



**ABE Level 3 Award in Digital
Marketing Essentials for
Small Businesses
(603/1928/8)**

Qualification Specification

Version 2.1

Version and date	Change detail	Section
Launch Version – June 2017	Document created	All
Version 2.0 – September 2019	Additional guidance added Indicative content removed	Qualification summary; Assessment Unit specifications
Version 2.1 – February 2020	Wording amended	Marking and moderation

Contents

About ABE	4
Recognition	4
Why study with ABE	5
About your qualification	5
Pathways	5
Progression	6
Qualification summary	7
Qualification title	7
Operational start date	7
Qualification objectives	7
Who is it for?	7
Who regulates this qualification?.....	7
Entry guidance and criteria	7
Before the qualification can be assessed and awarded	8
Knowledge, skills and understanding to be assessed	8
Staffing and physical resource requirements.....	8
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), and Exemptions	9
Localisation	10
Qualification structure	11
Credits, Guided Learning Hours (GLH) and Total Qualification Time (TQT)	12
Modes of study	13
Suggested reading and resources for the qualification	13
Assessment	14
Assignment	14
Marking and moderation	14
Additional examination requirements	14
Reasonable adjustments and special considerations	14
Appeals and enquiry of results	14
Grading	15
Results and certification	17
Unit specifications	18
Recommended resources	22

About ABE

Recognition

ABE is fully regulated by Ofqual, the qualifications regulator for England. In addition to Ofqual, ABE have agreements or recognition by regulatory authorities in many other countries where we operate – check our website for more details.

All ABE qualifications are part of the UK Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF).

ABE qualifications are valued internationally because they are:

Professional	Our qualifications are designed to give you the knowledge and skills you need to excel in a managerial career
Affordable	ABE is a not-for-profit organisation; as such we endeavour to keep costs to a minimum. Our fast track routes to degrees are often much less expensive than traditional routes
Recognised	In addition to respected regulatory authorities, our qualifications are recognised by colleges, universities, employers and governments around the world
Supported	As an ABE member, you can access a wealth of resources designed to support your studies, and enhance your learning experience. Each ABE unit has its own study guide and we support our colleges with a wealth of tuition resources to help them deliver teaching to an outstanding standard
International	For more than 40 years, learners around the world have been benefitting from ABE qualifications
Proven	Our alumni speak for themselves – see their testimonials on our website. They work in a diverse range of industries and organisations. Many are in top jobs or running their own successful enterprises
Flexible	You can study full time or part time at a pace that suits you. All our diplomas provide expertise in business management and offer you the option of specialising in Marketing or Human Resources alongside this
A great route to university	ABE diplomas have credits which are accepted by universities around the world. Holders of ABE diplomas can fast track onto a degree course, meaning the cost of your education is dramatically reduced

Why study with ABE

ABE has an outstanding history and an excellent global reputation. Our qualifications are designed to give you the best chance of achieving your full potential in your chosen career. There is a world of opportunity waiting for you, and ABE can help you seize that opportunity and succeed.

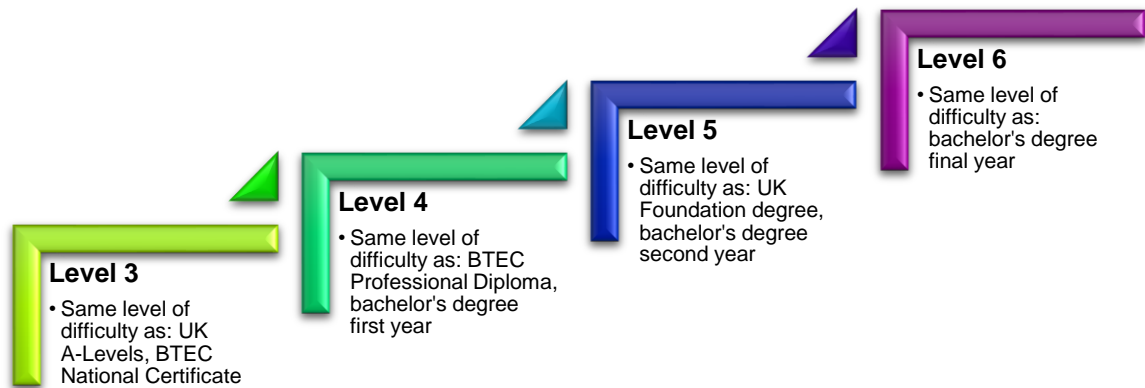
The content and format of our qualifications are the outcome of extensive research which explored the knowledge and skills employees need to possess in order for businesses to succeed. When redeveloping the new qualifications in Business, we collaborated with a wide range of students, employers, higher education providers, colleges and subject experts to ensure that the new qualifications meet their needs and expectations. Our findings highlighted that organisations require staff with a set of strong core business skills that can be flexible and adapted to diverse environments.

This research, along with consultation with employers and subject experts, has provided the backdrop for ABE’s outstanding portfolio. Our qualifications are designed to adapt and develop in line with the needs and demands of employers now and in the future.

Whether you dream of becoming an entrepreneur, getting a great job, being promoted to senior management, or if you are already in a leadership role and want to enhance your professional skill set, an ABE qualification will help you turn your plans into reality.

About your qualification

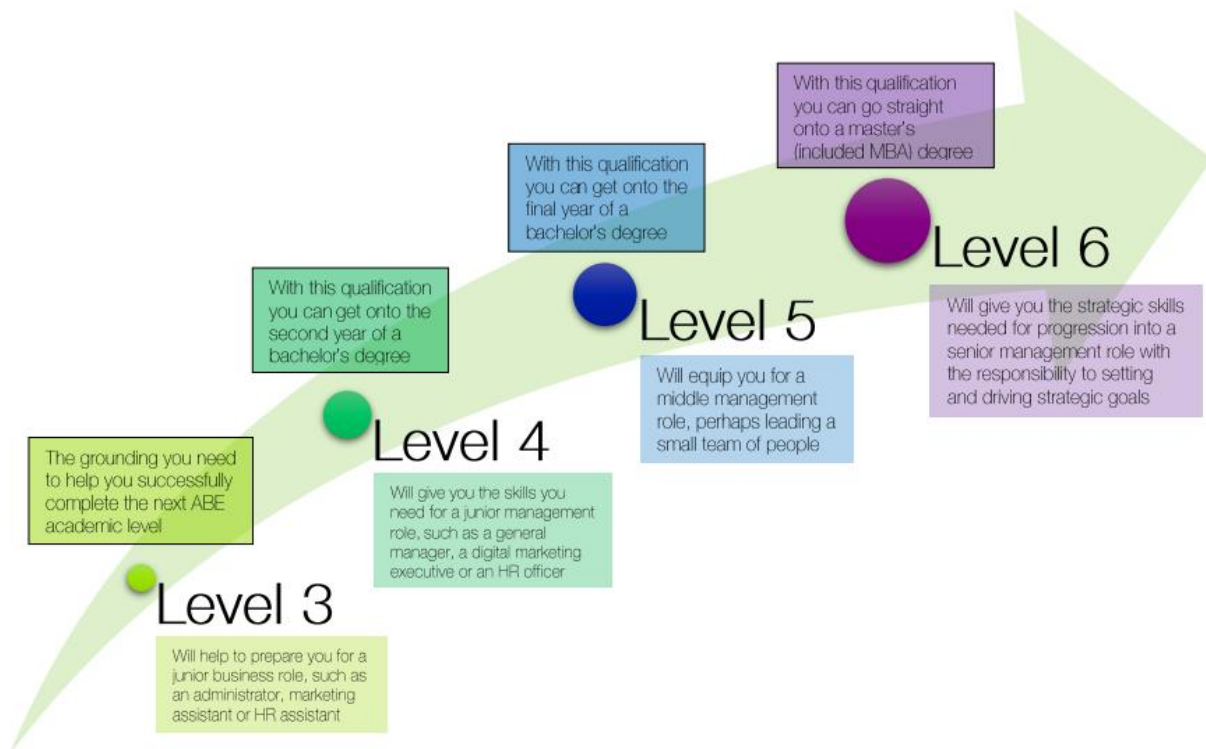
ABE is regulated by Ofqual who also manage the Regulated Qualifications Framework, which ABE’s Diploma are accredited against. Qualifications within the RQF must be levelled against the RQF level descriptors to ensure they are broadly similar in the knowledge and depth of understanding required to pass them. The size and the content of qualifications at the same level can vary. The diagram below shows how the levels progress.



Pathways

ABE’s qualifications runs from Level 2, right through to Level 6. You can enter at Level 2 and progress all the way to Level 6, enabling you to accumulate the credits needed for a university top-up, or you can enter onto the framework at any point depending on your centre’s professional and academic judgement– see our ‘Entry guidance’ section for more details.

Progression



ABE qualifications have been designed with progression in mind and, after completing one of our qualifications, you can progress to employment or to a higher level of study.

ABE offers you a full framework of qualifications that have been designed for you to be able to progress right from Level 2 all the way up to Level 6. Each qualification builds from the one before, taking you from introductory units through to strategic ones.

ABE allows you to progress from one level to the next before you have completed all the units at a given level, however we recommend that where possible you fully complete a level before moving on to the next to give yourself the best chance of success. You must ensure you fully complete the initial level in order to be awarded the next level. Should the higher level be completed first, ABE will withhold the certificates until the initial level is achieved.

On completion of the **ABE Level 3 Award in Digital Marketing for Small Businesses** you will be able to progress to another qualification in the ABE suite or use what you have learned to set up a small business.

Qualification summary

Qualification title

ABE Level 3 Award in Digital Marketing Essentials for Small Businesses (603/1928/8)

Operational start date

12th June 2017

Qualification objectives

The objectives of the ABE Level 3 Award in Digital Marketing Essentials for Small Businesses are as follows:

- Explain the terminology, benefits, risks and other considerations of using digital and online tools and techniques
- Outline the practical aspects of creating the infrastructure for digital and online tools
- Identify potential legal and contractual considerations
- Demonstrate how digital and online tools can be used to engage with customer, prospects and the market
- Suggest how digital and online tools can be used to generate revenues for the business
- Create an online profile for a business and potential points of differentiation
- Explain the importance of customer behaviour in an online context
- Develop a creative digital marketing plan for a small business

Who is it for?

This qualification is for learners that are 16 and over.

The ABE Level 3 Award in Digital Marketing Essentials for Small Businesses is aimed at those individuals who are thinking about setting up a new small business or who are already running such a venture and are keen to use technology to improve performance

Who regulates this qualification?

The qualification is regulated in the UK by:

- Ofqual

Entry guidance and criteria

There are no formal entry requirements to study an ABE Level 3 Award; however, the centre should ensure that you have a reasonable expectation of success on the programme by assessing your previous qualifications and/or related work experience.

Hence, it is their responsibility to use their professional and academic judgement when assisting you in making the decision at which level you should enter the ABE programmes.

In order to successfully study for an ABE qualification, you should have an appropriate level of English Language skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening). To ensure success rates are maximised, for **all** ABE qualifications, we recommend the following standards are met:

- IELTS 5.5
- Cambridge ESOL Cambridge English First
- Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic) 51
- Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) B2

Centres can use other English language tests as a measure of a learner's English language Skills; but the centre must be satisfied that the score is equivalent to those recommended above.

Before the qualification can be assessed and awarded

To be awarded the ABE Level 3 Award in Digital Marketing Essentials for Small Businesses learners are required to successfully achieve the one mandatory unit. There are no optional pathways as part of this qualification.

Knowledge, skills and understanding to be assessed

The knowledge, Skills and Understanding being assessed in this qualification is as follows:

- Be able to explain the terminology, benefits, risks and other considerations of using digital and online tools and techniques
- Outline the practical aspects of creating the infrastructure for digital and online tools
- Identify potential legal and contractual considerations
- Demonstrate how digital and online tools can be used to engage with customer, prospects and the market
- Give suggestions on how digital and online tools can be used to generate revenues for the business
- Create an online profile for a business and potential points of differentiation
- Explain the importance of customer behaviour in an online context
- Develop a creative digital marketing plan for a small business

Staffing and physical resource requirements

As part of the centre accreditation process ABE ask for details around staffing and physical resource. For more information on becoming an ABE accredited centre go to: <https://www.abeuk.com/abe-accreditation>

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), and Exemptions

If you hold a qualification from either another professional body or university which is similar in content and level to the ABE 6 qualifications, you might qualify for RPL, APL or an exemption from some ABE examinations or units.

If you wish to find out if you qualify before you register with us, please send a letter or an email to exemptions@abeuk.com with copies of your qualifications.

If you are already registered, you can find further information on the [ABE Portal](#).

Localisation

It is very important when studying for your ABE qualification that you consider your local business environment and try to apply what you are learning to relevant scenarios in your local business context. Doing this will help you to put your learning into practice and use it in your professional day-to-day activities.

The emphasis of the unit is primarily to facilitate business using digital tools within your local environment. Learners should take into account the following when preparing the digital marketing plan for their business which will be submitted for assessment at the end of study:

- Local culture, identity and the local environment and how it impacts the business
- Local social and community agendas
- Local legal and taxation arrangements
- Local funding opportunities
- Local business rules and regulations
- Local employment rules, regulations and legislation
- Local currency various and fluctuations

Qualification structure

ABE Level 3 Award in Digital Marketing Essentials for Small Businesses (603/1928/8)

The **ABE** Level 3 Award in Digital Marketing Essentials for Small Businesses consists of **one mandatory** unit. To be awarded this qualification you must achieve a minimum of a Pass in the mandatory unit.

The total Guided Learning Hours (GLH) is **50 hours**

The Total Qualification Time (TQT) is **60 hours**

The credit value is **6**

ABE Unit code	Unit title	Level	GLH	Credits	Assessment method
Mandatory Unit					
3UDME	Digital Marketing Essentials for Small Businesses	3	50	6	Assignment

Credits, Guided Learning Hours (GLH) and Total Qualification Time (TQT)

Total Qualification Time

As part of its Ofqual regulation, ABE allocates a Total Qualification Time (TQT) to each of its qualifications. TQT is the estimated total number of hours that learners will need in order to complete and achieve the qualification.

Examples of activities which can contribute to Total Qualification Time include:

- Guided Learning
- Independent and unsupervised research/learning
- Unsupervised compilation of a portfolio of work experience
- Unsupervised e-learning
- Unsupervised e-assessment
- Unsupervised coursework
- Watching a pre-recorded podcast or webinar
- Unsupervised work-based learning.

Within the TQT value of each qualification, we also define the Guided Learning Hours (GLH). The GLH is the estimated total number of hours for centres to deliver a qualification to their learners. The GLH covers any activities completed under direct instruction or supervision of a lecturer/teacher/tutor etc. For example, classroom learning supervised by a teacher, live webinar or telephone tutorial, e-learning supervised by a teacher in 'real time' and all forms of assessment which take place under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer/teacher/tutor.

Credits

ABE qualifications also have credits assigned to them. When you achieve a qualification with credits, you can use these credits towards progression to another qualification.

Modes of study

To study for an ABE qualification, you should be registered with an ABE Accredited Centre. For more information on finding an accredited centre, please see the ABE website.

When studying for your ABE qualification, you will most likely learn both with supervision from tutors at your centre and through your own self-study time.

Your centre is responsible for teaching ABE qualifications and they will likely use a range of delivery methods. For example, they might use:

- Classroom delivery (face to face taught time)
- Mentoring and coaching from tutors or external employers
- E-learning
- Formative assessment
- Live webinars
- Assessment support for assignment writing and revision sessions

Note: The list above is indicative; to find out more about how you will be taught, you should contact your centre.

Suggested reading and resources for the qualification

For each unit in the ABE qualifications, ABE will provide the following learning materials:

- A Study Guide in PDF format available on the ABE Portal. This Study Guide is aimed at learners and will expand on the Unit Syllabus, including case studies and examples, activities, and a glossary of terms
- Tutor Resource Packs for centres. These will contain session plans, presentations, activities and wider resources available for each unit
- Recommended resources, including online resources, available at the end of this document.

Assessment

ABE's assessments are specifically designed to fit the purpose and objective of the qualification. The **ABE Level 3 Award in Digital Marketing Essentials for Small Businesses** is assessed by an assignment, which is externally set and marked by ABE. You can find out how each unit is assessed by checking the Unit Specification in this document, or the qualification tables above.

Assignment

Assignments will be set by ABE in the format of an assignment brief. Sometimes a scenario and/or templates may be provided as well. This Level 3 assignment will have a word count of 1500. For more details on the assignment format, please see the Sample Assessment Materials available on the **ABE Portal**.

Completed assignments should be submitted by the 1st day of each month. All assignments will be submitted by centres to ABE for marking. Results will be released by ABE on your Portal six weeks later.

Marking and moderation

ABE has a broad and varied external academic team with a breadth of experience across the qualification areas and levels. Our external assessment team is very familiar with ABE students and the format of ABE exams and assignments. ABE has a very robust marking and moderation process: assessments are marked and standardised by our external team. The results are ratified by our senior assessment team, prior to publishing.

Additional examination requirements

There are no additional examination requirements for this qualification.

Reasonable adjustments and special considerations

In the development of this qualification ABE Awards has taken steps to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to achievement. For learners with particular requirements reasonable adjustments may be made in order that they can have fair assessment and demonstrate attainment. There are also arrangements for special consideration for any learner suffering illness, injury or indisposition. Full details of the reasonable adjustments and special considerations are available from the ABE candidate portal.

Appeals and enquiry of results

ABE has an appeals procedure that has been written in accordance with the regulatory arrangements in the Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition. Full details of this procedure, including how to make an application, are available on the [ABE Portal](#).

You can find further information relating to ABE assessment on the Exam Regulations section of the [ABE website](#).

Grading

In order to achieve an ABE qualification, you must demonstrate sufficient depth of study and acquisition of knowledge and skills expected for the qualification. You will need to demonstrate your achievement through the assessments set by ABE. On completion of your ABE qualification, you will be awarded an overall qualification grade based on your performance across all of your unit assessments.

The following qualification grades are available:

Grade
Distinction
Merit
Pass
Fail

Units will be assessed using the following grading scale:

Grade	Boundary
Distinction	80% - 100%
Merit	65% - 79%
Pass	50% - 64%
Fail	0% - 49%

To be awarded the **ABE Level 3 Award in Digital Marketing Essentials for Small Businesses**, you must complete and achieve a minimum of a Pass in the single mandatory unit

Grade descriptors

The table below details the grade descriptors that will be used to make judgements on grade boundaries. These descriptors will also help you to understand what we expect to see in order to achieve each grade.

Level 3

0-49 Fail	50-64 Pass	65-79 Merit	80-100 Distinction
Knowledge and understanding of the subject matter			
Lack of, limited or incomplete knowledge and understanding of the subject matter and of appropriate theory and concepts; largely unable to apply in context.	Adequate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter and of appropriate theory, but with some minor gaps; some ability to apply in context.	Good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter and of appropriate theory; generally able to apply in context.	Excellent knowledge and understanding of the subject matter and of appropriate theory; consistently able to apply in context.
Information gathering, use of reading sources and data			
Lack of, limited or only partly completed evidence of information gathering, use of resources and data, which may not be appropriate.	Adequate evidence of information gathering, use of resources and data.	Clear evidence of information gathering, use of resources and data, all of which is generally used to support answers.	High level of evidence of information gathering, use of resources and data, all of which is highly appropriate and used consistently to support answers.
Application and interpretation			
Lack of or limited interpretation and application of theory and concepts; weak or missing justifications and recommendations where relevant.	Adequate interpretation and application of theory and concepts; adequate justifications and recommendations where relevant.	Good interpretation and application of theory and concepts; generally supported justifications and recommendations where relevant.	Outstanding interpretation and application of theory and concepts; justifications and recommendations are consistently supported where relevant.
Professional communication			
Poor presentation, structure and editing; several presentation errors	Adequate and logical presentation, structure and editing; minor errors.	Good standard of presentation, structure and editing; limited number of errors.	Excellent presentation, structure and editing; well-structured and error-free.

Results and certification

If you are taking an ABE qualification, please allow three months from the date of your results to the receipt of your certificate. Certificates are usually dispatched around six weeks after results have been published (this is to allow time for any enquiries about results or appeals). Transit times vary according to which country you are in so we say allow three months but most people won't have to wait this long.

For a fuller explanation of the process see our [blog](#).

Unit specifications

In the second section of this document, you will find the Unit Specification for each unit included in the **ABE Level 3 Award in Digital Marketing Essentials for Small Businesses**.

The Unit Specification contains all the information you need about a particular unit, including the Credit value, Guided Learning Hours and the Unit Syllabus details. You should use the Unit Specifications to see what you will be expected to learn and what you will be expected to demonstrate in your assessments.

Here are some key terms to help you read and use the Unit Specifications:

Qualification	The qualification is the outcome of your studies and assessment, and represents your achievement.
Unit	A unit is a component of the overall qualification, focusing on a particular topic or area of study relevant to the qualification. Some units may be mandatory and some may be optional so be sure to check before starting your studies.
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	TQT is the number of notional hours which represents an estimate of the total amount of time that could reasonably be expected to be required in order for a Learner to achieve and demonstrate the achievement of the level of attainment necessary for the award of a qualification.
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	GLH is an element of the TQT and is an estimate of the number of hours during which the learner is given specific guidance by their tutor towards the achievement of the qualification, for example: face to face teaching, e-learning, mentoring etc.
Element	An element represents a segment of learning within the unit. Each individual element has its own rationale and content.
Learning outcomes	The learning outcome lays down the expectations of the learner and defines the knowledge, understanding and/or skills they will acquire on completion of the Unit.
Assessment criteria	The assessment criteria define what a learner must know, understand or be able to do, proving that they can achieve the Learning Outcome.
Indicative content	The indicative content is the scope of knowledge required in order to fulfil the assessment requirements and achieve the learning outcome; it also outlines the technical components of the programme.
Weighting	The way in which a section of the content is emphasised in terms of teaching, learner effort, and emphasis in assessment.

Unit Type: Mandatory

Level: 3

Credits: 6

GLH: 50

Assessment Method: Assignment

Today, it is a fact for most businesses that the ability to operate in a digital context is a key requirement to remain competitive and ensure the business achieves long term success. Technologies are changing, and will continue to evolve, and so business owners must be able to embrace the use of digital and online approaches to support their business goals, based on local market practices, tools and consideration of how they are utilised.

It's an exciting time to be running a small business, particularly when owners start to think about expanding the reach of their business through the use of digital marketing; for others, there may be the opportunity to consider a business that operates solely online.

This unit is aimed at those individuals who are thinking about setting up a new small business or who are already running such a venture and are keen to use technology to improve performance. The unit introduces the use of online and digital marketing, including consideration of the risks and issues that might arise during implementation, compared to the more traditional forms of marketing.

It explores the uses of online and digital tools to build and enhance relationships with customers and to generate revenues. During your studies, you may also be set some formative assessment tasks as part of the learning approach to help you prepare for your summative assignment. For the final summative assessment at the end of the fifth Element you will be required to develop a digital marketing plan for your business. All of the required tools and techniques to develop such a plan, will be covered throughout the unit.

The unit is appropriate for all types of businesses, whether they are selling products to customers (consumers or businesses) or for those providing a service, for example hairdressers, taxi drivers, cleaning services etc. and will enable them, regardless of the type of business, to consider how to create a digital presence in the market place, through the use of effective digital marketing tools.

What you'll learn

The table below shows the learning outcomes of this unit (what you will be able to do or what you will know), along with the assessment criteria (what you will be able to do to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcome).

Learning Outcomes The learner will:	Assessment Criteria The learner can:	Weighting
Element 1 - Introduction to the digital world for small businesses		
1. Explain the terminology, benefits, risks and other considerations of using digital and online tools and techniques	1.1 State relevant definitions and benefits of using digital and online tools 1.2 Identify key considerations and decisions regarding the implementation of digital and online tools	5%
Element 2 – How to create the infrastructure for digital and online tools		
2. Outline the practical aspects of creating the infrastructure for digital and online tools	2.1 Outline the practical aspects and associated benefits of creating the infrastructure	20%
3. Identify potential legal and contractual considerations	3.1 Identify potential legal and contractual considerations of using digital media	
Element 3 – Using digital and online tools to communicate and generate revenues		
4. Demonstrate how digital and online tools can be used to engage with customer, prospects and the market	4.1. Demonstrate how digital and online tools can be used to engage with customers, prospects and the local market in which the business operates, taking into account local culture and business practices	20%
5. Suggest how digital and online tools can be used to generate revenues for the business	5.1 Recommend methods of using digital and online tools to generate revenues 5.2 Outline physical payment methods and considerations when transacting online	
Element 4 – How to develop and maintain an online presence		
6. Create an online profile for a business and potential points of differentiation	6.1 Create an online profile for a small business and outline its key points of differentiation 6.2 Establish key points of differentiation for the business online and how it generates additional sales	20%
7. Explain the importance of customer behaviour in an online context	7.1 Explain the importance of customer behaviour in an online context	

Learning Outcomes The learner will:	Assessment Criteria The learner can:	Weighting
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Element 5 – Creating a digital marketing plan for a small business

8. Develop a creative digital marketing plan for a small business	8.1 Summarise the background and analytical steps to develop a digital marketing plan 8.2 Recommend messaging, digital tools and scheduling within a digital marketing plan 8.3 Recommend methods of measuring the effectiveness of the digital marketing plan	35%
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Capabilities

Alongside academic learning and development, ABE qualifications have been designed to develop your practical skills and capabilities. These capabilities are highlighted as certain values, knowledge, skills, and behaviours that will help you in your professional development.

Below is an overview of the behaviours, skills, and attitudes that you will develop through this unit:

Element of learning and weightings	Key capabilities developed
Element 1 - Introduction to the digital world for small businesses	Ability to utilise the key terminology relating to the digital/online world for businesses and the benefits, risks, challenges when considering use of such tools
Element 2 - How to create the infrastructure for successful Small-Medium Enterprises (SMEs)	Ability to identify the requirements and considerations when establishing an infrastructure to enable and support the use of digital/online tools
Element 3 - Using digital and online tools to communicate and generate revenues	Ability to compare different digital/online tools and demonstrate how they can be used to communicate with customer and prospects and to generate revenues
Element 4 - How to develop and maintain an online presence	Creating an online profile for the business and understanding of the online behaviour of customers
Element 5 - Creating a digital marketing plan for a small business	Ability to prepare a creative digital marketing plan for a small business venture

Recommended resources

Core text:

- ABE Study Guide for ABE Level 3 Award in Digital Marketing Essentials for Small Businesses

Supplementary text:

- Ryan, D (2016) Understanding Digital Marketing: Marketing Strategies for Engaging the Digital Generation, 4th ed, London, Kogan Page, ISBN-13: 978-0749478438

Online resources:

- <https://blog.aweber.com/digital-marketing-2/creating-a-diy-digital-marketing-plan-for-your-small-business.htm>
- <https://hbr.org/2016/07/3-ways-to-get-your-own-digital-platform>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=StYGaCeaRkQ>
- <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/223752>
- <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jaysondemers/2014/04/16/50-content-marketing-ideas-for-your-website-or-blog/#2f6736647211>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/small-business-network/2013/aug/29/social-media-boost-business-tips->How-to-Properly-Use-Social-Media-to-Fit-Your-Business-Strategy>



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