

About this Update

This is the third update about Access 1 and 2. Its purpose is to support teachers and lecturers in any SQA centre offering qualifications at this level and to help keep you up-to-date with current developments.

This is a reminder of the qualifications available at Access 1 and 2:

- ◆ Access 1 Units
- ◆ Access 2 Units and Clusters
- ◆ Scottish Group Awards (Access 2)*
- ◆ Skillstart Group Awards (Access 2)*

*There are also Group Awards available at Access 3

How one local authority is handling Access 1 & 2

In Fife, National Qualifications Access courses have mainly been used in special schools and departments of special education attached to secondary schools, with some noteworthy developments in mainstream settings. The policy of inclusion and the National Priorities are central to the work being carried out in Fife.

The setting up of the Access Working Group; development of a website: www.fife-education.org.uk/nq and the appointment of two Development Officers (Kayren Hall and Sheila Auras), was a clear indication of Fife's Education Service's continuing commitment to Access and the proposal to share best practice across Fife.

In 2003 the Access Support Pack produced by the Development Officers was distributed to all Fife centres, and regular newsletters are also produced.

What is happening in Group Awards?

Skillstart

The Skillstart Group Award(s) are currently being reviewed and revised. The Skillstart Group Award Access 2 specification is being revised to include vocational Units. The mandatory section will now allow candidates to achieve the five Core Skills: Communication, Information Technology, Numeracy, Problem Solving and Working with Others.

The next stage in the process will be to look at the Access 3 Group Award specification.

Scottish Group Awards (Access 2 and Access 3)

Scottish Group Awards are packages of National Courses, Clusters and Units which are designed to give candidates coherent and relevant learning experiences. At Access 2 and 3 there are general SGAs available as Single, Double and Triple awards. These general SGAs allow for lateral as well as vertical progression. To achieve an SGA, candidates have to meet the design rules in terms of Clusters and Unit credits and also achieve three Core Skills.

Certification news

Cluster entries

Clusters are coherent groupings of (normally) three National Units. Candidates who are doing a Cluster must be entered for the Units in the Cluster and also for the Cluster (these have 'C' code) for certification. Approximately 400 candidates would currently be eligible for certification for a Cluster, but if a candidate has not been entered for the Cluster by his/her centre, he/she will not receive certification for the Cluster automatically.

Certification — August 2004

When SQA issued certificates for the main diet in August 2004, candidates in special schools who were doing Units also received their certificates. This is the first time SQA has issued Unit-only certificates with the main diet results. Gerry Campbell, Headteacher of Kilpatrick School is pictured with two of her candidates who received their certificates at the main diet in August 2004.



New and revised provision 2004–2005

Social Subjects — amendments

The three Social Subjects Units D527 08 *Contrasting*, D526 08 *Deciding* and D528 08 *Organising and Presenting Information* have been amended to make them easier to read; to remove confusion about topics, aspects, and contexts; and to make it clear that centres may deliver within one context. There have been no significant changes to the requirements of the Units, and there has been no change to the Evidence Requirements.

SQA Units are available on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk. If you are experiencing difficulties in downloading them, please telephone SQA's Customer Contact Centre on 0845 279 1000.

A further 11 Independent Access 1 Units have been developed and will be available to download from SQA's website as soon as they are validated. These are:

- ◆ Everyday Communication in a Work-Related Setting
- ◆ Everyday Communication in a Cultural Setting
- ◆ Everyday Communication: Recognising Signs in the Community
- ◆ Healthy Basic Cooking: Make a snack
- ◆ Recognising Number
- ◆ Problem Solving
- ◆ Using Mathematics to Handle Information
- ◆ Investigating Measurement
- ◆ Investigating Length in Familiar Situations
- ◆ Investigating Weight in Familiar Situations
- ◆ Investigating Volume in Familiar Situations

Supported Access 1 Units

Many centres are now delivering the Supported Access 1 Units:

- ◆ DE67 07 Healthy Basic Cooking: Introduction to Kitchen Routines
- ◆ DE68 07 Healthy Basic Cooking: Use of Small Electrical Equipment
- ◆ DE69 07 Healthy Basic Cooking: Producing a One Course Uncooked Meal
- ◆ DE6A 07 Healthy Basic Cooking: Producing a One Course Cooked Meal
- ◆ DE6C 07 Healthy Basic Cooking: Producing a One Course Cooked, One Course Uncooked Meal
- ◆ DE6D 07 Healthy Basic Cooking: Producing a Two Course Meal

Centres which are delivering the Supported Access 1 Units will be asked to give feedback to SQA to help with the development of more provision at this level.

Learning and Teaching Scotland has produced a National Qualifications Curriculum Pack — Additional Support Needs — Advice on the Implementation of Supported Units at Access 1. A copy has been sent to all centres, and it can also be downloaded from the LTS website: www.LTScotland.org.uk.

SQA, LTS and SFEU are working collaboratively to produce a DVD to exemplify the standards in the Access 1 Supported Level Units. This DVD will be issued to centres in Spring 2005.

School college link programme and processes in Kilmarnock

Park School is a special school in Kilmarnock which has 60plus pupils in its secondary department. The relationship between Park School and Kilmarnock College has always been a fruitful one which makes the transition between school and college as easy as possible.

Kilmarnock College has been involved in supporting students with additional needs for many years. Approximately 350 students with additional needs are enrolled at Kilmarnock College, most of whom are on individual timetables, chosen by the students from about 70 classes. These classes encompass a wide age and ability range.

Over the past six years Kilmarnock College and Park School have worked together to arrange classes for post-16 pupils. Pupils' needs are reviewed by lecturers and teachers and the pupils are given college placements before they leave school to make the transition between school and post-compulsory education easier for the pupils.

In May and June, school and college staff meet to discuss provision for the S5 and S6 pupils and to draw up timetables which take into account the pupils' abilities and needs. Liaison between the school and college is crucial. The placements, which can be for a morning or for a whole day, are for pupils in S5 and S6. They attend the college as a group, with the school providing additional staff to support them. This support is gradually reduced as the group

members become more independent in the busy college environment.

At Kilmarnock College the courses, which tend to be vocational and/or Life Skills Courses, are well suited to the needs of the students and complement the Access 2 and 3 Units and Clusters being done in the school. The college offers a full-time Vocational Assessment Programme at Access level offering experience in vocational taster areas, and a three-day programme (Access 2) for school leavers. Generally, school leavers from Park School take places on one of these two programmes.

Any plan of this nature has to be modified from year to year, depending on the variables of delivery, but the principles remain in place. It all seems to add up to a quality, comprehensive service to the students in these two establishments.

Seamless transition is always a sort of 'pie in the sky' kind of idea, but here I feel that we have achieved a school-college transition which is relatively painless for our students and for their families. It provides a continuation in their education with as little interruption as possible.'

Tom Nisbet – Park School

Acknowledgements

We wish to acknowledge the contribution to this section of the update by Mr Tom Nisbet of Park School and Linda Montgomerie of Kilmarnock College.

SQA's website

Our website has been updated to allow centres to access it more easily. All information on Access 1 and 2 is now grouped together in the same place. To find it, go to:

- ◆ SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk
- ◆ Home Page ▶
- ◆ top right-hand side ▶
- ◆ choose a section
- ◆ Click on the drop-down menu
- ◆ Select Access 1 and 2 tab

Information is grouped as follows:

- ◆ News
- ◆ Access 1 Unit Specifications
- ◆ Access 2 Unit Specifications and Clusters
- ◆ Senior Moderator reports
- ◆ Staff support materials
- ◆ Update letters

Moderation

Central Moderation

Last session, moderation activity focused on the central moderation event in April and centres' requests for development visits. One centre was retrospectively moderated. The central moderation event was highly successful, with the majority of schools and colleges submitting candidate evidence of a high quality. At the event there were six moderators present, enabling a good team approach to issues that arose.

Visiting Moderation

Visiting moderation takes place where evidence is available in centres and cannot be easily transported or where the evidence is based on performance. More visiting moderation on Access 1 and 2 based on incomplete evidence is planned for 2005 to support centres delivering Access 1 and 2 Units.

External Moderators

External Moderators are appointed on a part-time basis. For Access qualifications, they must be practising teachers/lecturers who have current experience of delivering and assessing National Units at Access 1 and 2. External Moderators for Access 1 and 2 Units are not appointed on a subject-specific basis, but work across the full range of provision. Currently we have ten External Moderators.

If you are interested in becoming an External Moderator, and meet the criteria (ie you are a practising teacher/lecturer, and have current experience of delivering and assessing National Units at Access 1 and 2), please contact the Appointments Section in SQA on 0131-561 6765 for an application pack.

Development visits

Centres can ask for an External Moderator to carry out a development visit if they are looking for some support with delivery and assessment issues.

An External Moderator can work with you to clarify issues such as guidance that can be given to candidates, how to devise a suitable assessment for a particular group, or how to demonstrate where to find evidence across different Units. There is a small charge for this service (£100). If you would like an External Moderator to come to your centre, please contact SQA's Moderation Section on 0141-242 2174 to arrange a suitable date.

National Assessment Bank materials (NABs)

NABs are now available on the secure pages of our website. SQA Co-ordinators have a password which allows them to access and download NABs.

From March 2005, Access 2 NABS will also be available to download in Word format so that teachers/lecturers can modify them to suit their candidates' needs.

Seminars/Quality Networks

Further seminars for special schools, colleges and mainstream secondary schools delivering Access 1 and 2 will be organised for 2005 and we will be writing to centres in due course to advise them of the dates. These events will have a focus on Quality Assurance and be supported by SQA External Moderators.

Seminars for secondary schools – May 2004

In May 2004 three national seminars were held for teachers delivering or about to deliver Access 1 and 2 provision in mainstream secondary schools. These events were organised as a result of many requests from mainstream secondary school teachers for assistance with delivery and assessment of what is, for many of them, a new level of provision. Almost 200 secondary schools were represented at the events, which were held in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Perth.

The seminar programme was a mixture of formal presentations covering a general update on Access 1 and 2, moderation issues, and operational issues; input from a practitioner; and a range of workshops.

Feedback from the seminars shows that there is a need for:

- ◆ more delivery and assessment support materials at this level
- ◆ more sharing of information, expertise and materials among teachers
- ◆ further seminars for teachers delivering with an input on quality assurance and standards
- ◆ more support for quality assurance from SQA
- ◆ a stronger 'inclusion' ethos in many mainstream secondaries
- ◆ overt support from senior management in schools for the integration of learners at Access 1 and 2 with mainstream learners where feasible
- ◆ guidance on timetabling, especially where a school has only one or two learners at this level
- ◆ raising the profile of Access
- ◆ further National Assessment Bank exemplars (NABs) with greater use of graphics

A Guide to Access 1 and 2 – Staff Support Materials 2005

This document will shortly be available from SQA's website. It is a resource for teachers and lecturers involved in the delivery of Access 1 and 2 provision, and is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of provision.

Support Network

SQA is keen to help promote good practice and facilitate sharing of experience among practitioners involved in the delivery of Access 1 and 2 Units, Clusters and Group Awards.

To help put practitioners in touch with each other, we have created a database of centres and practitioners who are willing to share expertise with other practitioners. Many centres and practitioners have given us their details, and from January 2005, this database will be available online to those who have asked to be included in it. The named contacts in these centres will shortly receive an e-mail advising them on how to access the database.

Practitioners who are not currently on the Support Network database can get the relevant forms by contacting Morna Cartoon (morna.cartoon@sqa.org.uk or on 0141-242 2428).

More information

Further copies of this Update may be obtained from SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk

For general enquiries and requests for publications, please telephone SQA's Customer Contact Centre on 0845 279 1000 or e-mail: customer@sqa.org.uk



Hanover House Ironmills Road
24 Douglas Street Dalkeith
Glasgow Midlothian
G2 7NQ EH22 1LE

Customer Contact Centre
tel: 0845 279 1000
fax: 0141-242 2244
e-mail: customer@sqa.org.uk

website: www.sqa.org.uk