

1 February 2013

To: SQA Co-coordinator (Secondary Schools  
and Colleges of Further Education)  
Directors of Education  
SCIS

Action by Recipient	
	Response required
√	Note and pass on
	None – update/information only

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Dear Colleague

### **National Qualifications Update – History**

The contents of this letter should be passed to the member of staff responsible for History.

### **SQA Website**

This is the main source of information on National Qualifications in History. It contains the current and past External and Internal Assessment reports, Course Specifications/Arrangements documents (including Access 3 Social Subjects) and Specimen Papers, previous National Qualifications Updates and marking instructions for recent diets. The address of the website is [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk). On the homepage, enter 'History' on the 'Subject and Qualification Finder'. Thereafter select from a choice of levels within History.

### **Extended Essay/Response and Dissertation Stationery**

Templates for the plans for the Extended Response and Extended Essay can only be downloaded from the SQA website. Flyleaves and notes for the submission of candidates' Extended Response, Extended Essay and Dissertation are available on the secure site.

The uplift date for the above candidate submissions is 23 April 2013.

### **Update on the 2012 diet**

Principal Assessors and their examining teams are warmly thanked for their efforts in delivering a successful diet. The External Assessment Reports are on our website and are invaluable sources of advice and good practice. Further points to bear in mind for each level are:

#### *Advanced Higher*

Field of Study 10: Spanish Civil War has had its title altered to reflect the period assessed and has become "*The Spanish Civil War: Causes, Conflict and Consequences 1923-1945.*" The summary descriptor now includes reference to the period 1923-1931, highlighting the potential for an exam question based on this period which does not necessarily refer to the fall

of the monarchy in 1931. The title now also allows for evidence of the consequences of Franco's victory to be fully credited. The timescale is solely extended for this purpose and any question relating to the period 1939-1945 would still be focused on the consequences of Franco's victory. The Fall of the Monarchy now becomes an italicised area, as does the extent of comparative rifts within The New Republic. The Bienio Negro is no longer italicised although under this section, the Revolt in Asturias remains italicised.

The list of approved Dissertation titles can be found on the Advanced Higher History subject page on the SQA website. Where centres wish confirmation of the validity of titles not on this list, such proposals should be submitted using the *Approval of Alternative Titles for Dissertations* form.

### *Higher*

Centres are reminded that for the Extended Essay marks can only be awarded where a candidate's essay relates to an Issue drawn from the course content for Paper I or Paper II. Where the question and essay content depart from each other, Knowledge may be credited, but only if it is relevant to the Issue from which the question is derived. However it is highly unlikely that such a piece of work will meet even the D criteria for Structure and Argument.

NABs for the old Higher lapsed in July 2011 and should be discarded.

### *Intermediate*

Candidates who move from Higher to Intermediate 2 must ensure that the issue chosen for their Extended Response lies within the Intermediate 2 Arrangements and that Intermediate 2 regulations for plans are followed.

### *Standard Grade*

It is permissible for centre staff to liaise with Invigilators to instruct candidates as to which contexts should be answered, thus preventing erroneous or multiple contexts being answered. At Credit or General, candidates should note the correct options on the front page of the question paper; at Foundation candidates should tick the correct boxes on page 3.

## **Verification**

Verification was carried out successfully last session and the Senior Verifier and Verifiers are thanked for all of their work. The Internal Assessment Report is available from the subject page of the website. It gives clear and helpful advice on the verification process. When submitting evidence, centres should indicate clearly which NAB is being used. It is also helpful if centres/candidates date the evidence when it is produced. Centres should use the latest version of any NAB available at the time of assessment.

## **Estimates and Appeals**

The updated *Estimates, Absentees and Assessment Appeals Guidance on Evidence Requirements* (Published: October 2012 (Revised), Publication code: BA5212) is available on SQA's website.

This document provides guidance on evidence requirements for estimates, absentee consideration and appeals consideration and is for subject specialists in centres that are delivering National Courses.

Appeals evidence should be of equivalent demand to the Course assessment and is best generated through a formal preliminary examination reflecting the demands of the SQA examination in terms of duration, complexity, sampling and security.

For National Courses in History, this is best achieved by using NABs, combined (and amended as recommended) to reflect the format, timing and conditions of the examination. For Higher, centres are reminded that the sampling pattern in Paper 1 should be the same in both Units; i.e. if issues 2, 4 and 6 are sampled in the British Unit, these should also be sampled in the European and World Unit. This is most easily achieved by using NAB 1 (or NAB 2 or NAB 3) for both Units in a prelim. For Paper 2, any NAB can be used.

For Intermediate, the advice is to use three composited NABs in timing equivalent to the Course Assessment. At Intermediate 2, the Short Essays from these NABs should be used; where a Short Essay is imported from another NAB, it runs the risk of overlapping with a question in the rest of the NAB, thus invalidating the instrument of assessment.

For Standard Grade, centres may generate their own assessment. These should indicate the provenance of items. Where past SQA items are used, these should come from a minimum of three past papers. Where commercial papers are bought in, it is the responsibility of the centre to ensure their validity. If necessary, questions and cut-off scores should be modified. Only the current year's commercial papers are deemed secure.

The use of past papers or specimen question papers in their entirety is not allowed for Appeals purposes.

Full guidance on the above is available via the SQA website.

## **Markers**

SQA is again grateful to those who marked in the 2012 diet. It is generally recognised that marking for SQA provides excellent professional development, and can be a major factor in promoting improved performance in individual centres.

## **Becoming a Marker**

If you are interested in becoming a marker in History, information and applications forms are available on the Appointee Management section of the SQA website. To become a Marker, we normally ask that you are in your third year of teaching the Course. We welcome applications throughout the year and, where a suitable vacancy exists, we may be able to offer an appointment for this year. The experience of marking helps to increase the awareness of the demands of Course assessment and is proven to be excellent professional and personal development.

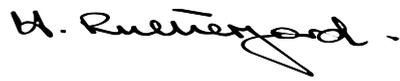
## **CfE Developments**

The developments for the new History Courses are well underway. It is recommended that you keep up to date on the progress of the developments by visiting the dedicated webpages: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45629.html>. You are also encouraged to use the *Have Your Say* facility on SQA's website to record any comments or feedback that you may have on the development or related materials.

We are currently in the process of recruiting specialists to write and check items for the Specimen and Live Question Papers for Higher History. If you are interested in becoming involved in the new Higher development, please get in touch with me.

If you wish further clarification on any of the above, please contact either Duncan Cox (0845 213 5498; [duncan.cox@sqa.org.uk](mailto:duncan.cox@sqa.org.uk)) or myself at the above address.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. Rutherford". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Hilary Rutherford  
Qualifications Manager