



## Administration and IT (National 4)

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### Draft National Course Specification

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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this Course Specification for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

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## Course outline

**Course title:** Administration and IT (National 4)

**SCQF:** level 4 (24 SCQF credit points)

**Course code:** to be advised

### Mandatory Units

**Administrative Practices (National 4)** 6 SCQF credit points

**IT Solutions for Administrators (National 4)** 6 SCQF credit points

**Communication in Administration (National 4)** 6 SCQF credit points

#### Added Value Unit

**Administration in Action (National 4)** 6 SCQF credit points

This Course includes six SCQF credit points for the assessment of added value in the Added Value Unit. Further information on this Unit is provided in the Assessment section.

### Recommended entry

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills and knowledge required by one or more of the following or by equivalent qualifications or experience:

- ◆ Administration and IT (Access 3 or relevant component Units)
- ◆ Business (Access 3 or relevant component Units)

In terms of prior learning and experience, relevant experiences and outcomes may also provide an appropriate basis for doing this Course. Further information on relevant experiences and outcomes will be given in the *Course Support Notes*.

## **Progression**

This Course or its components may provide progression to:

- ◆ other SQA qualifications in Administration and IT or related areas
- ◆ further study, employment or training

Further details are provided in the Rationale section.

## **Equality and inclusion**

This Course Specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence. For further information, please refer to the *Course Support Notes* and the *Course Assessment Specification*.

## **Rationale**

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 and 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**

Administration and IT builds on the principles and practice paper and the relevant experiences and outcomes for the technologies curriculum area. It enables learners to understand the nature of administration and to embrace and use IT in administration-related contexts. The Course lays foundations for lifelong learning and a successful working life.

Administration and IT 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.

The Course also 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 a basic ability to use 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' administrative and IT skills and, ultimately, to enable them to contribute to the effective functioning of organisations in junior administrative positions. The Course aims to enable learners to:

- ◆ develop a basic understanding of administration in the workplace and key legislation affecting employees
- ◆ develop an appreciation of good customer care
- ◆ develop IT skills and use them to perform straightforward administrative tasks
- ◆ acquire organisational skills in the context of organising and supporting small-scale events (including meetings)

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

The Course contains a significant practical component, which involves experiential learning and uses real-life contexts, which makes it relevant to the world of work. Its uniqueness lies in developing IT skills 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, as 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 administration and practical uses of IT and 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 3 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. Thus, it places emphasis on the outcome rather than the process of learning and does not prescribe the mode or period of delivery.

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

Learners will also develop the ability to organise, process and communicate information; the ability to organise and support small-scale events (including meetings); and skills, qualities and attributes required of junior 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 education, including other NQs, Skills for Work, NPAs and NCs. It may also lead to employment and/or training in various industries.

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## **Course structure and conditions of award**

### **Course structure**

The Course, which is practical and experiential in nature, develops both generic and subject-specific skills in administration-related contexts. The generic skills include the thinking skills of understanding, applying and simple evaluation as well as aspects of literacy and numeracy. The subject-specific skills, which include basic IT skills, will enable learners to organise, process and communicate simple information, to carry out straightforward administrative tasks and to organise and support small-scale events (including meetings).

This Course comprises four mandatory Units, including the Added Value Unit. 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 Practices (National 4)**

The purpose of this Unit is to give learners a basic introduction to administration within organisations. Learners will begin to appreciate the nature of the sector, key legislation affecting employees, key features of good customer care and the skills, qualities and attributes required of junior administrators. The Unit will also enable them to apply this basic understanding in carrying out a range of straightforward administrative tasks, with the emphasis on those involved in organising and supporting small-scale events (including meetings).

#### **IT Solutions for Administrators (National 4)**

The purpose of this Unit is to develop learners' basic skills in IT and organising and processing simple information in familiar administration-related contexts. Learners will use the following IT applications: word processing, spreadsheets, databases, or emerging equivalent technologies, to create, edit and update simple business documents. Through its emphasis on the outcome rather than the process, the Unit will allow emerging technologies to be incorporated so as to ensure that its content remains current and relevant.

#### **Communication in Administration (National 4)**

The purpose of this Unit is to enable learners to use IT for gathering and sharing simple information with others in familiar administration-related contexts. Learners will develop a basic understanding of what constitutes a reliable source of information and an ability to use appropriate methods for gathering information. They will also become able to communicate simple information in ways which show a basic awareness of its context, audience and purpose. Through its emphasis on the outcome rather than the process, the Unit will allow emerging technologies to be incorporated so as to ensure that its content remains current and relevant.

#### **Added Value Unit: Administration in Action (National 4)**

The purpose of this Unit is to draw on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed in the other three Units. Learners will undertake a practical administration- and IT-based assignment, which will involve a range of straightforward tasks related to organising and supporting small-scale events (including meetings). The assignment will be underpinned by the learners' basic

knowledge and understanding of administration in the workplace and other relevant administration- and IT-related aspects.

## **Conditions of award**

To achieve the Administration and IT (National 4) Course, learners must pass all of the required Units, including the Added Value Unit. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section.

*National 4 Courses are not graded.*

## **Skills and knowledge**

Full skills and knowledge for the Course will be given in the *Course Assessment Specification*. A broad overview of the mandatory subject skills, knowledge and understanding that will be covered in the Course includes:

- ◆ basic skills in using the following IT applications: word processing, spreadsheets, databases and desktop publishing, or equivalent technologies, in familiar administrative contexts
- ◆ skills in organising and supporting small-scale events (including meetings; to include straightforward preparation, support on the day and follow-up activities)
- ◆ basic skills in using technology, including the internet, for electronic communication and investigation in familiar administrative contexts
- ◆ appreciation of administration in the workplace and key legislation affecting employees
- ◆ appreciation of the key features of good customer care
- ◆ basic skills in organising, processing and communicating simple information in familiar administrative contexts
- ◆ skills, qualities and attributes required of junior administrators

## Assessment

Information about assessment 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 the Unit Specification.

They can be assessed on a Unit-by-Unit basis or by combined assessment.

They will be assessed on a pass/fail basis within centres. SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgements are consistent and meet national standards.

The assessment of the Units in this Course will be as follows:

#### **Administrative Practices (National 4)**

In this Unit, learners will be required to provide evidence of their:

- ◆ skills in carrying out a range of straightforward administrative tasks in familiar administrative contexts, with the emphasis on those involved in organising and supporting small-scale events (including meetings)
- ◆ basic knowledge of administration in the workplace, key legislation affecting employees, the key features of good customer care and skills, qualities and attributes required of junior administrators

#### **IT Solutions for Administrators (National 4)**

In this Unit, learners will be required to provide evidence of their:

- ◆ basic skills in using the following IT applications: word processing, spreadsheets and databases, or equivalent technologies, in familiar administrative contexts
- ◆ basic skills in organising and processing simple information in familiar administrative contexts

#### **Communication in Administration (National 4)**

In this Unit, learners will be required to provide evidence of their:

- ◆ basic skills in using IT for gathering and sharing simple information with others in familiar administrative contexts

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

## **Added Value Unit**

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of [added value](#)<sup>1</sup>. At National 4, added value will be assessed in an Added Value Unit. The Added Value Unit will 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 and application.

In this Course, the Added Value Unit will focus on challenge and application.

The learner will be assessed by a practical administration- and IT-based [assignment](#)<sup>2</sup> drawing on the knowledge, understanding and skills 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 organising and supporting a small-scale event (which may be a small-scale meeting). The assignment brief will be sufficiently open and flexible to allow for personalisation and choice.

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<sup>1</sup> Definitions can be found here: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html)

<sup>2</sup> Definitions can be found here: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html)

## Development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

*(Note: The information given below reflects the initial thinking on significant opportunities for development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work. These may be subject to change as the development process progresses.)*

It is expected that learners will also develop broad, generic skills through this Course. The skills that are likely to be appropriate for this Course are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These must be built into the Course where there are appropriate opportunities.

### **1 Literacy**

1.3 Listening and talking

### **2 Numeracy**

2.1 Number processes

### **4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship**

4.1 Employability

4.2 Information and communication technology (ICT)

### **5 Thinking skills**

5.1 Remembering

5.2 Understanding

5.3 Applying

Amplification of these is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Course. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work for the Course is given in the *Course Support Notes*.

## Administrative information

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**Published:** April 2011 (version 1.0)

**Superclass:** to be advised

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## History of changes to National Course Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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Note: You are advised to check SQA's website ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of the Course Specification.