



## **Core Skills for the Future — Bulletin**

### **Issue 4 — Autumn 2007**

#### **Welcome**

Welcome to the fourth issue of the Core Skills for the Future Bulletin.

This Bulletin will outline our progress in terms of stakeholder engagement and will summarise the progress of the refresh of the Core Skills Framework and associated qualifications. The Bulletin will also provide you with up to date information on other developments within the area of Core Skills. You will note that we have a new Contents page, which we hope will allow you to navigate the Bulletin more easily.

We do hope you find the content both informative and interesting!

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## **Skills for Scotland — a lifelong skills strategy**

SQA welcomes the Scottish Government's Skills strategy, in particular its commitment to develop and embed essential skills in learning to underpin individual's personal, social and economic futures. Core Skills form a critical part of the essential skills outlined in the Scotland's Skills strategy and we look forward to seeing how these will be further developed in the future with the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence and its four capacities.

## **Core Skills Qualification development update**

### **Progress to date**

The development of the Core Skills qualifications is now firmly underway with Phase 1, being the smaller NQ Units in Communication and Numeracy at SCQF 2 and 3, nearing its validation stage and Phase 2, the Workplace Core Skills Units, finishing its engagement period. We have worked with stakeholders throughout these development phases, which have led to the production of a different Unit design and a fresh look at alternative assessment methods.

We are about to start the engagement period on the Phase 3 qualifications, the NQ (40 hour) Units across all five Core Skills and we would encourage all centres who deliver Core Skills, to take part. You can do this by attending an event or logging onto SQA Academy. It is vital that you have your say, after all, you will be managing, delivering and assessing the qualifications!

## **Phase one — smaller NQ Core Skill Units in Communication and Numeracy at SCQF levels 2 and 3**



We have now completed this phase of work and the new NQ Units in Communication and Numeracy at SCQF level 2 and 3 are ready to move forward for validation at the beginning of December. We have worked very hard to ensure that these Units are both valid and fit for purpose and would like to take this opportunity to thank those stakeholders who attended our events and gave feedback on the Units during their engagement period.

In Communication we expected to offer Ten Hour Units in:

Reading @ SCQF 2 and 3

Writing @ SCQF 2 and 3

Speaking @ SCQF 2 and 3

Listening @ SCQF 2 and 3

In Numeracy we expect to offer units in:

Using Number – Measure (10Hr) @ SCQF 2

Using Number – Time (10Hr) @ SCQF 2

Using Number – Money (10Hr) @ SCQF 2

Using Graphical Information (10Hr) @ SCQF 2

Using Number — Calculation (20Hr) @ SCQF 3

Using Number – Measure (10Hr) @ SCQF 3

Using Graphical Information (10Hr) @SCQF 3

These Units are designed to offer learners the opportunity to gain certification through undertaking smaller chunks of learning, building towards the full Core Skill of Numeracy or Communication at SCQF level 2 and 3. It is intended that these new Units and Support Packs will be launched officially at two National events in April 2008, with the first set of candidate entries in August 2008. The Units will be charged at the usual SQA Unit Entry charge.

## Phase two — Workplace Core Skills

The Workplace Core Skills Units have undergone a rigorous period of engagement through SQA Academy and also a national engagement event was held to receive feedback. The event which took place on Thursday 5 October 2007 was extremely well attended and we would like to thank all stakeholders who attended for their valuable input. We will now take some time to compile all of the comments, which will go back to our writing team for inclusion where appropriate.

The revised Units will then be posted on SQA Academy with the comments. It is anticipated that these new Units will be ready for candidate entry in August 2008. SQA Academy will remain open for comments and we would encourage stakeholder to use the forums to express their views!



*Working with Others  
to get the Units right!*



## **Phase three — National Qualifications Core Skills Units (40 hour)**

### **Remember, remember the fifth of November**

This final phase of Core Skills qualifications will be ready for engagement from the beginning of November 2007. We are holding a National Engagement event in Glasgow on Monday 5 November 2007 and have invited all centres to participate.

The new Units will be posted on SQA Academy on 1 November for centres to view and your comments and feedback are welcomed. We are looking forward to gathering stakeholder's views and comments on the design and content of our new Units.

If you are interested in attending this event and have not yet booked a place, please contact Colin Currie on 0845 213 5385 or e-mail [colin.currie@sqa.org.uk](mailto:colin.currie@sqa.org.uk) to book your place. Please hurry as places are limited!



### **SQA Academy — Core Skills**

SQA Academy is a webspace, devised to allow stakeholders the opportunity to make comment on some of the current developments within SQA. Core Skills for the Future has its own area within SQA Academy which has, to date, allowed stakeholders to view the refreshed Core Skills Framework and the first two phases of Core Skills qualification development. Now that we are in the final phase of qualification development it is important that you take part in the discussion and debate around the qualifications and give us your thoughts. To gain access to SQA Academy, follow the instructions below:

*SQA want you to join in our process of updating Core Skills qualifications, and are keen to engage with you in our Qualifications for the Future discussions too!*

### **SQA Academy — Qualifications for the Future**

This virtual space has been developed to create a place where you can participate in debate about the possible impact of national discussions on qualifications and

assessment. Relevant documents, think-pieces, questionnaires and work-shop materials are posted here, and you will be able to comment on them and make suggestions, by using the on-line forum.

## **To join SQA Academy**

Open your web browser and navigate to [www.sqaacademy.org.uk](http://www.sqaacademy.org.uk)

In order to use the SQA Academy you'll need to create an account. Instructions on how to do this are available from the link '**Creating an Account on the SQA Academy**'. You will be asked for an '**enrolment key**'. The '**enrolment key**' for Core Skills for the Future is '**Framework**'.

If you have any problems contact the SQA Academy team

E-mail: [academy@sqa.org.uk](mailto:academy@sqa.org.uk)

## **Other Core Skills developments**

### **Curriculum for Excellence and Core Skills**

#### **Mini action research projects**

##### **Anniesland College, Glasgow**

Anniesland College have embarked on a project to support Core Skills the FE sector. Their project has been designed to take forward current thinking on the holistic nature of Core Skills acquisition and application. Its ethos is one of providing continued development of Curriculum for Excellence capacities within the FE sector. The development of the refreshed Core Skills Units provides an opportunity for a new dialogue with vocational specialists in FE and colleagues within the school sector to model different ways of delivering Core Skills, which embrace both the aspirations of Curriculum for Excellence and embeds the seven principles of curriculum design.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Anniesland College for their work in this area and will keep Stakeholder updated as to the mini project progress!

### **Revised National Assessment Bank Materials**

#### **Intermediate 2 Numeracy Motor Vehicle**

SQA are pleased to announce a revised edition of the Numeracy Int 2 NAB, specifically for graphics in Motor Vehicle which is now available on SQA's secure site. We do hope you find this contextualised material useful. If you have any comments, please contact [core.skills@sqa.org.uk](mailto:core.skills@sqa.org.uk).

## Jewel and Esk Valley College

### Pilot — Personal Development Planning for Core Skills delivery on tour!

#### Eifel Conference, Maastricht



SQA were delighted to be invited to speak at the Eifel Conference in Maastricht to showcase the work carried out during the Pilot phase of Jewel and Esk Valley College's project, which used the Personal Development Planning Unit as a vehicle for on line delivery of Core Skills across four HN vocational areas.

Evidence abounds on the importance of Core Skills to a learner's future. It is argued that only through successfully developing these critical skills will learners make a full contribution to society. This can range from being active in their community as responsible and effective citizens, to being effective in work, and not least by being

responsible for their own learning and personal growth.

The presentation focused on the collaborative action research project in developing a DIY e-portfolio to support the delivery of Core Skills within a four vocational areas. SQA Academy provided and supported the VLE Moodle as the platform for this e-portfolio. The subjects were Electrical Engineering, Social Care, Multi Media and Working with Communities, all being delivered at Higher National level and designed to increase employability.

The presentation focused on the complex issues that arose in developing it for staff, for students and for SQA. These included

- ◆ Winning the hearts and minds of staff and students
- ◆ Creating space for innovation in a full timetable
- ◆ Selecting and developing the platform for delivery
- ◆ Translating traditional Core Skills delivery into a virtual learning environment
- ◆ Developing technological capacity within the college
- ◆ Raising the ICT skills of students and tutors
- ◆ Establishing quality assurance links to the awarding body

For further information or to request a copy of the presentation in full, please contact [\*\*margaret.tierney@sqa.org.uk\*\*](mailto:margaret.tierney@sqa.org.uk)

## **So, what should you do now?**

### **All centres who deliver National Qualifications Core Skills**

As mentioned earlier, we are about to start our engagement period at the beginning of November on SQA Academy and through an engagement event on 5 November. To contribute to the discussion, you need to join SQA Academy or sign up for the event! If you don't join and take part then you will miss a valuable opportunity to take part in this important development.

### **For all centres who deliver Workplace Core Skills**

With the engagement period for the Workplace Core Skills now in its completion, we are busy compiling the comments which will be posted on our SQA Academy site at the beginning of November. We will then change the Units, where appropriate and post the revised Units up, we welcome further feedback through SQA Academy at that time. The Workplace Core Skills Units are due to be Accredited in December 2007 ready for candidate entry in August 2008, so its important that you keep monitoring SQA Academy for progress!

The next issue of the Core Skills Bulletin will be January 2008.