

5 February 2014

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, including the new CfE qualifications.

#### **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 24 April 2014.

#### **Update on the 2013 diet**

Principal Assessors and their examining teams are warmly thanked for their efforts in delivering a successful diet. In particular, SQA is grateful for all of the hard work that the Standard Grade Principal Assessor and Examining Team have undertaken to ensure that the national standard was upheld during the lifespan of the Standard Grades in History. We also thank all markers who have carried out their duties so diligently in the marking of candidates' examination question papers for Standard Grade.

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*

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.

## **NQ 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.

## **Results Services: 2013-2014**

In the academic year 2013-2014, SQA will introduce two new 'Results Services' to replace our existing Appeals Service.

These are:

### *Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service:*

This service will run prior to results being published. If a school or college believes that a candidate has suffered as a result of exceptional circumstances (for example bereavement or illness during an exam) staff can inform us of the circumstances and submit alternative evidence of attainment demonstrated by the candidate, which we will consider. This 'alternative evidence' will be coursework, class assessments or mock exams. To take a holistic view on the appropriate result, our Examiners will also take account of how the other candidates at that school/college performed in the exam.

### *Post Results Service:*

This service will run after candidates have received their certificates. If a school or college is concerned by a candidate's result, they can request a clerical check and/or a marking review

of the script. The 'script' is the name we give to the candidate's exam answer paper. If this check/review of the marking of the script, leads to a change of grade (either up or down), this will be amended on our system and a new certificate will be issued to the candidate. There will be no consideration of 'alternative evidence' with this service. If the original grade remains unchanged after the check/review of the marking of the script, the school or college will be charged for this service.

## **Markers**

SQA is again grateful to those who marked in the 2013 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.

## **Curriculum for Excellence**

### *National 5 Question Paper*

To support candidates in answering the "to what extent" 8 mark questions in the Question Paper, it has been decided to insert the following wording in brackets, immediately after the question:

(You must use recalled knowledge to present a **balanced account** of the influence of different factors and come to a **reasoned conclusion**.)

This wording, taken from the marking instructions, will appear in future question papers, including 2014.

### *National 5 Assignment*

The uplift date for the above candidate submissions is 25 March 2014.

### *Commonly Asked Questions*

To assist teachers with National 3, National 4 and National 5 History, SQA has published subject-specific common questions and answers. These can be found on the History CfE page of the SQA website and will be periodically updated.

### *Verification*

The first round of Verification activity took place in November and we thank all the nominees for their valuable contribution in carrying out this process.

After each round of verification activity, SQA will publish key messages that have been identified by each verification team. The Verification Key Messages for History are now available on the CfE History pages, under the level and within the 'verification' tab.

Subject key messages can be found on each [subject page](#), under the level and within the 'verification' tab.

### *Textbooks*

Publishers are beginning to produce textbooks to support the new National Qualifications in History. Centres are reminded that while textbooks serve as a useful guide to teaching and learning they do not specify what could be assessed by SQA in external examinations. For this information centres should refer to the mandatory course coverage in the Course Assessment Specification. The Course Assessment Specification for National 5 History can be found using the following link:

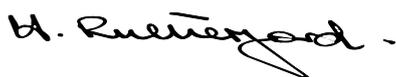
[http://www.sqa.org.uk/files\\_ccc/CfE\\_CourseAssessSpec\\_N5\\_SocialStudies\\_History.pdf](http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_CourseAssessSpec_N5_SocialStudies_History.pdf)

### **National Qualifications Support Teams**

Are you aware that we are currently recruiting for members of a National Qualifications Support Team for History? NQSTs are practitioner consultation groups that will feed back to SQA on the internal and external assessment of National Qualifications. These groups will communicate via secure online discussion forums as well as an annual meeting. For more information and to apply please visit <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/67177.html>

If you wish further clarification on any of the above, please contact either Duncan Cox (0345 213 5498; [duncan.cox@sqa.org.uk](mailto:duncan.cox@sqa.org.uk)) or myself at the above address.

Yours faithfully



Hilary Rutherford  
Qualifications Manager