



**Arrangements for:**  
**National Progression Award (NPA) in**  
**Business with Information Technology**  
**at SCQF level 5**

**Group Award Code: G9X0 45**

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## **Acknowledgement**

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges have made to the development of National Qualification Group Awards.

## History of changes

It is anticipated that changes will take place during the life of the qualification, and this section will record these changes. This document is the latest version and incorporates the changes summarised below.

Version number	Description	Date	Authorised by
01	Original Document		
02	<p><b>Revision of Unit:</b> DM3R 11 Information Technology for Administrators <i>has been revised by H1YW 75 IT Solutions for Administrators and will finish on 31/07/2016.</i> DM3T 11 Administration: Presenting and Communicating Information <i>has been revised by H1YY 75 Communication in Administration and will finish on 31/07/2016</i></p> <p>DV4L 11 Business Decision Areas: Finance and HR Management <i>has been revised by H20S 75 Management of People and Finance and will finish on 31/07/2016.</i></p> <p>DV4G 11 Business Enterprise <i>has been revised by H20R 75 Understanding Business and will finish on 31/07/2016.</i></p> <p>DV4K 11 Business Decision Areas: Marketing and Operations <i>has been revised by H20V 75 Management of Marketing and Operations and will finish on 31/07/2016.</i></p>	13/05/2014	Mark Mina

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# 1 Introduction

This is the Arrangements Document for the National Progression Awards in Business with Information Technology at SCQF level 5. This document includes: background information on the development of the Group Award, its aims, guidance on access, details of the Group Award structure, and guidance on delivery.

This Group Award has been designed to provide candidates with the fundamental knowledge required for success in current and future employment in the business and information technology sector or for progression onto further academic qualifications.

## 2 Rationale for the development of the Group Award

The National Progression Awards in Business with Information Technology at SCQF level 5 consists of four 40 hours Units. One of these Units is mandatory, with the remaining three Units being chosen from a restricted choice of options.

The NPA has been developed by SQA with the purpose of providing candidates with the fundamental business and information technology skills required for employment and/or further study in any of these two areas.

The award has been designed to be flexible to allow both schools and colleges flexibility when timetabling, and as well as allowing a suitable range of optional Units to be chosen dependant on local circumstances and candidate requirements.

National Progression Awards are designed to:

- ◆ mainly be used in post-compulsory education
- ◆ be followed part-time for those already in work; or for those who have a desire to enter employment in the business, administration and/or information technology sector
- ◆ assess and certificate a defined set of skills and knowledge
- ◆ give credit to full-time candidates who may not be able to complete their full course

### 2.1 Nature and purpose of the awards

The National Progression Award in Business with Information Technology at SCQF level 5 has been designed to provide candidates with the fundamental knowledge required for success in current and future employment in the business and information technology sector or for progression onto further academic qualifications.

The structure of the award provides candidates with fundamental knowledge and skills relating to the study of business and information technology, as well as allowing for choice and personalisation.

## 2.2 Establishing the need for the award

Consultation was undertaken with Colleges of Further Education, Employers and past NC/NQ candidates. Two consultations were carried out; one for NPAs in the Business area generally and also one specific to the NPA Business with Information Technology.

### **NPAs in Business General Consultation:**

Over 94% of colleges questioned agreed or strongly agreed that they would be interested in offering more or different NPAs in Business and Administration. Similarly, they also agreed that a mixture of Units from the Business and Administration National Certificate frameworks would be attractive to them. Indeed, the structure of the NPAs articulate directly with the frameworks for both the National Certificate in Administration and in Business and Colleges were very supportive of this in the consultation. The majority of the Colleges questioned were also supportive of the fact that suitable NPAs (or clusters of NPAs) would be suitable for progression to the HN Business and/or HN Administration and Information Technology programmes.

Past NC/NQ candidates were very supportive of NPAs and the majority of those questioned, stated that they would have undertaken such an award and thought it would be useful to have shorter programmes of study to gain formal qualifications. Many past candidates also thought it would be good to undertake an NPA as an enhancement to their existing qualifications.

### **NPAs in Business with Information Technology Consultation (May 2010):**

100% of the centres surveyed supported the rationale, aims, levels and proposed size of the NPAs in Business with Information Technology. 90% supported the recommendation to have *Business Enterprise* as the mandatory Unit and there was very strong support for the inclusion of the range of optional Units that were chosen. All centres surveyed said that they would be interested in offering the NPAs in Business with Information Technology.

The NPAs would meet the needs of employers providing opportunities to develop basic computer literacy (level 5) and advanced IT and software training (level 6) as reported in the Future Skills Scotland report (2007). In addition, this report stated that employers also find employees to have skill gaps in planning and organising, team working, problem solving and strategic management. The NPAs would contribute directly to improving these skills gaps because of the content of Units within the awards.

The level 5 award would provide progression into the National Certificate in Business or Administration at level 5 and the level 6 award could provide progression onto suitable HN Business or Administration and IT programmes. The level 5 award could also provide progression onto appropriate National Courses at Higher level (eg Business Management and Administration) and the level 6 award into appropriate Advanced Highers (eg Business Management and Administration).

The QDT felt it was important for the award to be flexible to meet the needs of a variety of candidates and local circumstances. It was felt that it was important the awards:

- ◆ have flexibility in the way they can be delivered
- ◆ provide an exit route
- ◆ provide progression and advancement from previous study
- ◆ provide opportunities for progression into more advanced programmes
- ◆ meet the needs and expectations of employers

### **2.3 Establishing the level of the award**

The awards have been designed at SCQF level 5 and 6. The level 5 award was designed around Units contributing to National Certificate in Business and in Administration at level 5 and the level 6 award to meet the needs of candidates who hope to progress to HNC/HND or other advanced programmes of study. Both awards can also be achieved by school pupils who are undertaking Intermediate 2 or Higher courses in Administration and Business Management, but who may fail to achieve all of the Units contributing towards these courses and/or the external examination. Centres surveyed in the consultation supported the suggested award levels.

### **2.4 Progression routes**

Candidates who successfully complete the level 5 award could progress into the level 6 award. They could also progress to into the full NC in Administration and/or Business at level 5 or onto National Courses in Administration and/or Business Management at Higher level.

Candidates who successfully complete the level 6 award could progress into HN programmes or onto appropriate National Courses at Higher and/or Advanced Higher level.

It would also be possible for candidates to progress into appropriate Professional Development Awards (PDAs). For example, the PDA Information Technology in Business, Office Administration, Office Management and Information Technology.

### **2.5 Relationship to National Occupational Standards**

National Occupational Standards (NOS) are developed by the key employment sectors of the United Kingdom. These standards set the competences required for job roles within a particular employment sector.

Business does not have any specific National Occupational Standards. However, links to the most relevant NOS for some of the IT Units are given in the table below. The most relevant set of NOS are the Council for Administration for SVQs in Business and Administration.

Optional Units	SCQF level	Links to NOS
Information Technology for Administrators	Level 5	209, 214, 215, 216
Researching and Preparing Presentations	Level 5	210, 215, 217
Information Technology for Management	Level 6	209, 210, 214, 215, 216, 217, 224

### 3 Aims of the Group Award

The National Progression Awards have been developed by SQA with the purpose of providing candidates with the fundamental business and information technology skills required for employment and/or further study in any of these two areas.

#### 3.1 Principal aims of the Group Award

- 1 To develop candidates knowledge and understanding of the role of business in society.
- 2 To develop candidates knowledge, application and usage of a variety of software packages.
- 3 To provide candidates with the relevant Core Skills for business, administration and technology for employment and further study.

#### 3.2 General aims of the Group Award

The award will develop candidates' problem solving and information technology skills. It will enable them to be more confident in the use of software application packages for administrative and business purposes. It will also develop their awareness of issues facing organisations in today's contemporary business society.

Depending on the choice of optional Units chosen, candidates will develop knowledge and understanding of a specialist business area (marketing, customer care, economics, accounting or law).

#### 3.3 Target groups

The NPA is designed to meet the needs of a wide client group as they are designed to develop a fundamental knowledge of business as well as developing IT skills.

The NPA would be suitable for:

- ◆ candidates who are at school or who may have just left school
- ◆ mature candidates who may have been out of education for a long period of time
- ◆ candidates whose first language is not English
- ◆ candidates who are currently in employment and wish to obtain a formal qualification

- ◆ candidates who are looking to access HN programmes
- ◆ employers who wish their employees to obtain short CPD courses

These groups have quite different characteristics. Many recent school leavers have limited formal school attainment. Adult returners may also possess few formal qualifications and while they frequently have valuable experience, they may lack confidence in their ability to learn. Students whose first language is not English would find the NPAs a useful starting point into further study of Business and/or IT following on from an ESOL course. As more emphasis is put on lifelong learning and continuing professional development, employers are keen to offer certificated courses to their employees.

It is envisaged that this award could be offered in one of the following modes:

- ◆ Full-time (eg fast-track into full NC programmes or HN programmes)
- ◆ Part-time (eg Day-release)
- ◆ Open and distance learning
- ◆ Infill into existing classes
- ◆ Evening provision

### **3.4 Employment opportunities**

Employment opportunities will exist in the business, administration and IT sectors.

## **4 Access to Group Award**

Entry is at the discretion of the centre. However, it is recommended for candidates entering the level 5 award that they have completed some ICT skills training at level 4. This may be through the achievement of relevant National Units or employment experience.

## 5 Group Award structure

The NPAs consist of four Units; one mandatory Unit and three optional Units. The Units are taken from the NC Administration and NC Business frameworks. At level 6, there is also the inclusion of the *HN Introductory IT in Business* Unit. All Units are at the level of the Group Award.

### 5.1 Structure

#### NPA Business with Information Technology (level 5)

4 credits are required to achieve the award (24 SCQF points) — the mandatory Unit plus one Unit from Group A and two Units from Group B.

Unit title	Code	SCQF credit points	SCQF level	SQA credit value
<b>MANDATORY UNIT (1 credit)</b>				
*Understanding Business	H20R 75	6	5	1
<b>OPTIONAL UNITS (minimum of 3 credits)</b>				
<b>GROUP A (minimum of 1 credit)</b>				
*Management of Marketing and Operations	H20V 75	6	5	1
*Management of People and Finance	H20S 75	6	5	1
Skills for Customer Care	F38X 11	6	5	1
Marketing: Basic Principles	F390 11	6	5	1
Market Operations and the Scottish Economy	F391 11	6	5	1
<b>GROUP B (minimum of 2 credits)</b>				
PC Passport: IT Software — Word Processing and Presenting Information	F1FC 11	6	5	1
PC Passport: Internet and Online Communications	F1FD 11	6	5	1
PC Passport: IT Software — Spreadsheets and Database	F1FB 11	6	5	1
Researching and Preparing Presentations <b>OR</b> *IT Solutions for Administrators	F5AO 11 H1YW 75	6	5	1
*Communication in Administration	H1YY 75	6	5	1

\*Refer to history of changes for revision details.

## 5.2 Mapping information

The structure of the NPA in Business with Information Technology meets the aims and the requirements of the award in a number of ways which can be summarised as follows:

- ◆ it provides skills, knowledge and capabilities needed for employment
- ◆ it provides the credibility of a nationally accredited award
- ◆ it consists of Units which are practical and will engage the interests of learners
- ◆ it is compatible with existing arrangements currently adopted by centres
- ◆ it provides the flexibility which learners and centres value
- ◆ it provides an opportunity for learners to develop the ICT Core Skill

A small grouping of relevant Units nationally accredited into a named award is attractive to many learners who don't want or have the time for a long period of study. It will provide learners with the options to move into employment or take further study at the same level allowing them to broaden their skills, or progress to further study at a higher level.

Because the award is made up of Units from both the mandatory and optional Units in the NC in Administration and NC Business frameworks, it is likely that many candidates will also have the necessary skills to progress to HN awards.

## 6 Approaches to delivery and assessment

The delivery of the award is at the individual centre's discretion. The award will be delivered over a 160 hour period which could be a mix of day time, evening or distance learning.

It would be beneficial if centres delivered the mandatory Unit *Business Enterprise* before delivering the specialist business Unit in option Group A.

### 6.1 Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop Core Skills throughout the award. The following Units offer automatic certification of Core Skills.

Unit	Core Skill component and level
PC Passport: IT Software — Word Processing and Presenting Information (level 5)	Information and Communication Technology (all components) — level 5

Core Skills are signposted in the following Units:

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Core Skill component and level</b>
Marketing: Basic Principles (level 5)	Communication and Problem Solving — level 5
Market Operations and the Scottish Economy (level 5)	Communication and Problem Solving — level 5
PC Passport: IT Software — Word Processing and Presenting Information (level 5)	Communication and Problem Solving — level 5
PC Passport: Internet and Online Communications (level 5)	Information and Communications Technology and Communication — level 5
PC Passport: IT Software — Spreadsheets and Database (level 5)	Information and Communications Technology, Problem Solving and Communication — level 5
Researching and Preparing Presentations	Problem Solving and Information and Communications Technology — level 4

## 6.2 Open learning

It is at the individual centre's discretion whether or not the award is available for opening learning. However, specific assessment arrangements for each Unit (as detailed in the Unit specification) must be complied with.

## 7 General information for centres

### Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website [www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).

### Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used within this/these Group Award(s) should be internally verified, using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

External verification will be carried out by SQA to ensure that internal assessment is within the national guidelines for these qualifications.

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in *SQA's Guide to Assessment* ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)).

## 8 General information for candidates

The National Progression Awards in Business with Information Technology at SCQF level 5 and 6 have been designed to provide you with the fundamental knowledge required for success in current and future employment in the business and information technology sector or for progression onto further academic qualifications.

The structure of the awards will provide you with fundamental knowledge and skills relating to the study of business and information technology. They allow for progression into other business, administration and/or IT related programmes in both the further and higher education sector, as well as providing progression within or into employment.

You will have to study one mandatory Unit in Business Enterprise and undertake a further three Units to achieve the NPA; two of these Units will be ICT based and the third one a specialist business Unit. Depending on the choice of optional Units chosen, you may get to specialise in a particular area of business such as marketing, customer care, law, economics or accounting.

## 9 Glossary of terms

**SCQF:** This stands for the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework, which is a new way of speaking about qualifications and how they inter-relate. We use SCQF terminology throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF visit the SCQF website at [www.scqf.org.uk](http://www.scqf.org.uk)

**SCQF credit points:** One SCQF credit point equates to 10 hours of learning. NQ Units at SCQF levels 2–6 are worth 6 SCQF credit points, NQ Units at level 7 are worth 8 SCQF points.

**SCQF levels:** The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2-6 and will normally be made up of National Units which are available from SCQF levels 2–7.

**Dedicated Unit to cover Core Skills:** This is a non-subject Unit that is written to cover one or more particular Core Skills.

**Embedded Core Skills:** This is where the development of a Core Skill is incorporated into the Unit and where the Unit assessment also covers the requirements of Core Skill assessment at a particular level.

**Signposted Core Skills:** This refers to the opportunities to develop a particular Core Skill at a specified level that lie outwith automatic certification.

**Qualification Design Team:** The QDT works in conjunction with a Qualification Manager/Development Manager to steer the development of the National Certificate/National Progression Award from its inception/revision through to validation. The group is made up of key stakeholders representing the interests of centres, employers, universities and other relevant organisations.

**Consortium-devised National Certificates/National Progression Awards** are those developments or revisions undertaken by a group of centres in partnership with SQA.