



ABE Level 3 Certificate in Business Start-up (603/0048/6)

Qualification Specification

Version 1.1

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Version 2.1 – February 2020	Wording amended	Marking and moderation

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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.

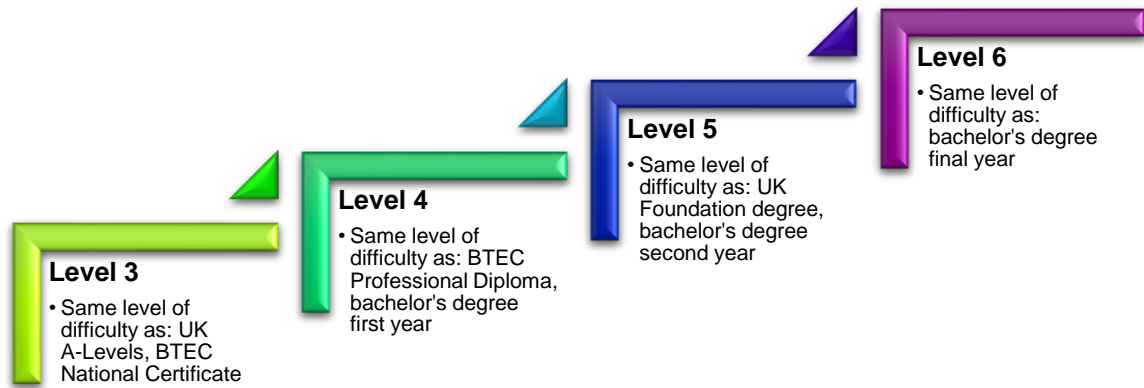
The content and format of our qualifications are the outcome of extensive research which explored the knowledge and skills employees need to possess in order for businesses to succeed. When redeveloping the new qualifications in Business, we collaborated with a wide range of students, employers, higher 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

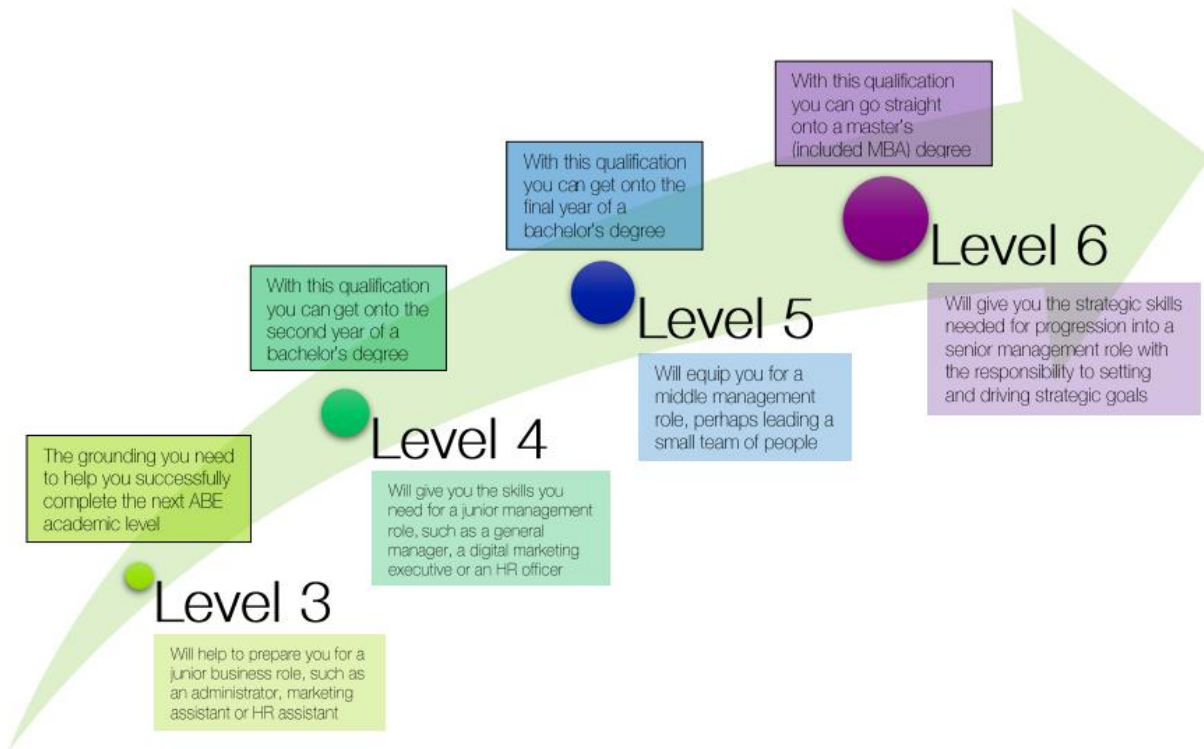
ABE is regulated by Ofqual who also manage the Regulated Qualifications Framework, which ABE qualifications are accredited against. Qualifications within the RQF must be levelled against the RQF level descriptors to ensure they are broadly similar in the knowledge and depth of understanding required 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 framework of business management qualifications runs from Level 3, right through to Level 6. You can enter at Level 3 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 3 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 Certificate in Business Start-up** you will be able to progress to another qualification in the ABE suite, or use what you have learned to seek employment within entrepreneurial set up.

Qualification summary

Qualification title

ABE Level 3 Certificate in Business Start-up (603/0048/6)

Operational start date

30th June 2016

Qualification objectives

The objectives of the ABE Level 3 Certificate in Start-up are as follows:

- Analyse entrepreneurial and market potential
- Build the business idea
- Developing the marketing approach
- Plan the operations
- Plan the budget
- Create the business plan and pitch

Who is it for?

This qualification is for learners that are 16 and over.

The ABE Level 3 Certificate in Business Start-up will give you the knowledge and confidence you need to run a successful business and learn the mechanics of running a business day-to-day.

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 Certificate; 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 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). For the ABE Level 3 Certificate, ABE recommends the following standards are met:

- IELTS 5.5
- Cambridge ESOL - Preliminary PET or BEC
- Pearson Test of English (PTE) – 36-41
- 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 Certificate in Business Start-up 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:

- How to research and build a business proposition
- How to analyse competitors
- How to write a business plan
- How to pitch
- How to plan
- Legal requirements in your country
- What you need to do to raise your skills
- How to manage a business day to day
- How to recognise when things are going wrong

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 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 nature and form of organisations varies widely. Internal factors such as ownership, business strategy, and size each play a part in defining the shape and focus of an organisation. In turn, this impacts upon the expectations and responsibilities placed on individual managers. Whilst trends in the external environment impact on organisations differently, increased globalisation and digitalisation have led to increasing competition resulting in a growing need for managers to be aware of external practices and approaches and to adopt a best fit approach.

You should take into account the following when preparing for your summative assessment:

- The structure, culture, size, vision, and mission of the organisation you are working for or basing your assessment on
- The local culture and how it impacts on employee and stakeholder expectations of a manager
- Availability of resources
- Feasibility and suitability of practices within your specific setting

Qualification Structure

ABE Level 3 Certificate in Business Start-up (603/0048/6)

The ABE Level 3 Certificate in Business Start-up 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 **240 hours**

The Total Qualification Time (TQT) is **360 hours**

The credit value is **36**

ABE Unit code	Unit title	Level	GLH	Credits	Assessment method
Mandatory Unit					
3BSU	Business Start-up	3	240	36	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

Assessment

ABE's assessments are specifically designed to fit the purpose and objective of the qualification. The ABE Level 3 Certificate in Business Start-up is assessed by a mixture of formative and summative assignments, and a pitch.

Assignment

The assessment for this qualification is an **assignment**, which will ultimately take the form of a **business plan**.

In order to prepare your business plan, you are required to successfully complete tasks that relate to the first five elements of the course; your centre will give you feedback on these tasks. These tasks will feed into your business plan, which is the assessment for Element 6. The summative assignment is externally set and marked by ABE. You can find out how each element is assessed by checking the ABE Level 3 Certificate in Business Start-up: Assignment Guidance document – that is available on the ABE website.

There are six briefs, one for each element of the course. Templates are provided for most tasks within the **Template Document**, but **Template M (a, b and c)** and the **Business Plan Template** are included separately within this folder, as Template M is an Excel spreadsheet and the Business Plan is the final template, which we recommend you use as the basis for your final assignment submission.

You can use the individual templates as they are, adapt them to better meet the needs of your business start-up, or devise your own, but the tasks associated with the first five elements are intended to be short and the use of templates should help limit the time you need to spend on each of them. The recommended word counts will help to ensure that you write concisely, which is important as any potential investors will not want to plough through lengthy documents. For more details on the assignment format, please see the documents available on the **ABE Portal**.

Your completed business plan should be submitted to ABE 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 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	70 - 100
Merit	55 - 69
Pass	40 - 54
Fail	0 - 34

To be awarded the **ABE Level 3 Certificate in Business Start-up**, 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

0-39 Fail	35-39 Marginal fail	40-54 Pass	55-69 Merit	70-100 Distinction
Structure and organisation of content				
Very poor presentation and structure; errors throughout	Poor presentation and structure; errors evident	Logical presentation and structure; minor errors; within word limit	Strong presentation and structure; minor errors; within word limit	Excellent presentation and structure; error free; within word limit
Knowledge and understanding				
Very poor descriptions and inappropriate theory and concepts	Limited description of appropriate theory and concepts	Minor gaps in description of appropriate theory and concepts	Good description of appropriate theory and concepts	Excellent description of appropriate theory and concepts; appropriate use of theory, concept
Application and interpretation				
Very poor or incorrect interpretation of theory and concepts; no justification for decisions and recommendations	Limited interpretation and application of theory and concepts; limited justification for decisions and recommendations	Limited interpretation and application of theory and concepts; some justification for decisions and recommendations	Good interpretation and application of theory and concepts; good justification for decisions and recommendations	Excellent interpretation and application of theory and concepts; strong justification for decisions and recommendations
Use of reference material				
Very poor range of reference material; incorrect referencing; unreliable reference sources	Poor range of reference material; poor referencing; unreliable reference sources	Limited range of reference material; references presented	A good range of reference material; references accurately presented	A diverse range of reliable reference sources; references accurately presented

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 Certificate in Business Start-up**.

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

Indicative Content

Comprehensive indicative content for each unit can be found in the unit syllabus on the ABE Portal.

Unit Type: Mandatory

Level: 3

Credits: 36

GLH: 240

Assessment Method: Assignment

For success in today's business environment, the skills and capabilities needed have changed significantly from those required even five years ago. With constantly changing aims and goals in business, the way in which we achieve success is also different. For many employees, these changes will affect their career path and progression.

The influence of technology, globalisation, and environmental issues mean that, in order to be successful and to progress in a career, the skills of the modern professional need to be relevant and adaptable, to cope with a new way of working.

This unit develops skills for the modern business professional, who is looking to progress, and for newly employed staff starting their career in business.

For new entrants into employment, it introduces them to an understanding of how businesses are run and how to contribute to that success.

For experienced employees, this unit will refresh, update, and introduce modern concepts of working to improve their skills. The programme focuses on the key capabilities required for you to work in a way that adds value to their organisation by developing practical working skills. The elements of learning enable you to develop these skills. Application of these skills is encouraged in suggested activities and formative assessments.

The structure leads you through an introduction to the modern business environment and how they work within it. It encompasses practical skills, knowledge, and guidance on how to focus on working methods to improve capabilities

This unit has a particular focus on how the employee can become an asset to an organisation by looking at the role of the employee, how employees fit in within an organisation and how they can add value to their role. It therefore supports new employees, those already working, and those seeking to change jobs or gain promotion and need to understand contemporary working methods.

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 - Analyse entrepreneurial and market potential		
1. Produce a plan to develop the entrepreneurial skills and attributes required to support a successful business venture	1.1 Explain the entrepreneur's role in relation to business start-up success 1.2 Produce a personal development plan to enhance personal performance and support a successful business start-up	20%
2. Identify information sources to produce a business plan and inform an external market analysis	2.1 Explain the purpose and benefit of the business plan for a business start-up 2.2 Explain how to gather information to make informed business decisions	20%
3. Explain the importance of the external environment and its potential impact on business success	3.1 Describe the PESTEL stages of the macro environment, relevant to a business start-up 3.2 Outline the dimensions of a market analysis for business planning and its importance for a business start-up 3.3 Describe the characteristics of the competitive environment and the level of competition in an industry using Porter's Five Forces Analysis 3.4 Describe stakeholders, their importance and impact on the business start-up	60%

Learning Outcomes The learner will:	Assessment Criteria The learner can:	Weighting
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Element 2 – Build the business idea

4. Describe how the business idea is unique from both customer and competitor perspectives	4.1 State how the business idea is different to and/or better than competitor offerings to enhance the probability of success for the start-up 4.2 Identify potential customers that may respond positively to the business idea 4.3 Develop a Unique Selling Proposition (USP) to differentiate the product/service from its competitors and communicate the benefit(s) for customers	40%
5. Analyse the business idea to support and inform the business plan	5.1 Explain the role of market analysis in business planning the business start-up and how it feeds into the SWOT analysis (5.2) 5.2 Analyse the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the business start-up	40%
6. Produce measurable business objectives to provide focus and direction for a business start-up	6.1 Describe the purpose and content of business objectives to ensure appropriate performance for the business start-up 6.2 Develop objectives to enable business performance to be monitored	20%

Element 3 – Develop the market approach

7. Describe and improve the business idea using the marketing mix	7.1 Explain the role of marketing for a business 7.2 Define each element of the marketing mix and how it could contribute to customer satisfaction	60%
8. Define and position the Unique Selling Proposition (USP) to build the business identity and influence customer perceptions	8.1 Produce a perceptual map to identify the position for a start-up	10%
9. Develop a sales pitch that an entrepreneur could use to drive sales or encourage investment in the start-up	9.1 Develop a convincing pitch to attract potential investors' attention and generate further interest or action for the start-up 9.2 Explain the skills involved in communicating the USP and persuading potential customers to purchase	30%

Learning Outcomes The learner will:	Assessment Criteria The learner can:	Weighting
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Element 4 – Plan the operations

10. Identify local legal structures and regulations relevant to a business start-up	10.1 Identify a suitable legal structure for a new business 10.2 Identify relevant local regulations for a start-up to ensure it operates within the law	30%
11. Describe the local requirements and resources required to enable a start-up to provide its products/services	11.1 Identify the physical resources and the related costs for a business start-up 11.2 Identify the human resources and the related costs for a business start-up	30%
12. Explain how the business will operate at launch and on an ongoing basis	12.1 Describe the activities to support a successful start-up launch 12.2 Describe business functions and activities to assist in managing the business on a day-to-day basis	40%

Element 5 – Plan the budget

13. Produce financial forecasts and budgets to assist in sourcing finances and inform the business plan for a start-up	13.1 Explain the purpose and benefits of producing accurate financial records for start-up and ongoing management of a business 13.2 Explain the financial and legal responsibilities and liabilities that a business and its director(s)/owner(s) must fulfil to comply with legal requirements 13.3 Prepare financial documents to meet requirements and inform the business plan 13.4 Identify potential sources of finance for the start-up, and the relative costs and terms	60%
14. Produce an operating budget for managing the day-to-day business using financial information to manage performance and spot the potential for failure.	14.1 Set up a day-to-day operating budget that allows for the management of cash flow and daily operational requirements 14.2 Describe the requirements for maintaining up to date accounting records to help the day to day operation of the business	40%

Learning Outcomes The learner will:	Assessment Criteria The learner can:	Weighting
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Element 6 – Create the business plan and pitch

15. Prepare a business plan that can be used to secure funding and assist the entrepreneur in the ongoing management of the business	15.1 Produce a business plan to generate funding and to drive start-up success	50%
16. Prepare a pitch that delivers key information and drives potential investors to explore the start-up in further depth	16.1 Prepare a pitch that could be used to stimulate interest from potential investors	30%
17. Reflect on the process of developing a business plan and pitch as part of the entrepreneur's personal development (developed in Element 2) in order to identify areas for further development to support the business start-up's success	17.1 Review the business plan and pitch to improve approach, structure and content 17.2 Review the PDP (developed in Element 1) to highlight successes and areas for further development 17.3 Produce an updated PDP to continue to improve personal performance and to build entrepreneurial skills to drive and develop a successful business start-up	20%

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	Key capabilities developed
Element 1 - Analyse entrepreneurial and market potential	<p>Ability to assess the marketing environment and how it impacts and influences your business idea</p> <p>Ability to assess your own capability against the needs of the proposed business venture</p>
Element 2 - Build the business idea	<p>Ability to scope and refine a business idea – what it might look like, feel like, act like and be like and the ability to research the market to make sure the business idea is of interest to your customers</p>
Element 3 - Developing the marketing approach	<p>Ability to build the unique selling proposition, to know who the customer and market is and how to approach them</p> <p>Ability to create the scope of the product and/or service and the ability to price it, promote it, sell it and service it whilst building brand recognition</p>
Element 4 - Plan the operations	<p>Ability to identify the need for the right legal set-up for the new business venture, while identifying the right people, operational processes and resources for the new business start-up</p>
Element 5 - Plan the budget	<p>Ability to develop a funding and operational budget for the new business start-up, including a daily cash flow along with setting key business performance indicators to monitor performance</p>
Element 6 - Create the business plan and pitch	<p>Ability to develop a business plan that incorporates all of the above</p> <p>Ability to pitch and present effectively for business funding from a range of sources</p>



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