysis could be used to make forecasts from the data collected.
- It would be useful for learners to practise on some data that you have supplied so that they can obtain feedback on the content and quality of their statistical analysis and report. This would, potentially, allow learners to obtain higher grades when they analyse and report on their own research. The final report will need to present the findings in a number of different ways, and consider the value of the data collected. Has it allowed the learners to come to a decision? Did the findings match expectations? Was there sufficient data and was bias and subjectivity avoided? Learners must be able to answer these questions in the report, before moving on to justify improvements to the market research process.

Details of links to other BTEC units and qualifications, and to other relevant units/qualifications

Pearson BTEC Level 3 Nationals in Business (NQF):

- Unit 2: Developing a Marketing Campaign.
- Unit 17: Digital Marketing.
- Unit 18: Creative Promotion.

The previous QCF Level 3 BTEC National in Business also has units that link to this and resources produced or purchased for those units may be suitable for use in this unit.

The Chartered Institute of Marketing website and associated materials may also be relevant.

Resources

In addition to the resources listed below, publishers are likely to produce Pearson endorsed textbooks that support this unit of the BTEC Nationals in Business. Check the Pearson website (<http://qualifications.pearson.com/endorsed-resources>) for more information as titles achieve endorsement.

Textbooks

- Armstrong G and Kotler P – *Marketing: An introduction* (Pearson, 2012) ISBN 9780273762607.
A good introduction to the world of marketing and small business research.
- Hague P, Hague N and Morgan C – *Market Research in Practice*, 2nd edition (Kogan Page, 2013) ISBN 9780749468644.
A practical guide to market research tools and approach. A clear step-by-step guide to the whole process.
- Kotler P and Armstrong G – *Principles of Marketing* (Pearson, 2013) ISBN 9780273742975.
This has good sections on developing an integrated marketing mix and marketing analysis.

Websites

- www.cim.co.uk/files/7ps.pdf
Marketing and the seven Ps – a brief summary from the Chartered Institute of Marketing.
- www.cimmarketingexpert.co.uk
A guide to effective marketing from the Chartered Institute of Marketing – a flow chart of the marketing process with marketing tool kit.
- www.contentmarketinginstitute.com/what-is-content-marketing/
Useful (and free) e-book on 'What is content marketing?' to help develop a marketing campaign, published by the Content Marketing Institute