



Higher Administration and IT — draft Course rationale and summary

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Course rationale

Background

All new and revised National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

In this Course, and its component Units, there will be an emphasis on skills development and the application of those skills. Assessment approaches will be proportionate, fit for purpose and will promote best practice, enabling learners to achieve the highest standards they can.

This Course provides learners with opportunities to continue to acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities as well as skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

All Courses provide opportunities for learners to develop breadth, challenge and application, but the focus and balance of the assessment will be appropriate for the subject area.

Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles

The Higher Administration and Information Technology (Administration and IT) Course builds on the principles and practice paper for the technologies curriculum area.¹ It enables learners to understand the importance of administration and to embrace and use IT in administration-related contexts. The Course lays foundations for lifelong learning and a successful working life.

The Course will develop: successful learners who achieve through participating in engaging, motivating and relevant learning experiences in real-life administration contexts; and confident individuals who derive satisfaction from engaging in practical activities relevant to the world of work and from having their achievements and skills recognised.

The Course will also develop: responsible citizens who actively participate in the work of the class, become aware of issues affecting society, such as internet safety and the impacts of IT, and take on organisational tasks; and effective contributors who share their views with others, effectively contributing to group tasks and supporting their peers whenever appropriate.

Moreover, the Course develops a range of skills for learning, life and work, which have a universal application and are essential to individuals' effective functioning in all three spheres. They include IT and aspects of literacy, numeracy and thinking skills.

Purpose and aims of the Course

Administration is a growing sector which cuts across the entire economy and offers wide-ranging employment opportunities. Moreover, administrative and IT skills have extensive application not only in employment but also in other walks of life.

The key purpose of this Course is to develop learners' advanced administrative and IT skills and, ultimately, to enable them to contribute to the effective functioning of organisations in supervisory administrative positions. The Course aims to enable learners to:

- ◆ develop an understanding of the nature, scope and importance of administration
- ◆ develop an understanding of key legislation affecting administration and its implications for organisations

¹ Technologies principles and practice paper

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/learningteachingandassessment/curriculumareas/technologies/principlesandpractice/index.asp>

- ◆ develop an understanding of the importance of key administrative functions to organisational effectiveness and of the benefits of good, and consequences of poor, customer care
- ◆ develop a range of IT skills, some of them advanced, and use them for research and for managing and communicating information
- ◆ acquire organisational skills in the context of managing the organisation of events (including meetings)

The broad structure of the Course meets its purpose and aims, which are addressed by the three Units it comprises.

The Course is a blend of applied, experiential learning and related theory and uses real-life contexts, which makes it relevant to the world of work. Its uniqueness lies in enabling learners to work towards industry standard in IT in an administration-related context. While the skills, knowledge and understanding it develops reflect current administrative practice, the Course is sufficiently flexible to take account of emerging technologies, and this will ensure its continuing currency and relevance.

The Course makes an important contribution to general education through developing a range of essential skills which will stand learners in good stead regardless of the career path they ultimately choose. Its contribution to vocational education is just as significant because it opens up progression to a range of careers in administration and IT. The Course also supports the wider curriculum through its emphasis on IT.

Information about typical learners who might do the Course

This Course is designed for those who are interested in the management aspects of administration and advanced uses of IT, and who want to develop their administrative and IT skills further. Learners who have completed the Course will be able to utilise the acquired administration- and IT-related knowledge, understanding and skills at home, in the wider community and, ultimately, in employment.

Although entry is at the discretion of centres, learners are expected to have reached SCQF level 5 in terms of relevant qualifications and/or experience.

The Course takes into account the needs of all learners in that it recognises that young people achieve in different ways and at a different pace.

Learners will develop a range of both generic and subject-specific skills, including: the ability to use a range of functions, some of them advanced, of IT applications including word processing, spreadsheets, databases and desktop publishing, or equivalent technologies; the ability to use technology, including the internet, for electronic communication and research; the ability to take

responsibility for key administrative functions; and the ability to organise, manage and communicate relatively complex information.

Learners will also develop: the ability to manage the organisation of events (including meetings); the ability to comply with relevant health, safety and security legislation and workplace procedures; the ability to solve technology-related and other problems in the context of administration; and the skills, qualities and attributes required of senior administrators.

The Course will support learners' personal and social development and will serve them very well in their day-to-day lives, as well as preparing them for the next stage in their education and for entering the world of work. Whatever path they choose, those who have completed this Course will thus be able to play their part in the economic and social life of the 21st century effectively.

The Course opens up a range of progression routes — both vertical and lateral — to further and higher education, including other NQs, NPAs, PDAs, SVQs, HNCs, HNDs and, ultimately, degrees in other administration-related subjects and IT. It may also lead to employment and/or training in various industries.

Course summary

Course title: Higher Administration and IT

SCQF level 6 (24 SCQF credit points)

Course outline

Mandatory Units

Administrative Theory and Practice (Higher)	(6 SCQF credit points)
IT Solutions for Administrators (Higher)	(6 SCQF credit points)
Communication in Administration (Higher)	(6 SCQF credit points)

Course assessment

(6 SCQF credit points)

This Course includes six SCQF credit points for 40 additional programmed hours to allow preparation for Course assessment. The Course assessment covers the added value of the Course. Further information on the Course assessment is provided in the Assessment section.

Course structure and conditions of award

The Course, which is a blend of applied, experiential learning and related theory, develops both generic and subject-specific skills in administration-related contexts. The generic skills include the thinking skills of understanding, applying, analysing and evaluating and aspects of literacy and numeracy. The subject-specific skills, which include a range of IT skills, some of them advanced, will enable learners to organise, manage and communicate information, take responsibility for key administrative functions and manage the organisation of events (including meetings).

This Course comprises three mandatory Units. All Units form a coherent whole, with learners' skills and related knowledge and understanding being systematically developed throughout the Course.

Units are statements of standards for assessment and not programmes of learning and teaching. They can be delivered in a variety of ways.

Administrative Theory and Practice (Higher)

The purpose of this Unit is to enable learners to develop an understanding of administration in the workplace from a management perspective and to apply it in the context of a range of administrative tasks, with the emphasis on those involved in managing the organisation of events (including meetings). Learners will acquire an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the nature, scope and importance of administration, key legislation affecting it, key administrative functions and their contribution to the effectiveness of organisations, the benefits of good, and consequences of poor, customer care and the skills, qualities and attributes required of administrators.

IT Solutions for Administrators (Higher)

The purpose of this Unit is to develop learners' skills in IT, some of them advanced, and in organising and managing information in administration-related contexts with some non-routine elements. Learners will develop the ability to utilise a range of functions, some of them advanced, of IT applications covering word processing, spreadsheets, databases, or emerging equivalent technologies, and to use them to analyse, process and manage information in order to create, edit and update relatively complex business documents. This Unit will also develop learners' understanding of the impact of IT on the workplace and the ability to solve technology-related problems. This Unit will allow emerging technologies to be incorporated so as to ensure that its content remains current and relevant.

Communication in Administration (Higher)

The purpose of this Unit is to enable learners to use a range of IT skills, some of them advanced, for research and sharing information with others in administration-related contexts with some non-routine elements. Learners will develop a sophisticated understanding of what constitutes a reliable source of information and the ability to identify and use the most appropriate methods for carrying out research. The Unit will also develop learners' understanding of what

successful learner, confident individual, responsible citizen, effective contributor

makes a good communicator and of the effects of poor communication and the barriers it creates. This understanding will enable learners to communicate relatively complex information in ways appropriate to its context, audience and purpose. The Unit will allow emerging technologies to be incorporated so as to ensure that its content remains current and relevant.

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all the Units as well as the Course assessment. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

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Assessment

Information about assessment standards for the Course will be included in the *Course Assessment Specification*, which will provide full details, including advice on how a learner's overall attainment for the Course will be determined.

Unit assessment

All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in Unit specifications.

They will be assessed pass/fail within centres.

SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgments are consistent and meet national standards.

Exemplification of possible assessment approaches for these Units will be provided in the *National Assessment Resource*.

Course assessment

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of [added value](#)². At National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, the added value will be assessed in the Course assessment. The added value for the Course must address the key purposes and aims of the Course as defined in the Course Rationale. It will do this by addressing one or more of breadth, challenge or application.

In the Higher Administration and IT Course, added value will focus on:

- ◆ breadth
- ◆ challenge
- ◆ application

Learners will be assessed through a combination of a [question paper](#)³ and a practical administration and IT-based [assignment](#)⁴.

The question paper will require the retention and/or integration of learning from across the Units as well as demonstration of a depth of knowledge and understanding developed across the Course.

The assignment will require learners to extend administration-related knowledge, understanding and skills and to apply them in the context of managing the organisation of an event (which might be a meeting). The assignment brief will be sufficiently open and flexible to allow for personalisation and choice.

² Definitions can be found here: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html

³ See link above for definitions.

⁴ See link above for definitions.