

# National Qualifications Review

## Accounting & Finance

### Investigation Report Executive summary

This report is the outcome of an investigation into how to implement the agreed actions on revision of the content, structure and internal and external assessment of Courses, as detailed in the Accounting and Finance Subject Review Report published in 2002.

The main concerns identified in the Review of Accounting and Finance were:

- ◆ Course structure: the use of two 60-hour Units at Advanced Higher
- ◆ Course content: the need to improve differentiation and progression between Courses and the use of Information Technology
- ◆ internal assessment: the need to significantly reduce the volume of assessment for each Unit; establishing suitable cut-off scores; and clarifying the role of internal assessment in Appeals
- ◆ external assessment: the need to clearly differentiate between the demands of the internal and external assessment; reducing duplication between internal and external assessment; and the issue of 'added value' of the external question paper

A consultation with key stakeholders took place between January and March 2003. These included presenting centres, a representative Subject Advisory Group, and other internal and external stakeholders' groups.

The consultation took the form of telephone and paper-based questionnaires, presentations to stakeholders, and meetings with the Advisory Group, Principal Assessors and HMI.

Responses provide a clear indication of the changes which need to be implemented to meet the major concerns identified above.

The following recommendations have been made:

- ◆ There is a discontinuity between the Course title and content, although there is no stakeholder pressure for change. SQA should review the title.
- ◆ The structure of all Accounting and Finance Courses should be two 60-hour Units — Financial Accounting and Management Accounting.
- ◆ The Course content should be restructured to improve progression and differentiation between levels.
- ◆ Internal assessment for each Unit should be revised to ensure it is more holistic, with a maximum duration of 1 hour 30 minutes and a threshold of attainment of 60%, and to include the continued use of a spreadsheet for Management Accounting

The current external assessment model should be revised to eliminate duplication, reduce the predictability of the question paper, reflect the syllabus and ensure coverage of it, and improve the 'added value' of the external assessment.

**The full version of the investigation report is available on the appropriate NQ subject page of the Scottish Qualifications Authority website – [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)**

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