

Our ref: GS/LM

18 June 2010

To: Head of centre
Cc: Directors of education, SCIS, Scottish Government,
key stakeholders, teaching associations and
SQA Co-ordinators

Action by Recipient
Response required
✓ Note and pass on
Note — update/information only

Contact: Linda Murray
Direct line: 0845 213 5568
E-mail: linda.murray@sqa.org.uk

Dear Colleague

Implementation of policy on low uptake National Courses

As you may know, SQA's low uptake policy was endorsed by the National Qualifications Steering Group (NQSG) in October 2003. This policy states that *existing National Courses will have a minimum life of five years. Courses at Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Higher which have failed to attract 100 candidates a year after five years and 50 candidates a year at Advanced Higher will be reviewed to determine whether they continue to be offered.* You can see a copy of the policy on our website at http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/lowuptake.pdf.

We have reviewed the National Courses falling into these categories and as a result of this, we have decided that:

- ◆ some will be removed from the NQ Catalogue after diet 2010, and some after diet 2011. The Units making up these Courses will be retained in the catalogue
- ◆ some will be retained in the NQ Catalogue, but may be reconsidered in line with the policy at a later date if they remain in the low uptake category.

Courses to be removed from the NQ Catalogue after the July 2010 examination diet

Automotive Engineering (Intermediate 2)

This Course has had no entries since 2005. The Units which make up the Course will remain in the Catalogue.

English – Spoken (Standard Grade)

This Course was developed to meet the needs of those candidates who had specific difficulties with reading and writing. Given that candidates who have these difficulties are able to use all forms of linguistic support, including assistive technologies, readers and scribes in the Standard Grade English Course, there has been no uptake for the Standard Grade English - Spoken Course since 2005. Consequently there is no need to retain this qualification and we are therefore withdrawing it from the NQ Catalogue. All candidates with specific difficulties who would have chosen this qualification can be accommodated by 0860 01 Standard Grade English with appropriate assessment arrangements.

Selling Scheduled Air Travel (Higher)

There have been no entries for this Course since 2008 and centres have indicated that there is no demand for it. The Units which make up the Course will remain in the Catalogue.

I would take this opportunity to remind you that, as stated in the *Update on National Qualifications developments* issued in February 2009, the following Courses will also be removed from the NQ Catalogue after the **2010** examination diet:

Economics (Intermediate 1)	Plant Propagation (Intermediate 2)
Amenity Horticulture (Intermediate 2)	Fitness and Exercise (Higher)
Design (Intermediate 2)	Professional Patisserie (Higher)
Fitness and Exercise (Intermediate 2)	Russian (Standard Grade)
Leading Sports Activities (Intermediate 2)	Sports Coaching Studies (Higher)

Courses to be removed from the NQ Catalogue after the July 2011 examination diet

Administration (Advanced Higher) and Media Studies (Advanced Higher)

These Courses were introduced in 2000 and some revisions were made and introduced in 2006 to try to promote uptake. However, uptake has been low – fewer than 20 candidates each year – and the Courses will be removed from the Catalogue. The Units which make up the Courses will remain in the Catalogue.

Classical Greek (Standard Grade)

There have been fewer than 10 candidates each year since 2001. Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Higher Courses in Classical Greek will remain in the Catalogue, as shown in the table later in this letter.

Contemporary Social Studies (Standard Grade)

Uptake of this Course has been in decline since 2005 as centres enter candidates for Intermediate Courses in Geography, History or Modern Studies, or the Access 3 Course in Social Subjects instead.

If the withdrawal of any of these Courses will cause your centre any difficulties, please contact Linda Murray, Project Manager, at linda.murray@sqa.org.uk, as soon as possible, outlining your concerns.

Other Courses in the low uptake category

The following Courses also fall into the low uptake category, but will be retained in the NQ Catalogue as they meet one or more of the criteria for retention. They may be reconsidered in line with the policy at a later date if they remain in the low uptake category.

National Courses with low uptake to be retained in the NQ Catalogue	
Course(s)	Course(s)
Biotechnology (Higher)	Hospitality - General Operations (Intermediate 2)
Care Issues for Society: Child Care (Intermediate 2)	Hospitality – Professional Cookery (Intermediate 2, Higher)
Care Issues for Society: Older People (Intermediate 2)	Italian (Intermediate 1, Advanced Higher)
Classical Greek (Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, Higher, Advanced Higher)	Latin (Intermediate 1, Advanced Higher)
Classical Studies (Intermediate 1)	Managing Environmental Resources (Intermediate 1)
Electrical Installation Fundamentals (Intermediate 2)	Mechatronics (Higher)
English – Alternative Communication (Standard Grade)	Retail Travel (Higher)
Fabrication and Welding Engineering (Higher)	Russian (Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, Higher)
Geology (Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, Higher)	Selling Overseas Tourist Destinations (Intermediate 2)
Home Economics: Health and Food Technology (Advanced Higher)	

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this letter, please contact my colleague Linda Murray at linda.murray@sqa.org.uk or on 0845 213 5568.

Yours faithfully



Dr Gill Stewart
Director of Qualifications Development