



**Arrangements for:
National Progression Award in
Administrative Activities
at SCQF level 4**

Group Award Code: GF4K 44

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1 Introduction

This is the Arrangements Document for the National Progression Award (NPA) in Administrative Activities at SCQF level 4. 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.

The NPA is designed to provide candidates with the practical skills and theoretical knowledge of the administrative systems and services essential to the effective working of a modern office, at junior level, or to allow for progression to further academic qualifications.

2 Rationale for the development of the Group Award

The NPA was developed by a number of centres, supported by SQA, following consultation with stakeholders. It is designed to meet the needs of candidates and employers who are seeking the flexibility of shorter awards. National Progression Awards are designed to:

- ◆ mainly be used in post-compulsory education
- ◆ 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
- ◆ be an entry point for other courses.

This NPA is designed for those who wish to gain up-to-date practical skills and knowledge of a modern office environment. Alternatively, it can provide enhanced employment opportunities at junior level or progression to higher level qualifications.

2.1 Nature and purpose of the award

The NPA is designed to provide candidates with theoretical knowledge and 'hands on' experience of key pieces of office equipment. It also develops candidates' abilities to communicate with internal and external customers, skills in locating and retrieving information and IT skills to present required information.

The structure and content provide a relevant, vocational curriculum which creates and promotes effective articulation and transition to further and higher education, while simultaneously recognising and supporting skills for industry and future employment; including soft skills demanded by employers.

2.2 Establishing the need for the qualification

A consultation with centres and employers identified a need for flexibility in delivery and provision for those unable to commit to a full year's programme of study. It was determined that there was a requirement for an award which would:

- ◆ Be recognised by schools, employers and other educational institutions
- ◆ Provide a group of Units which represent significant achievement

- ◆ Retain flexibility in delivery
- ◆ Provide a progression route from SCQF level 4
- ◆ Provide an exit route
- ◆ Match the capabilities, expectations and interests of candidates enrolling for the award.

2.3 Establishing the level of the award

One of the principal aims of the NPA is to prepare candidates for entry to SCQF level 5 awards in Administration. The NPA and Units within it are at SCQF level 4 and facilitate smooth progression to SCQF level 5.

2.4 Progression routes

Candidates undertaking and successfully completing the NPA could progress to SCQF level 5 Units, for example:

H1YV 75 *Administrative Practices*
 H1YW 75 *IT Solutions for Administrators*
 D932 11 *Word Processing 4.*

Candidates may also progress to the National Progression Award in Administration: Office Skills and Services (G9CF 45) at SCQF level 5 and/or National Certificate in Administration (G99P 45) at SCQF level 5.

If candidates obtain employment in the administrative sector, they may also have the opportunity to undertake an SVQ Level 2 in Business and Administration.

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.

This NPA provides candidates with the underpinning skills to consider undertaking Scottish Vocational Qualifications in Business and Administration at Level 2.

Links to National Occupational Standards (NOS) are shown in the following table. The Council for Administration (CFA) publishes the NOS for SVQs in Business and Administration. The table shows where the Units for this award have specific links. Further detail is available in Appendix 1.

Mandatory Units	SCQF level	Links to NOS
Administrative Activities	4	PPL1FOH1 PPL1FOH2
Prepare Business Documents	4	BAA211 BAA213

3 Aims of the Group Award

The main aim of the NPA at SCQF level 4 is to provide a practical and flexible introduction to the administrative sector. This will enable learners to acquire and develop skills and knowledge needed for further study or to access employment in administration as trainees or in junior roles.

3.1 Principal aims of the Group Award

The principal aims of the NPA are to:

- 1 Give candidates an insight into administration.
- 2 Enable candidates to consider the various options open to them and to make informed career choices for their future.
- 3 Prepare candidates for entry into further qualifications — in particular directly into SCQF level 5 Administration or SVQ Level 1 or 2.
- 4 Provide candidates with specific administrative related knowledge and practical skills and the transferable skills demanded by employers.
- 5 Standardise provision at SCQF level 4.
- 6 Respond to Sector Skills Council and market demand for relevant skills development and qualifications at non advanced level.
- 7 Develop core and transferrable skills.

The award meets these principal aims through administrative focused, mandatory Units. The Units ensure that all candidates acquire and develop key knowledge, understanding and skills relevant to further study and to employment in an administrative environment. The table below references the aims to the Units on the framework.

Unit code	Unit title	Reference to aims of the award
H1N5 10	Administrative Activities	1,2,3,4,5,6,7
H1N6 10	Prepare Business Documents	
H1WY 74	IT Solutions for Administrators	1,3,4,5,6,7
F787 10	Building Own Employability Skills	1,2,3,4,5,6,7
F786 10	Preparing for Employment: First Steps	
F788 10	Responsibilities of Employment	
F789 10	Dealing with Work Situations	

3.2 General aims of the Group Award

The NPA aims to provide a robust programme with practically focused Units and skills relevant to the administrative sector, with a high degree of emphasis upon transferable skills, employability and personal development.

The practical focus and nature of the Units is consistent with the needs and demands of candidates, employers and centres as well as other key stakeholders such as Education Scotland and the Scottish Government. The general aims can be summarised as follows:

- ◆ To provide candidates with soft skills such as building confidence and sense of achievement
- ◆ To provide the opportunity for candidates to use their National Progression Award to contribute to a programme of study in

Administration at SCQF level 4 which could lead to the NC in Administration at SCQF level 5

- ◆ To provide an NPA sufficiently flexible to allow for a number of different modes of delivery
- ◆ To provide candidates with a recognised, relevant and up-to-date non advanced NPA in Administration at SCQF level 4
- ◆ To provide candidates with Core Skills and essential skills for administrative related occupations and for further study in administration.

3.3 Target Groups

Target groups include:

- ◆ Young people still at school or who have left school recently
- ◆ Adults who have decided to re-enter education
- ◆ Candidates whose first language is not English
- ◆ Employers requiring short CPD courses for their employees
- ◆ Candidates seeking access to HN.

3.4 Employment opportunities

On successful completion of the NPA, it is envisaged that employment could be gained in the administration, business and commercial sector in one of the following job roles:

- ◆ Administrative Assistant
- ◆ Office Junior/Receptionist
- ◆ Clerical Assistant.

4 Access to the Group Award

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, it is recommended that where candidates do not have an existing Core Skills profile, a profiling exercise is carried out in order to ensure the NPA is appropriate to their capabilities.

5 Group Award structure

The qualification comprises a framework of complementary administration and employability Units. Five Units are mandatory, with one option from two required, and all are at SCQF level 4.

The Units ensure that on completion of the NPA, candidates have the necessary hard and soft skills required to work in the administrative sector at a junior level.

5.1 Framework

	Unit title	Code	SCQF level	SQA credit value	SCQF credit points
	Mandatory Units (3.75 SQA credits required)				
	Administrative Activities	H1N5 10	4	1	6
	Prepare Business Documents	H1N6 10	4	1	6
	IT Solutions for Administrators*	H1YW 74	4	1	6
Employability Award (G9CY 44)	Building Own Employability Skills [20 hour Unit]	F787 10	4	0.5	3
	Preparing for Employment: First Steps [10 hour Unit]	F786 10	4	0.25	1.5
	Optional Units (0.25 SQA credits required)				
	Responsibilities of Employment [10 hour Unit]	F788 10	4	0.25	1.5
	Dealing with Work Situations [10 hour Unit]	F789 10	4	0.25	1.5
	Total required			4	24

Note: The Unit *Information Technology for Administrators* (DM3R 11) has been replaced by *IT Solutions for Administrators* (H1YW 75). Candidates who have achieved the former Unit may receive credit transfer to (H1YW 75).

5.1.1 Employability Award (G9CY 44)

Nested within the NPA is the Employability Award (G9CY 44) which comprises three Units and 1 SQA credit in total. Candidates will gain this on completion of all mandatory Units and one optional Unit.

NB: To be certificated for the Employability Award, centres must enter candidates for the additional Group Award code G9CY 44 (there is no additional charge for this entry).

5.2 Mapping information

The structure of the NPA:

- ◆ provides flexibility for learners and centres
- ◆ provides skills, knowledge and capabilities needed for employment
- ◆ provides progression routes
- ◆ provides an exit route
- ◆ is compatible with existing arrangements currently adopted by centres

- ◆ consists of Units which are practical and will engage the interests of learners.

A small grouping of relevant Units nationally accredited into a named award is attractive to many learners who don't have the time for a long period of study. The NPA provides learners with options to move into employment or take further study at the same level, allowing them to broaden their skills, or progress to SCQF level 5.

The award is compatible with other arrangements such as NPAs and NCs at SCQF level 5.

6 Approaches to delivery and assessment

Delivery and timetabling of Units is at the discretion of individual centres. The structure allows centres a high degree of flexibility in delivery. The NPA can be offered:

- ◆ in a practical setting which could be within candidates' current employment, a placement scenario or within a simulated practical learning environment in a presenting centre
- ◆ as a full-time short programme, day release, or evening class
- ◆ using a combination of delivery styles. For example, candidates may want to study on a half-day/evening basis or combine evening (or day release) study with some distance/open/online learning provision.

Assessment Support Packs are available which reinforce the practical aspects of Units and set a common standard across centres.

Assessment Support Packs have a critical role in ensuring that delivery of Units is linked to administration and admin-related situations allowing for integration of delivery and assessment, where possible. For example, a topic for assessment of *Administrative Activities* (H1N5 10) could be used in *Produce Business Documents* (H1N6 10).

6.1 Sequence of delivery

Centres can choose in which order to teach and assess the Units, according to their local market needs and resources. It may be beneficial to have two or three Units taught at the same time to allow integration of teaching and assessments.

The NPA can be delivered as a full time programme at most centres, however it is possible to offer the award on a part time mode of delivery using an integrated learning approach.

6.2 Core Skills

The NPA provides opportunities for candidates to develop Core Skills noted in the table below. Development of these skills may be possible naturally through the Unit content. Further information is available in the individual Unit specifications.

Unit code	Unit title	Core Skills (signposted at SCQF level 4 except where stated)
H1N5 10	Administrative Activities	Working with Others Problem Solving Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Numeracy Communication
H1N6 10	Prepare Business Documents	ICT (Embedded at SCQF level 3) Problem Solving Communication Numeracy

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.

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).

8 General information for candidates

The National Progression Award (NPA) in Administrative Activities at SCQF level 4 is designed to enable you to acquire and develop knowledge, understanding and skills for working, at junior level, in the administrative sector. The award will enable you to focus upon key skills such as administration, documentation content, using templates, IT and customer care as well as providing you with information regarding working safely.

The award will give you a platform which will provide you with opportunities to progress through further education or pursue employment opportunities. It will also allow you to acquire and develop skills that will increase your confidence and employability in the administration sector across a range of occupations.

There are five mandatory Units and one option (from two) which give a total of four credits needed to gain the award. These Units are designed to:

- ◆ Give you an insight into administration
- ◆ Enable you to consider the various options open to you and to make informed career choices for your future
- ◆ Prepare you for entry to further qualifications, eg National Certificate at SCQF level 5 in Administration or SVQ in Business and Administration
- ◆ Provide you with specific administrative related skills and transferable skills demanded by employers
- ◆ Provide you with the opportunity to develop Core Skills for administrative related occupations and for further study in administration subjects
- ◆ Provide you with the opportunity to develop a range of other skills which you will be able to use in many life, learning and work related situations.

They will provide you with knowledge and skills in the following areas:

- ◆ Working in the administrative sector
- ◆ Customer service practices
- ◆ Working safely
- ◆ Organisational skills
- ◆ Employability
- ◆ Research
- ◆ Positive attitude to workplace and learning
- ◆ The importance of timekeeping and attendance
- ◆ The importance of creating accurate content for business documentation
- ◆ The importance of Information Technology
- ◆ The importance of keeping up-to-date with technology
- ◆ The importance of good verbal communication
- ◆ The importance of good listening skills
- ◆ How to work co-operatively with others as a member of a team
- ◆ Self-respect and showing respect and consideration for others
- ◆ Adaptability and flexibility
- ◆ Application of appropriate legislation eg health and safety
- ◆ Planning and Preparation
- ◆ Having the confidence to seek feedback
- ◆ Having the confidence to give feedback
- ◆ Personal target-setting and review.

For some Units, you may be able to relate what you are learning to other subjects studied, work experience, or simply your own personal experience.

Entry to the award is at the discretion of the centre. You can discuss your particular situation with centre staff, who will be pleased to offer you guidance, support and advice on how the award can help you.

On successful completion, you may be able to progress to the National Progression Award in Administration: Office Skills and Services (G9CF 45) at SCQF level 5, which can improve and build on your administrative and IT skills.

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

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.

10 Appendices

Appendix 1: Mapping to National Occupational Standards

Appendix 1 Mapping to National Occupational Standards

The content of the Unit *Administrative Activities* (H15N 10) is aligned to CfA — Business Skills @ Work (formerly known as the Council for Administration) and provides links to the National Occupational Standards PPL1FOH1 and PPL1FOH2.

PPL1FOH2 Assist in handling mail

Incoming Mail

- ◆ P1 Check incoming mail or packages
- ◆ P2 Sort incoming mail or packages and dispose of unwanted 'junk' mail
- ◆ P3 Identify and/or report suspicious or damaged items
- ◆ P4 Distribute incoming mail or packages
- ◆ P5 Refer any problems to the appropriate colleague

Outgoing mail

- ◆ P6 Collect and sort outgoing mail or packages
- ◆ P7 Dispatch outgoing mail or packages on time
- ◆ P8 Refer any problems to the appropriate colleague

PPL1FOH1 Process information for reception function

Deal with incoming and outgoing telephone calls

- ◆ P1 Answer the telephone promptly, using your organisation's style
- ◆ P2 Identify the caller and what they need
- ◆ P3 Answer queries accurately according to your own level of responsibility
- ◆ P4 Make outgoing calls, for self or on behalf of others, using your organisation's style and procedures
- ◆ P5 Give relevant information promptly and accurately
- ◆ P6 Refer any queries that are beyond your level of responsibility to the appropriate member of staff

Give people the information they need

- ◆ P7 Find out what information is needed
- ◆ P8 Identify the right source for the information
- ◆ P9 Get the information and organise it clearly and logically
- ◆ P10 Give the information to the person who has asked for it within agreed time limits
- ◆ P11 Avoid giving out confidential information
- ◆ P12 Ask for help from an appropriate member of staff when you cannot find the information
- ◆ P13 Politely explain to the person asking for the information if you have had problems finding it

The content of the Unit *Prepare Business Documents* (H1N6 10) aligns to CfA — Business skills @ work and provides links to the National Occupational Standards - BAA211 and BAA213.

BAA211 Produce documents in a business environment

- ◆ Agree the purpose, format and deadlines for the transcription
- ◆ Prepare the required resources
- ◆ Organise the required content
- ◆ Use available technology appropriate to the document being produced
- ◆ Produce the document in the agreed style
- ◆ Check for accuracy, editing and correcting text as necessary
- ◆ Store the document safely and securely in approved locations

BAA213 Prepare text from notes

- ◆ Input text using keyboarding skills
- ◆ Format text, making efficient use of available technology
- ◆ Clarify text requirements when necessary
- ◆ Select the required resource
- ◆ Proofread and check formatting of final document
- ◆ Present the text in the required format within agreed deadlines